

# GROWTH

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MENTOR Minnesota's 2021 vision, informed by community input, was big and bold: increase free and low-cost services for mentoring programs across the state, increase and diversify the leaders in Minnesota's mentoring field, develop the infrastructure to expand and launch our inaugural State of Mentoring Survey.

With your help, we delivered.

**In March, we hired Program Director, Emily Geray**, who led a banner year in programming, reaching over 600 people through mentoring best practice trainings. This included but was not limited to an **LGBTQ mentoring cohort**, conversations around mentoring Indigenous youth, workplace development mentoring initiatives, and providing technical assistance to start new mentoring programs.

Mid-Summer, MENTOR Minnesota partnered with three teen Breck School students who, with the mentorship of three mentoring researchers (Search Institute's Amy Syvertson, MENTOR National's Mike Garringer, and University of Minnesota's Lindsey Weiler), interviewed stakeholders, researched mentoring outcomes, and **drafted our inaugural State of Mentoring survey which launched Spring 2022.**

**Mid-year, we gave our warmest thanks and well-wishes to longtime board members, Jay Gregerson and Ashley Mehbod.** Ashley served as Board Chair throughout leadership changes and the onset of the pandemic and had a profound impact on MENTOR Minnesota's success. She laid the groundwork for MMN to **recruit four new board members: Tanya Schuh, Nana Ahwoi, Mario Hess-Winburn, and Jamal Abdur-Salaam, and to appoint our new Board Chair Kelly Rowan. Ashley continues her service as a member of our new Legacy Committee.**



PILOTED  
LGBTQ+  
COHORT



WROTE  
STATE OF  
MENTORING  
SURVEY



EXPANDED  
BOARD  
OF  
DIRECTORS

Are you an alumni board member or staff member of MENTOR Minnesota? Consider joining the Legacy Committee.

By the end of 2021, **we expanded our team once more to welcome on our Americorps Vista, Alli Urevig, as a full-time staff member with the new title, Marketing and Development Manager.** You may have seen her work if you've read our newly revamped website, newsletter, social media materials, or watched any of the free trainings catalogued on our MENTOR Minnesota Youtube.

The MENTOR Minnesota team is honored to continue the important work of expanding mentoring access to young people across the state. We believe in the power relationships. Relationships are transformative.

We look forward to being in relationship with you in 2022 and beyond.

Sarah



EXPANDED  
MENTOR MN  
TEAM



LAUNCHED  
LEGACY  
COMMITTEE

# MISSION & VISION

## OUR MISSION:

Fuel the quality and quantity of equitable and inclusive developmental relationships for MN young people by building and elevating the capacity of programs, systems and policies.

## OUR VISION:

All youth have agency and power at home, school, community and in the workplace.

# PILLARS OF WORK

## ELEVATING QUALITY

Support capacity building and quality of programs by activating, leveraging and disseminating evidence-based research to promote best practices in mentoring.

## ENGAGING LOCAL LEADERSHIP

Convene, connect and support the field to enhance mentoring.

## EXPANDING THE MOVEMENT

Scale the impact of mentoring by leveraging positive outcomes and the transformative impact of mentoring relationships.

## INFLUENCING SYSTEMS

Advocate for and foster shared youth power across a range of environments (school, work, community, home).

