



# EMPOWERMENT PLAN

10 YEARS OF IMPACT

Annual Report  
April 2022–March 2023

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# OUR MISSION:

To employ and empower unhoused individuals to break the generational cycle of homelessness by producing a sleeping bag coat for those in need

# OUR VISION:

A world in which people impacted by homelessness have the tools and resources to be the architects of their own future

# OUR VALUES:

1. **People** come first
2. Everyone's **voice** has value
3. Strive to make the greatest **impact**
4. Success looks **different** for everyone
5. Our work is hard, and we have **fun** doing it

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Toya Allen**  
Ford Motor Co.  
Program Graduate



**Sheilah Clay, Vice Chair**  
Community Leader



**Tiffany Ford, Treasurer**  
University of Michigan  
Credit Union



**Robyn Glaser, Secretary**  
The Kraft Group



**Steve Hamp, Chairman**  
Michigan Education Excellence  
Foundation (MEEF)



**Chad Kilpatrick**  
Spreetail



**Tim Melton**  
Jones Day



**Peter Remington**  
The Remington Group



**Veronika Scott, President**  
Empowerment Plan



**Alexis Wiley\***  
Moment Strategies



**Lori Wingerter**  
General Motors

\* No longer serving as an active Board Member

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

The year 2022 was a milestone for Empowerment Plan. We completed our 10th year fighting homelessness; hiring and training unhoused individuals and their families for a better future; and providing nearly 9,000 sleeping bag coats to homeless citizens all across the world. But in addition to continuing our vitally important work with our target population, we also spent much of 2022 planning our next 10 years of activity in this space. The entire team at EP worked diligently crafting a 3-year strategic plan that will allow the organization to scale to meet the growing demand for the jobs we create and the coats we make, while also laying the groundwork for future growth and model replication. This process was a true full-team effort and included months of exploration, research and data collection, numerous conversations with thought leaders and partners, all of which culminated with findings reports generated by each department. Veronika was the orchestra director, but everyone played their necessary and unique symphonic part.

**Once consolidated, the strategic plan identified four goals that will define the outlines of our future direction:**

1. Invest in talent by hiring additional program leadership and development support staff;
2. Unlock the capital needed to scale by becoming less dependent on traditional philanthropy;
3. Grow to maximum capacity in Detroit;
4. Package up the model to pilot another location within Michigan.

These are challenging but realistic goals that will drive our work in 2023 and beyond.

In addition to future planning, our 10 year anniversary was defined by some key metrics. In 2022, we launched Project 10: a nation-wide day of impact marked by the distribution of 1,000 coats across 10 cities on World Homeless Day. We served 57 individuals at our Kercheval manufacturing center. We offered 15 different programs geared at helping participants achieve stability.

The board and staff, plus many dedicated community partners and donors, helped make 2022 a meaningful and impactful year. We all know homeless is a systemic and urgent problem. The team at Empowerment Plan knows this and intends to lean in even harder in 2023 to do our part to create an opportunistic future for challenged individuals, one person at a time. And after 10 years refining our approach, we know we have a model that definitively works and saves lives.

Thank you all for your support and stay tuned for our exciting future!!

-- Steve Hamp, Board Chair



# FROM OUR FOUNDER

I am thrilled to be sharing an update on the progress of Empowerment Plan! Last year was filled with incredible highs and tough obstacles that I am so proud of the team for tackling with strength, passion, and dedication. **Our commitment to community engagement has fostered strong partnerships and collaboration across the city of Detroit and beyond.**