# YEAR IN REVIEW



BAGELS & BEST PRACTICE

CONVENED OVER 600 PEOPLE IN LEARNING ABOUT MENTORING BEST PRACTICE



270 HOURS OF NO COST TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GIVEN TO 12 PROGRAMS



HIGHLIGHTED 9 FREE CRITICAL MENTORING TOOLS



INCREASED PROGRAM SERVICES COUNCIL FROM 13 TO 18 MEMBERS



CREATED AND HOSTED OUR FIRST PRESS START: PROGRAM BUILDING 101 TRAINING FOR NEW PROGRAMS



DELIVERED 31 TOTAL TRAININGS

# MENTOR MINNESOTA TEAM



**SARAH SCHAEFER M.Ed**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**EMILY GERAY**  
PROGRAM DIRECTOR



**ALLI UREVIG**  
MARKETING & DEVELOPMENT  
MANAGER

# MENTOR MINNESOTA CONSULTANTS

**APRIL RIORDAN**  
CONSULTANT

**CAROLYN SCHERER, MSW**  
CONSULTANT

**SARAH GATLIN**  
CONSULTANT

**MANDY ARDEN**  
CONSULTANT

# CONSULTING GROWTH

2021 proved to be a year of growth for MENTOR Minnesota consulting! We provided over 240 hours of technical assistance for mentoring programs across the state. In addition, we increased our consulting pool, adding two additional Technical Assistance Providers with unique backgrounds to support Minnesota Mentoring Programs. Technical Assistance services are critical in elevating the effectiveness of mentoring & increasing program capacity.

MENTOR Minnesota also added quarterly 'Press Start' events providing foundational knowledge regarding the steps to starting a mentoring program. These events were created to serve as a bridge, providing vital elements & considerations in starting a program, followed by connecting them to one of our consultants where they received expertise & guidance in getting their program up & running. In addition, our consultants continued to provide 1:1 technical assistance to programs as they journeyed through the National Quality Mentoring Survey; a review process that identifies how programs can elevate their programming for long term improvement.



# LEGACIES IN MENTORING

This past year, we began work on a training module titled Untold Legacies in Mentoring in collaboration with MENTOR Washington, supported by Carlson Family Foundation. Untold Legacies in Mentoring is a three-part training module conceived in partnership with MENTOR Washington and MENTOR Minnesota in response to a lack of foundational understanding of



structural racism by mentoring program professionals.

Though often well meaning, mentoring programs have the power to reinforce most stereotypes and systems of oppression. In this series of trainings, participants will investigate the legacy of mentoring, explore how these harmful assumptions of mentoring programs impact young people from intersecting identities, their families, and communities, and workshop how to change these oppressive structures in their own programs. Participants will walk away with a clearer view of their program's blind spots and provide practical next steps toward an asset-based liberatory mentoring model.

Communities of color have faced the heartbreaking challenges of dual pandemics: the COVID-19 global pandemic and pandemic of white supremacy. During this

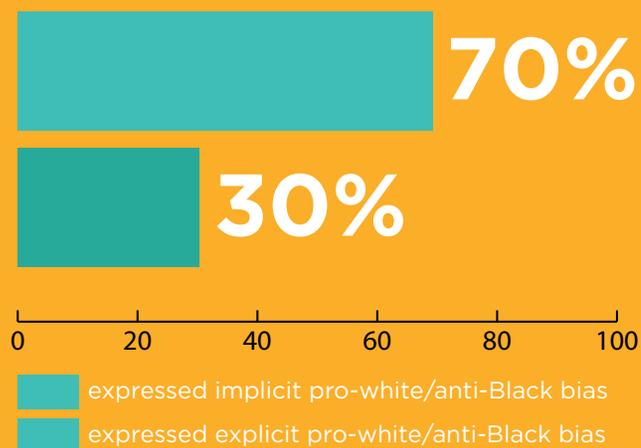
time, there has been an increase in racially motivated hate crimes against Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities; for example, targeting of Asian people and the brutal murders of Black people by the police.



White people across the national often do not fully understand the systems that have created this double pandemic. A 2020 Brookings Institute study concluded that of over 68,000

educators, 70% expressed implicit pro-white/anti-Black bias and 30% expressed explicit pro-white/anti-Black bias. There is a clear disconnect between what people think they know of themselves and what is shown through their actions.

## 2020 Educator Bias



The Brookings' study underscores local Minnesota data. According to the Search Institute's Cultivating Connections survey, most adults in leadership positions feel that they are doing a good job of racial equity work themselves, whereas the people who report to or are supported by them do not feel the same way. It is easy to see where

the staff skepticism stems from, as in this same study only 44% of Twin Cities programs critically examined the role their program and school played in reinforcing and buffering systemic racism. In Greater Minnesota, those numbers dipped to 27%.