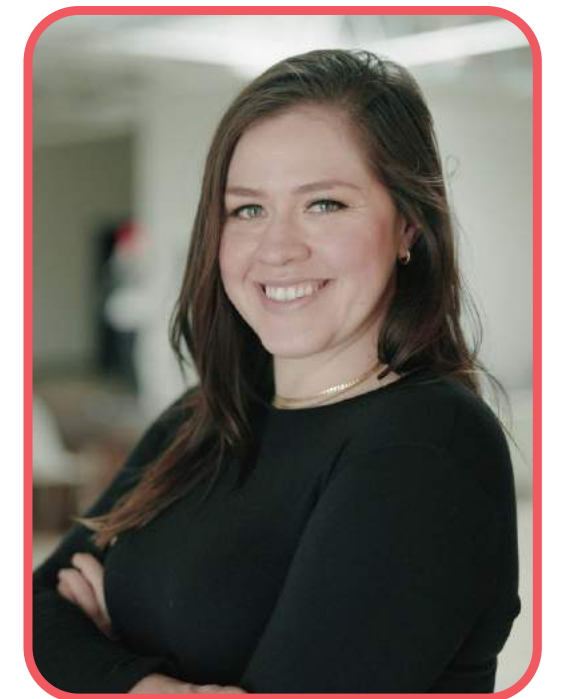
Over the past year, we continued to experience high demand for our EMPWR coats, with a consistent wait list of thousands of units. We saw a dramatic reduction in shelter occupancy numbers, which meant far fewer people could find available beds, leading to higher numbers of people being displaced – staying in their cars, doubling up with others, and rough sleeping. Fewer people in shelters meant more people in need of coats and more people in need of employment opportunities to help break out of the vicious cycle of homelessness.

We used these challenges to fuel our creativity in solving how we can sustainably grow our impact. **As a team, we spent months surveying and interviewing coat sponsors and recipients, program graduates, current team members, organizations we admire from across the country, community members, funders and partners. We dove deep into existing research on workforce development, poverty alleviation, homelessness support, barriers to employment, and more.** Spending months entrenched in this phase allowed us to better understand ways for us to scale, and the things we should and should not be focussing on over the next few years.

I am so grateful we had the opportunity to learn from our community when building our strategic plan, which provides a clear roadmap for achieving our mission and outlines key objectives and strategies to drive our growth. We are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead. I cannot wait to share it with you!

We are filled with optimism and excitement for the future of Empowerment Plan. **With our strong strategic plan and the collective efforts of our community, we are confident that we will make an even greater impact in the years to come. Together, we can build a world in which people impacted by homelessness have the tools and resources to be the architects of their own future.**

Thank you for being an essential part of our journey!



With gratitude,

*Vanessa Scott*

# OUR STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Our team spent a majority of the last year crafting a new 3-year strategic plan, which will kick off in the summer of 2023. This new plan will help us lay the groundwork for further scale, heightened impact, and replication of our model.

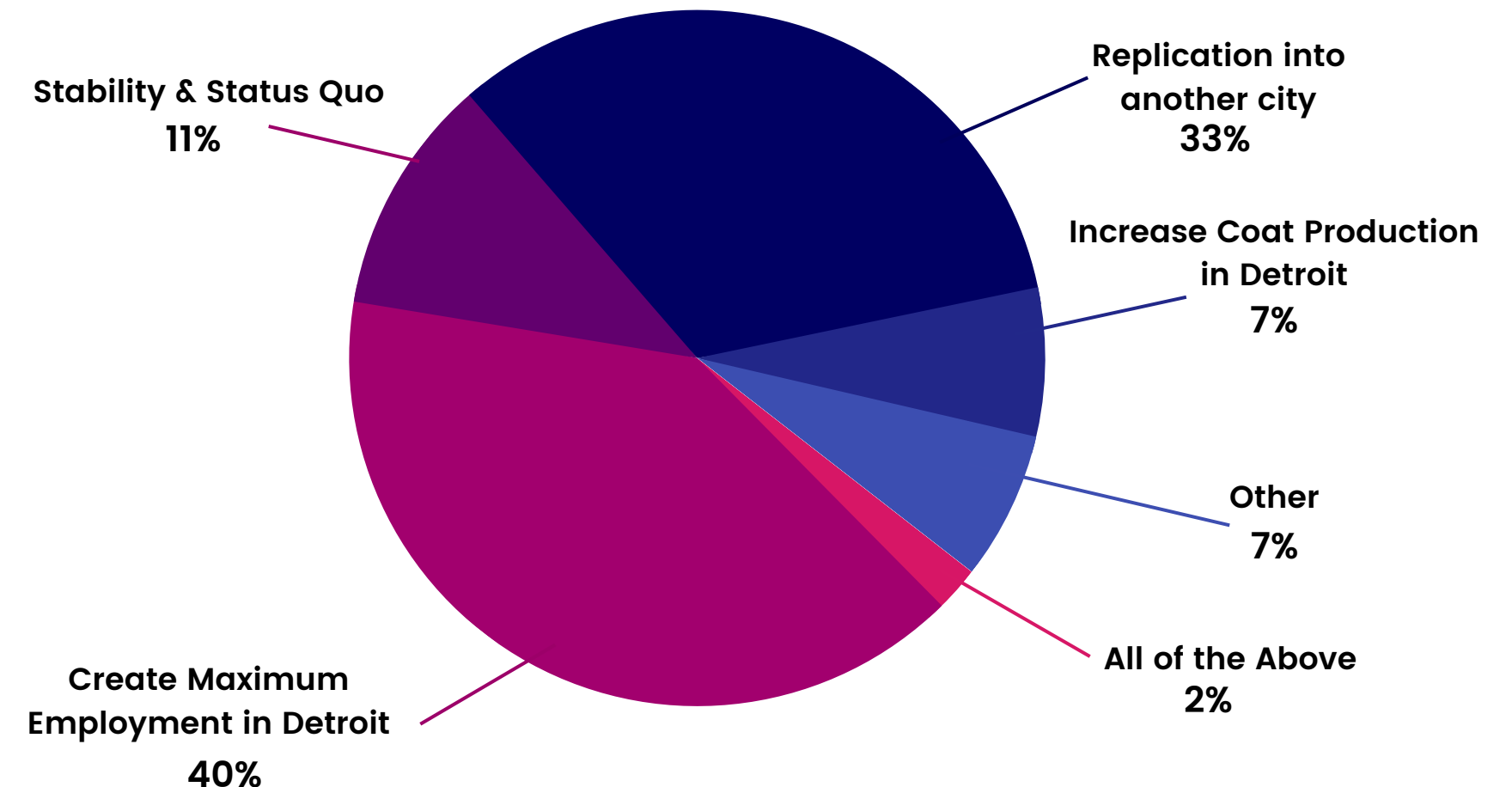
Over the course of several months, we engaged in more than 55 conversations with thought leaders, partners, donors, coat sponsors, and other constituents to gain a deeper understanding of other models, what works well and what doesn't, and how we can scale in a meaningful way that addresses true systems change.