The lack of critical examination may be, in part, caused by a lack of resources. From the Search survey, it was revealed that only 1/3 of youth work professionals attended professional development on relationship-building skills in the last year. Unsurprisingly, very few Minnesota youth reported that the adults in their schools and after-school programs were trustworthy. In fact, less than half as many young people said they trusted the adults at their schools as adults who thought they were trustworthy themselves. So, while adults may perceive themselves as good at building relationships, young people do not feel the same. A question the MENTOR Minnesota and MENTOR Washington teams seek to answer is, can investigating systemic racism in after school and

mentoring programs increase youth trust and educational outcomes?

Thus, the Untold Legacies in Mentoring project will target a promising opportunity area. MENTOR Minnesota is investigating the origins of whiteness in mentoring, how to expand anti-racist liberatory mentoring, and youth-lead relationship building as a core tenant of quality for any youth-serving organization. These training modules will be offered free of charge, preclude program's National Quality Mentoring System reviews, and provide a lightweight framework to encourage continued reflection.



**Hear about why the Carlson Family Foundation is supporting the Legacies in Mentoring project from their Program Director, Aretha Green-Rupert:**

“The Carlson Family Foundation recently launched our new funding area, the Constellation Strategy. It was born out of our long history of working with and learning from mentoring and out-of-school programs. We took a step back and said, ‘if we have long-term goals for young people, how are adults who connect with them, whether they’re in schools, out-of-school time, informal or formal mentors, how are those adults equipped to best support young people in our community?’ So, when MENTOR Minnesota and MENTOR Washington were first starting these conversations [discussing the creation of Legacies in Mentoring], it connected with what we were envisioning. The Carlson Family Foundation was an early funder of NQMS (QMAP at the time), and if we can again help to grow training that becomes a part of the mentoring landscape nationwide, we’d be excited to see what the impact could be.

The project is taking a hard look at the history of mentoring, where it’s come from, acknowledging that, and then expanding on the positive aspects and seeing where inequities show up. We want to see developmental training opportunities provided for mentors, organizations, and anyone supporting young people. We want those adults to feel equipped to address issues like equity, race, trauma and approach it from an understanding of a young person’s individual journey, identity, and experience. We can’t assume that happens in every mentoring relationship. The Legacies in Mentoring project is intentional about this. At the heart of mentoring is adding another person to the constellation of adults supporting a young person. An adult that will walk along beside them, pour into their lives, recognize their gifts, and honor their journey.”



**“ IF WE HAVE LONG-TERM GOALS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, HOW ARE ADULTS WHO CONNECT WITH THEM, WHETHER THEY’RE IN SCHOOLS, OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME, INFORMAL OR FORMAL MENTORS, HOW ARE THOSE ADULTS EQUIPPED TO BEST SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY? ”**

# PROGRAM SERVICES COUNCIL GROWTH

The Program Services Council serves as an advisory group to MENTOR MN's staff and provides thoughtful leadership in providing program input, an understanding of program needs, and a pulse on trends within youth programming. Under the guidance of the PSC, we were able to ensure our programming and training opportunities meet the needs of the programs across Minnesota.

- MENTOR Minnesota was thrilled to increase the Program Services Council roster by 61% in 2021.
- With this increased involvement of diverse mentoring programs, organizations, and collaborations from around the state, the Program Services Council now represents youth serving programs in every Minnesota region.

## PSC MEMBERS

### **Amy Gray**

Kinship Partners

### **Beth Burt**

Mentor North

### **David Pearson**

Change Inc

### **Erin Walloch**

Darts

### **Heidi Langeberg**

FamilyWise

### **Jenna Collins**

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### **Moriah Peterson**

Kids 'n Kinship

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Y of the North

### **Shawntan Howell**

Girls Are Powerful

### **Stephanie Baker**

Lakes Crisis and Resource Center

### **Tanya Schuh**

Comunidades Latinas Unidas en  
Servicio (CLUES)

### **Will Tabor**

Rebound Inc.