*If you are interested in reading our strategic plan, let us know and we can email you a copy!*

# WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

*Surveys were sent to 309 individuals and 145 responses were received for an overall response rate of 47%*

**In the next 3 years, what would you most like to see next from Empowerment Plan??**



# STABILITY: HOW WE DEFINE SUCCESS

For us, helping those we serve achieve stability is how we measure long-term programmatic success.

As a result of the conversations and learnings from our strategic planning process, **we define stability as having full-time employment, consistent housing, reliable transportation, dependable childcare, food security, basic financial management skills, and being on a journey of mental and physical well-being.**

While we do not feel two years is enough time for someone to achieve self-sufficiency, we believe it is enough time for someone to achieve and maintain stability and our goal is to help those we serve feel confident in doing so!





# A DECADE OF IMPACT

2022 marked 10 years of impact for Empowerment Plan! Take a look at what we accomplished in our first decade.



**120 INDIVIDUALS**

EXITED HOMELESSNESS THROUGH EMPLOYMENT



**360 CHILDREN**

IMPACTED THROUGH OUR GENERATIONAL FOCUS



**50 STATES & 21 COUNTRIES**

LOCATIONS WHERE COATS WERE DISTRIBUTED



**75,000 COATS**

PRODUCED BY OUR TEAM IN DETROIT



**166,400 HOURS**

OF PAID PROGRAMMING TIME



**100% OBTAINED STABLE HOUSING**

WITHIN 90 DAYS OF JOINING EP

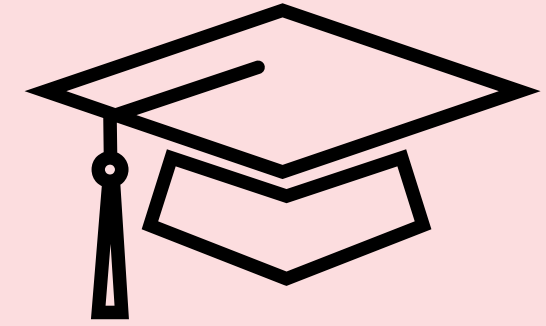


# A YEAR IN REVIEW



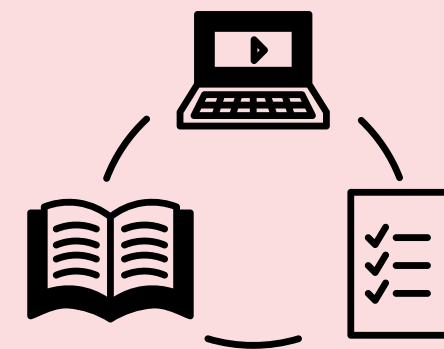
57

Individuals  
Served



10

Program  
Graduates



15

Programs  
Offered



8,272

Coats  
Distributed

# PROGRAM PARTICIPANT: SHANIECE THREAT

Shaniece is one of our newer faces at Empowerment Plan, but once you meet her, you won't forget her! Shaniece joined the team in September and has come in smiling every day since. She constantly reminds us that even though we may come from different backgrounds with different stories, we are all alike in some way.

While she absolutely loves making the coats, what is most important to Shaniece is helping people and spreading joy and kindness. Since working here, Shaniece has moved into her own place and purchased a car! Having secure housing and transportation brings stability, safety, and comfort to her and her young daughter.

Shaniece is working towards her GED and upon completion she wants to pursue medical billing and coding. We know she will achieve this goal and so much more and can't wait to see all she accomplishes in the years to come. Thank you for being such a bright light and positive outlet for our team!

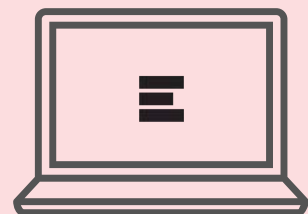


"There's always tomorrow and even if you're having a bad day - which most of the time it's just bad moments - just take a step back to think and **notice you have tomorrow to try again and to do better than what you did before.** And that's my goal too...and to always keep my head held high."

# OUR PAID-TO-LEARN SUPPORTIVE EMPLOYMENT MODEL

Our innovative approach pairs full-time employment with a wide range of supportive services, addressing everything from housing and childcare to transportation, education and more. During a typical 40-hour workweek, approximately 60% of the paid time is dedicated to coat production and the remaining 40% is dedicated to program time. With our community of partners we have created an ecosystem of support that helps people achieve financial stability and independence for their whole family. We currently offer 15 different programs, 12 of which are run by 7 different community organizations and 3 of which are managed internally.

On-site programming includes:



**JOURNi**

Computer Training



**E3 Michigan**

Clinical Therapy



**Empowered Pantry**

On-site Food Pantry



**Dominican Literacy**

GED tutoring

# PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: E3

E3 is a female-founded and minority-owned therapy practice focused on empowering clients through comprehensive therapy, specializing in dysfunctional communication patterns, victims of trauma, substance abuse, depression, grief, stress, domestic violence, and sexual abuse. Empowerment Plan established a relationship with E3 in 2020 and have since scaled the partnership to include individual, group, and family therapy.

**Therapists come onsite to Empowerment Plan twice a week to deliver services and meet with program participants. Especially since COVID, the need for mental health services is more prevalent than other and we are proud to be able to offer this benefit to those we serve at no additional cost.**



Sarah Pilson, one of E3's therapists, at Empowerment Plan preparing to meet with clients

"In my first session, the therapist asked me questions no one had ever asked me before. I was talking openly and told her things I never told anyone. She made me feel extremely comfortable and that is a true person that cares...I appreciate her and recommend her highly"

*-Claudia, Program Participant*



## **PROGRAM GRADUATE: BENJAMIN WILSON**

After working with Empowerment Plan for six months, Benjamin was stably housed, had his own car, and was ready to move on to something bigger. In September he graduated from the program and now works as for a demolition construction company making \$28.00 an hour!

While Benjamin was a pro on the sewing machines, he was also our resident photographer and videographer and used his social media following and digital skills to help elevate Empowerment Plan within the community. He has his own production company on the side and hopes to use these skills to continue telling stories for other organizations like Empowerment Plan.

We are so proud of Benjamin and are always keeping an eye on his social media to see which video goes viral next!