### **Xavier Vazquez**

Bolder Options

# LGBTQ+ COHORT PILOT

BY XAVIER VAZQUEZ, BOLDER OPTIONS, MMN PSC MEMBER

*In January 2021, MENTOR Minnesota and MENTOR National co-hosted a 4-week cohort of mentoring programs on LGBTQ+ mentoring best practices. These sessions were led by Dr. Christian Rummell (Mentorist) and Nia Clark (BBBS of America), who provided ongoing coaching to participating programs over the rest of the year. All participants had access to an online hub to discuss successes and challenges. Bolder Options of the Twin Cities and Rochester participated in the initial cohort. Xavier Vazquez, Program Director, details his experience.*



“Being a part of the LGBTQ+ cohort pilot was a life-changing experience, not only for our community at Bolder Options, but in helping me personally understand myself better as a human being. During the initial training, I got to internalize “why” I am the way that I am. I’m grateful that other people were able to do research and spend time investigating and honoring their identities. I learned how to identify myself and how to support others in their process of identifying and understanding themselves and proudly honoring who they are.

In our implementation of the training’s tools at Bolder Options, we had a varied committee with a total of 14 members, composed of 7 staff members, 4 LGBTQ+ youth, and 3 mentors (one of them from the LGBTQ+ community). We collaborated with our youth and mentors’ voices in what we did to honor their voices and that they felt ownership of the changes they made. We learned how to honor our true selves, to promote that to our community- we learned how to internalize to then externalize.

This initial training gave our staff the awareness and perspective of how to intentionally be present and advocate for the LGBTQ+ community, and even though we were already working with LGBTQ+ youth, there was so much more we could have been doing, and we were not moving towards incorporating these. This training made us move towards inclusivity, intentionally moving forward with a purpose, and address topics and policies that we needed at Bolder Options...that everybody needs no matter their work field. At the beginning of the year, we met as a group of people that was “getting together” to provoke change, but throughout the year, having our safe space and knowing each other better with time, we ended up being catalyzers of transformation (personally and as an organization) and that’s what we wanted to promote at Bolder Options. Also, we were blessed to have such an inclusive staff and Board of Directors, which made a huge difference when it came to input and approval of new processes and policies.

**“BEING A PART OF THE LGBTQ+ COHORT PILOT WAS A LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE, NOT ONLY FOR OUR COMMUNITY AT BOLDER OPTIONS, BUT IN HELPING ME PERSONALLY UNDERSTAND MYSELF BETTER AS A HUMAN BEING. DURING THE INITIAL TRAINING, I GOT TO INTERNALIZE “WHY” I AM THE WAY THAT I AM. I’M GRATEFUL THAT OTHER PEOPLE WERE ABLE TO DO RESEARCH AND SPEND TIME INVESTIGATING AND HONORING THEIR IDENTITIES.”**

This pilot program worked as a connector, between Bolder Options and our trainers (Nia and Christian) and between local organizations that had similar inclusivity goals. The MENTOR Hub was the safe place to ask, comment, and be vulnerable about the things we didn’t know. We felt very supported through the year, both by the trainers and the organizations, and when we needed input, everybody was there, ready to address the situation with us.

Implementation was a lot easier thanks to the guidance we received from our trainers and the LGBTQ Inclusivity Planning Tool: Action Steps to Create a Safe and Affirming Mentoring Program for LGBTQ Youth. This provided our committee with guidance to get things started at Bolder Options. Throughout the year we would reference this document several times to see where we were at, plan our meetings, and make sure we stayed on track. This document gave us the structure work towards internal and external inclusivity. We also relied on the LGBTQ Supplement to the Elements of Effective Practice as a way of checking what we were doing or needed to do regarding our policies and processes. We made sure that

we were 100% in compliance with this supplement document, and it allowed us to measure quantifiable progress.

This year has given us a different purpose and vision and made us better people and professionals. Now, instead of just envisioning what we want to innovate - in any area - at Bolder Options, we swiftly think about how to implement and how we can include our community in every step. We want the LGBTQ+ community at Bolder Options- and everywhere - to know that they have a safe space at our organization where they can be themselves, whether or not they have it figured out, and that we will provide them the space and opportunity to be catalyzers of impactful change within our organization and we will support them to spread that change in our community.

It has been a year of a lot of growth and learning, for both our staff and our stakeholders. Being inclusive is not about making a statement, being inclusive is about carrying out intentional actionable steps.”

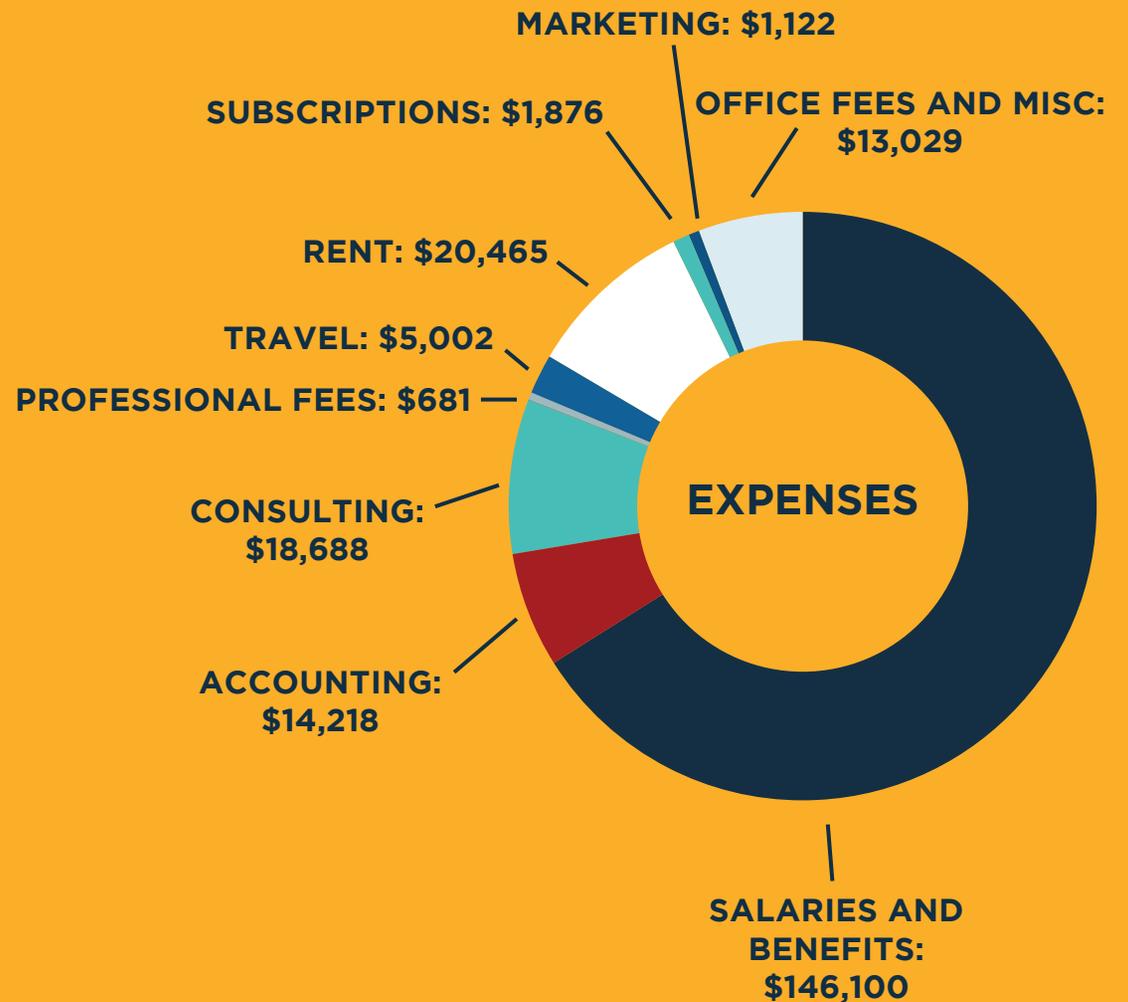
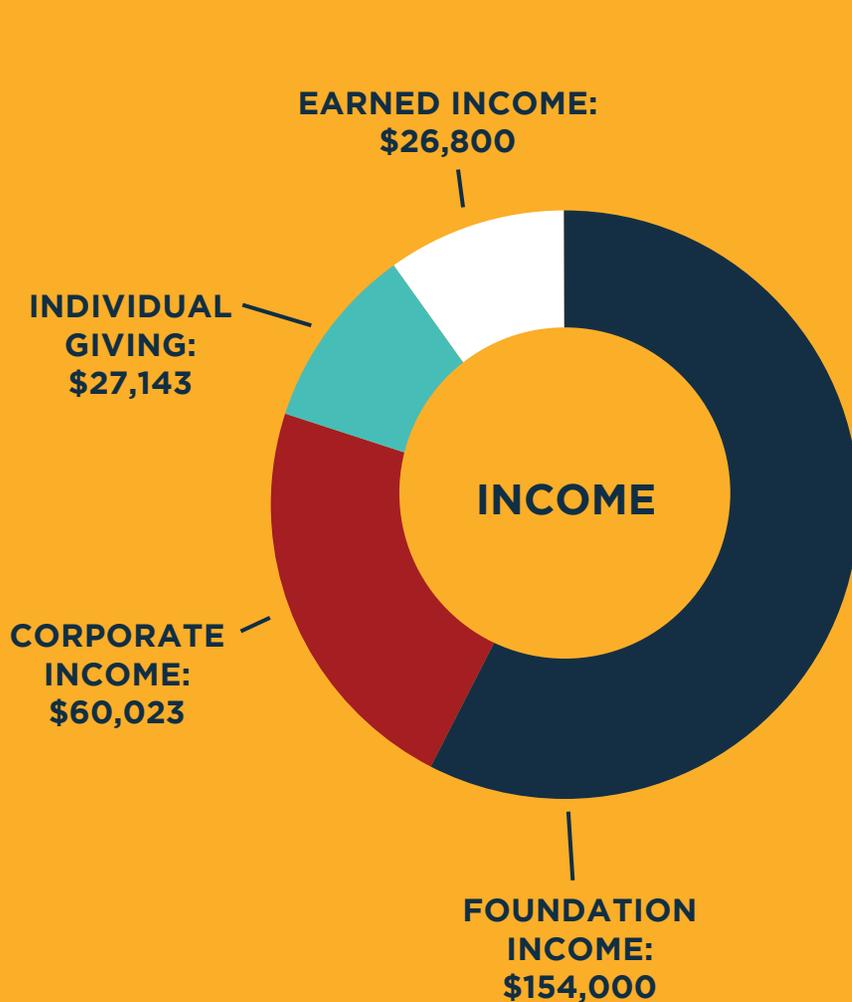
# FINANCIALS