# PRODUCTION MANAGER: JESSICA WEST

Jessica started at Empowerment Plan in 2015. Throughout her tenure she has stayed focused, worked incredibly hard, and served as a role model and leader for the entire team, working her way up from seamstress to supervisor. **Last fall she was promoted to Production Manager overseeing the entire manufacturing floor!**

Not only is Jessica a huge asset to our team, she is also an amazing mother to her six children. Her dedication to her family is unparalleled and reminds us each day how to lead with patience, grace, and empathy. **Last year Jessica purchased her first home and is proud to leave a legacy behind for her kids.**

**"Owning my own home means a lot to my family because there was a time where we didn't have a place to sleep. To have a home that I own means that my children and their children will never have to experience that again. My home can now be passed down for generations to come."**

**We are beyond lucky to have Jessica on the team and cannot wait to see what the future brings her way. Please take a moment to [watch this video](#) as her story is one worth sharing.**

# 2022 COAT RECAP

8,272 Coats Distributed Worldwide

30

States

3

Countries

4

Continents

## IMPACTED ORGANIZATIONS

Through partnerships with hundreds of outreach organizations around the globe, we are able to spread the warmth and empower communities near and far. Listed below are a handful of organizations impacted this year.

4 Others Inc  
Amherst Survival  
Blue Wagon Ministry  
Detroit VA Hospital  
Lost N Found Youth  
New Beginnings Counseling Center  
River Fund  
Serve Your City DC  
We See You San Diego

Advent House Ministries  
Ann Arbor V.A. Hospital  
Chicago Coalition  
Haven of Rest  
Mercy Care Atlanta  
Pine Street Inn  
Rutgers  
Village for Vet  
Woods Mullen Women's Shelter



A coat handout led by Sidewalk Samaritan in NYC



# PROJECT 10

**1,000 coats. 1,000 lives impacted.**

**Project 10 was a nation-wide day of impact in support of World Homelessness Day and in honor of Empowerment Plan's 10th Anniversary. Together with 10 cities across the country, we distributed 1,000 EMPWR Coats on October 10th. Members of the Empowerment Plan team met with leaders, activists and volunteers making an effort to support their unhoused community members and permanently end the generational cycle of poverty and homelessness.**

## **CITIES IMPACTED**

Detroit	San Diego
Chicago	Atlanta
Muskegon	New York
Boston	Spokane
Los Angeles	Queens

## **SPONSORSHIP PARTNERS**

Lucky Duck Foundation  
DTE Foundation  
Brothers Trust  
Diane von Furstenberg  
Hello For Good & Empire Health Foundation  
New England Patriots  
Detroit Pistons  
Lineage Foundation for Good



Empowerment Plan's Chief Development Officer, Erika George, visited Drew Moser, Executive Director of the Lucky Duck Foundation in San Diego for Project 10

# PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: DWIHN

Detroit Wayne Integrated Health Network (DWIHN) is one of Empowerment Plan's longest-standing coat sponsors and distribution partners. They sponsored their first coats back in December 2014 and since then have continued to place annual orders for coats, distributing them throughout Metro Detroit and impacting thousands of our unsheltered neighbors here at home.

**This past year, DWIHN ordered 1,275 EMPWR Coats that were distributed throughout the fall and winter.** Part of their order was paired with the National Overdose Awareness Day community outreach initiative. In addition to providing 14 local organizations with EMPWR Coats, they handed out NARCAN Kits and Fentanyl test strips to combat the substance abuse crisis.

We are so grateful for DWIHN's ongoing partnership and look forward to continuing to impact the Detroit community together!



DWIHN team members on site at Empowerment Plan picking up EMPWR coats for the community

# EMPWR COAT TESTIMONIALS

"Our guests are so incredibly grateful for the coats. This was the toughest winter those who live on the streets have faced in a long time. **We were so grateful to be able to give a jacket of such high quality, that would keep people warm as they faced the elements of winter like many had never experienced before.**"

- Laura Chez, We See You San Diego

"During the colder months, Empowerment Jackets are the most useful item we can distribute as they fill two critical needs in one easily transported garment: a warm, resilient coat and a warm, durable sleeping/sitting bag. **The looks on people's faces when they receive such a beautifully designed and useful garment is priceless.**"

- Emily Borghard, Sidewalk Samaritan



Photo taken at a coat handout at TACO San Diego in partnership with the Lucky Duck Foundation

# BROOKLINE CARES

In early 2021, a group of 11 high school sophomores launched Brookline Cares: a philanthropic volunteer effort to raise funds for goods and resources to support the unhoused in Boston. They partnered with Empowerment Plan to raise funds for EMPWR Coats to distribute to individuals and organizations across Boston.