## INVESTMENT BREAKDOWN

**Total Expenses:**  
**\$222,059**

**Revenue:**  
**\$267,965**

**Net Assets (EOY):**  
**\$259,616**



# FUNDERS

MENTOR Minnesota would like to thank all of our funders and donors for making our mission possible. Thank you!

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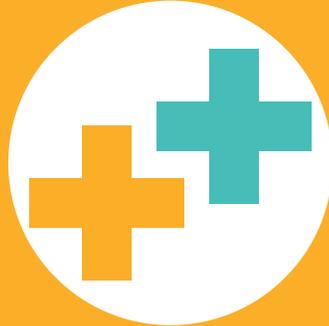
**Mario Hess-Winburn**  
Director of Annual Giving  
Hamline University

# THE YEAR AHEAD

MENTOR Minnesota hopes you'll join us as we continue to expand access relationships! Our 2022 strategic initiatives include:



Increase programming opportunities through cohort learning experiences.



Increase the number of partners in the mentoring movement: corporate mentoring partners and mentoring programs in the state overall.



Publish our State of Mentoring survey and engage with you, our stakeholders, on where we can make the biggest collective impact.



Engage with more young people through employment and advisory opportunities in Minnesota.

We accomplish more together. Please connect with staff at [mentor@mentormn.org](mailto:mentor@mentormn.org) if you're inspired to join forces.