This March, the students, now high school seniors, decided to launch another fundraiser to support their community. In just a few short weeks, and with the help of the Tony Robbins Foundation Match Campaign, they were able to raise close to \$14,000 and distribute almost 100 coats to those in need in their community.

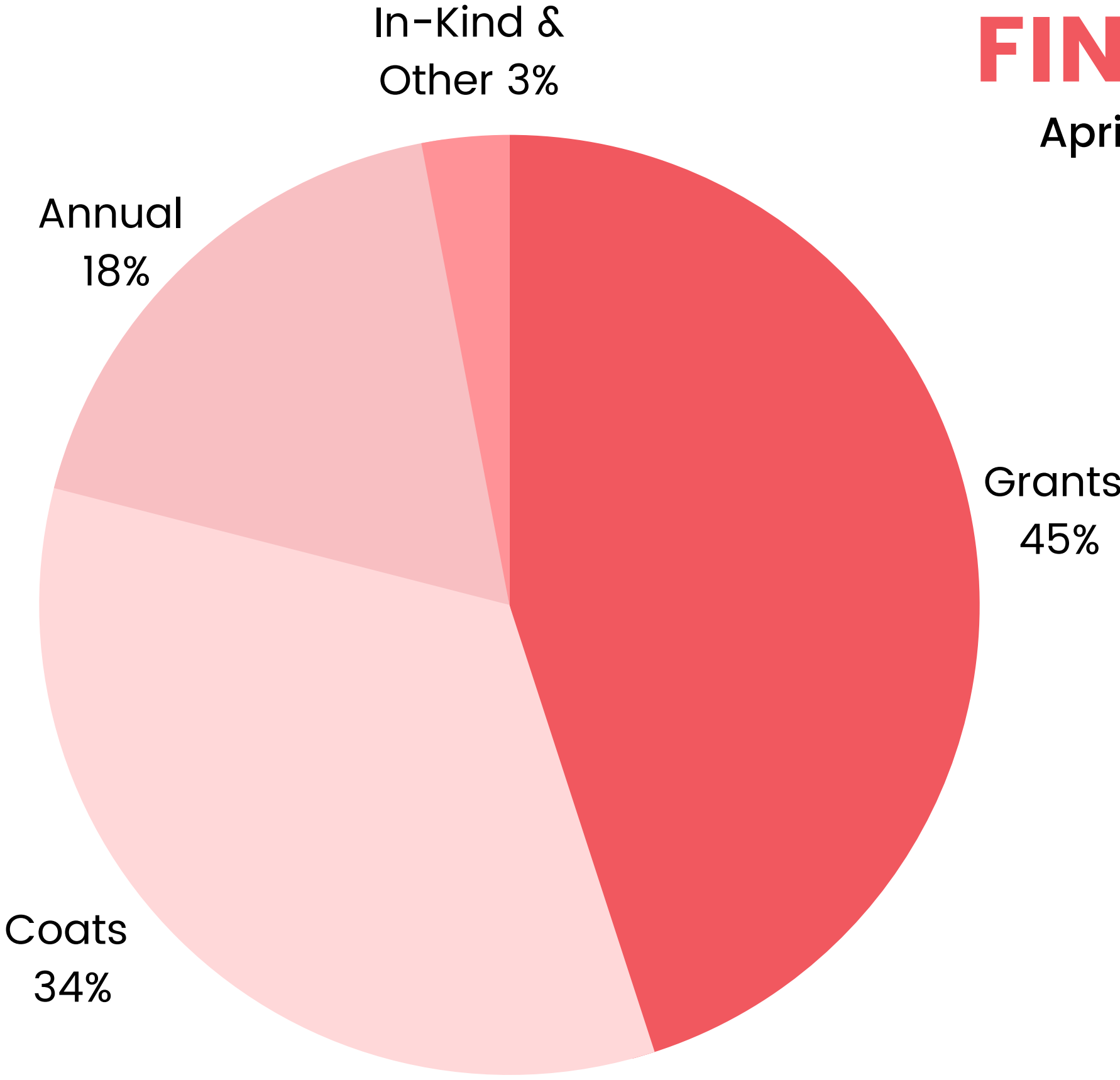
**"It warmed my heart to see an EMPWR coat in the hands of a man dealing with homelessness while walking around Boston last week,"** said Elliot Arnold, a Senior at Brookline High School and member of Brookline Cares. It is through local leaders – no matter the age – that help us make the biggest impact across communities near and far.



Students and members of  
Brookline Cares

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

April 2022– March 2023 Contributions by Source\*



**CONTRIBUTIONS**

\$3,402,247

**EXPENSES**

\$3,351,360

**NET INCOME**

\$50,887

\*Unaudited 22-23 Financials

# OUR SUPPORTERS:

Thank you to the following individuals, organizations and partners who contributed to our mission through sponsorship, grants, and donated services.

Altec/Styslinger Foundation  
Albert Ford  
Anonymous Donor  
Applebaum Family Philanthropy  
Attleboro Area Interfaith Collaborative  
Barbara St. John  
Blake's Hard Cider  
Brasscraft Manufacturing  
Carol Hermann  
Carol Hoyt  
City of Jackson  
Collective Solutions Giving Group  
Detroit Pistons  
Detroit Street Medicine  
Detroit Wayne Integrated Health Network  
Diane Monico  
Diller-von Furstenberg Family Foundation  
Domino's Pizza  
DTE Energy Foundation  
Emily & Henry Ford III  
Empire Health Foundation  
First United Methodist Church Holland  
Floyd, Inc  
Ford Foundation

Foroulis Private Foundation  
Franklin Philanthropic Foundation  
General Motors  
Gina & Douglas Leppink  
Harmon Family Giving Fund  
Hello for Good  
Henry Ford II Fund on behalf of Cynthia & Edsel B. Ford II  
Jeffrey Farber Family Foundation  
John & Lacy Williams Family Fund  
Jones Day  
Knights of Columbus Flint  
Kresge Foundation  
KT Foundation  
Lineage Logistics  
LPR International  
Lucky Duck Foundation  
Mailchimp  
Match Square  
Matilda R Wilson Fund  
McGregor Fund  
Melton Family Charitable Fund  
MiraMed Global Services  
Molinello Family Foundation

Moore Family Charitable Fund  
New England Patriots Foundation  
Pam Dawber  
Peabody & Plum Fund  
Peter Remington & Peg Daitch  
Phillip Wm. Fisher Fund  
PNC Foundation  
Public Affairs Associates  
Rhonda Lee Meister Living Trust  
Rutgers University  
Samuel Ulmer  
Steve & Sheila Hamp  
Sub Zero Mission  
Tarsadia Foundation  
The Brother's Trust  
The Cole Foundation  
Tony Robbins Foundation  
United Way of Southeast Michigan  
University of Michigan Credit Union  
Vera & Joseph Dresner Foundation  
W.K. Kellogg Foundation  
Walters' Family Foundation  
Young Woman's Home Association  
Zatkoff Family Legacy Fund



"I'm looking forward to getting my life on the right track. I have four kids and they keep me motivated and help me strive to be a better me for them. **Never give up because your day to shine is coming soon.**"

-- Tiera, Program Participant since January 2023



# WHAT'S NEXT

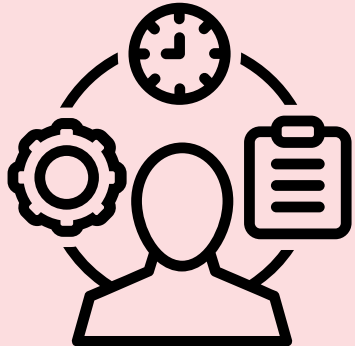
Next year, we will...



Hire 27 individuals into the program



Graduate 22 team members



Onboard a new Program Director



Produce and distribute 11,000 coats



# COMING SOON...

There is so much happening this year that you won't want to miss! Keep an eye out on our website and social media for:

- more details about our strategic plan
- announcements about our first annual event since 2019
- information about how you can join our third annual Trunk-or-Treat
- impact stories about the coats we make and the jobs we create



[info@empowermentplan.org](mailto:info@empowermentplan.org)  
[www.empowermentplan.org](http://www.empowermentplan.org)



EMPOWERMENT PLAN

# JOIN US IN BREAKING THE CYCLE

Your support amplifies our efforts to continue building equitable opportunities for families in need through the jobs we create and the coats we make.

To make a donation or to learn more, click [here](#).





**THANK YOU!**



EMPOWERMENT PLAN