



10th Anniversary



ReEstablish
RICHMOND

Annual Report 2023

Our 10th year of community impact



A DECADE OF MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS

When I joined ReEstablish Richmond in 2013, one of my first tasks was creating programs to address the practical needs of people who had resettled here as refugees and were experiencing barriers on their path to integration. From the beginning, we listened to clients' goals and then **CONNECTED** them to the information and services they needed to work toward those goals.

Through bus orientations, trips to the DMV, and resume writing sessions, I got to know people from all over the world who had been forced to leave their home countries and were working hard to rebuild their lives here. With the support of ReEstablish Richmond, these newcomers gained skills, confidence, and a sense of **CONNECTION** to their new community.

One of the things I'm most proud of is that we have continued to develop trusted **CONNECTIONS** with newcomers, as evidenced by the growing number of referrals coming from friends and family members of previous clients.

Over the past decade of providing services and growing our team, it has also been an honor to **CONNECT** with other Richmonders who already are or want to get involved in welcoming newcomers to our area. We have continued to deepen our relationships with partner organizations, serving as a bridge so our clients can access local resources more successfully. We have also gathered community stakeholders regularly, building stronger networks of support and equipping volunteers, faith communities, and service providers with the tools they need to better welcome newcomers.

As we document and celebrate our impact this year, it's fitting that we also recognize the mentors, volunteers, partners, family, and friends who have helped ReEstablish Richmond get here today. By **CONNECTING** across these multiple sectors of our region, we are truly creating a community that is united for the welcome and well-being of newcomers.

In celebration,



Kate Ayers, Executive Director





OUR TEAM

CLIENT ENGAGEMENT

This year we restructured our Client Engagement programming to align with the two pathways of support that our clients experience:

Newcomer Navigation (1:1 support) and
Newcomer Education (in-person groups)

Shifting our internal structure to highlight the way clients participate in our services has both sharpened our focus and expanded opportunities to collaborate with community partners.

What hasn't changed? Our commitment to our mission, vision, values, and the work itself: **CONNECTING** newcomers to the life-building tools and resources they want and need so that their integration into the community can be a more positive and empowering experience.

640 referrals received across all Client Engagement programming

407 client referral requests accepted



Newcomer Navigation services provide personalized support to ensure that our clients can effectively and efficiently **CONNECT** to the resources needed to work toward their goals.

Delivered by staff and/or volunteers, these services assist newcomers to learn English; become safe, confident drivers; navigate the healthcare system; search and apply for jobs or navigate the credential evaluation process; and study for the citizenship test.

212 client intakes completed

104 volunteer matches completed

\$27,138 provided for rent and financial assistance to **28** clients



**NEWCOMER
NAVIGATION**

Pairing newcomers with a volunteer English tutor **CONNECTS** them with personalized support to boost language acquisition and increase confidence.

Volunteers are trained and equipped with teaching materials so they can focus on the client and their learning goals.

In addition to building English skills, this supportive relationship encourages cultural exchange and community understanding.

"I didn't speak English when we came here. Now we are studying and working very hard. I am able to understand things better at my job. I feel very happy."

Male client from Myanmar

68 clients matched with a trained volunteer for 6 months of weekly English sessions



English Tutoring

Earning a driver's license is vital to economic self-sufficiency, but language barriers get in the way. When newcomers are **CONNECTED** to road safety information in their primary language, they have the tools needed to become safe, skilled drivers.

"I was so happy to receive study materials, a tutor, and a DMV Orientation in my own language. It helped me understand. Because of this, I passed the test!"

Female client from Ukraine

196 clients equipped with learner's permit study materials in their primary language

45 clients received DMV navigation support

161 driving credentials earned
** learner's permit or driver's license*

\$8,009 provided in scholarship funding for driving lessons



**Transportation
Independence**

CONNECTING newcomers to resources in their primary language is a basic yet powerful way to communicate welcome and ensure equity. But what can be done when those resources simply do not exist?

This year we introduced a Kinyarwanda translation of the Virginia driver's manual. Created in collaboration with ReEstablish Richmond staff, volunteers, and contractors, it also includes 180 DMV practice questions.

Now, for the first time, members of our Kinyarwanda community have access to study materials in their own language and can pursue their goals on their own terms, with confidence.

"When I think of what this project will mean to the (Kinyarwanda) community, I want to give you the world."

Chantal Ingabire, professional translator, reviewing our Kinyarwanda translation of the Virginia driver's manual



**Transportation
Independence**

Due to a high demand for employment and higher education navigation support, this year we piloted a service to **CONNECT** clients with tools and guidance to move through these complex processes.

"As a new immigrant student, trying to find a GED class and enroll in college was very hard for me. I'm thankful that I found ReEstablish Richmond to help me understand the application process and find resources for the GED class and FAFSA."

Female client from Afghanistan

27 clients received job search + resume support

13 clients received job application assistance

23 clients guided through the Credential Evaluation process in partnership with VCU Globe and WES Gateway



**Employment +
Education Navigation**

Newcomer Education addresses the need for in-person programming while removing common access barriers such as language, transportation, and childcare.

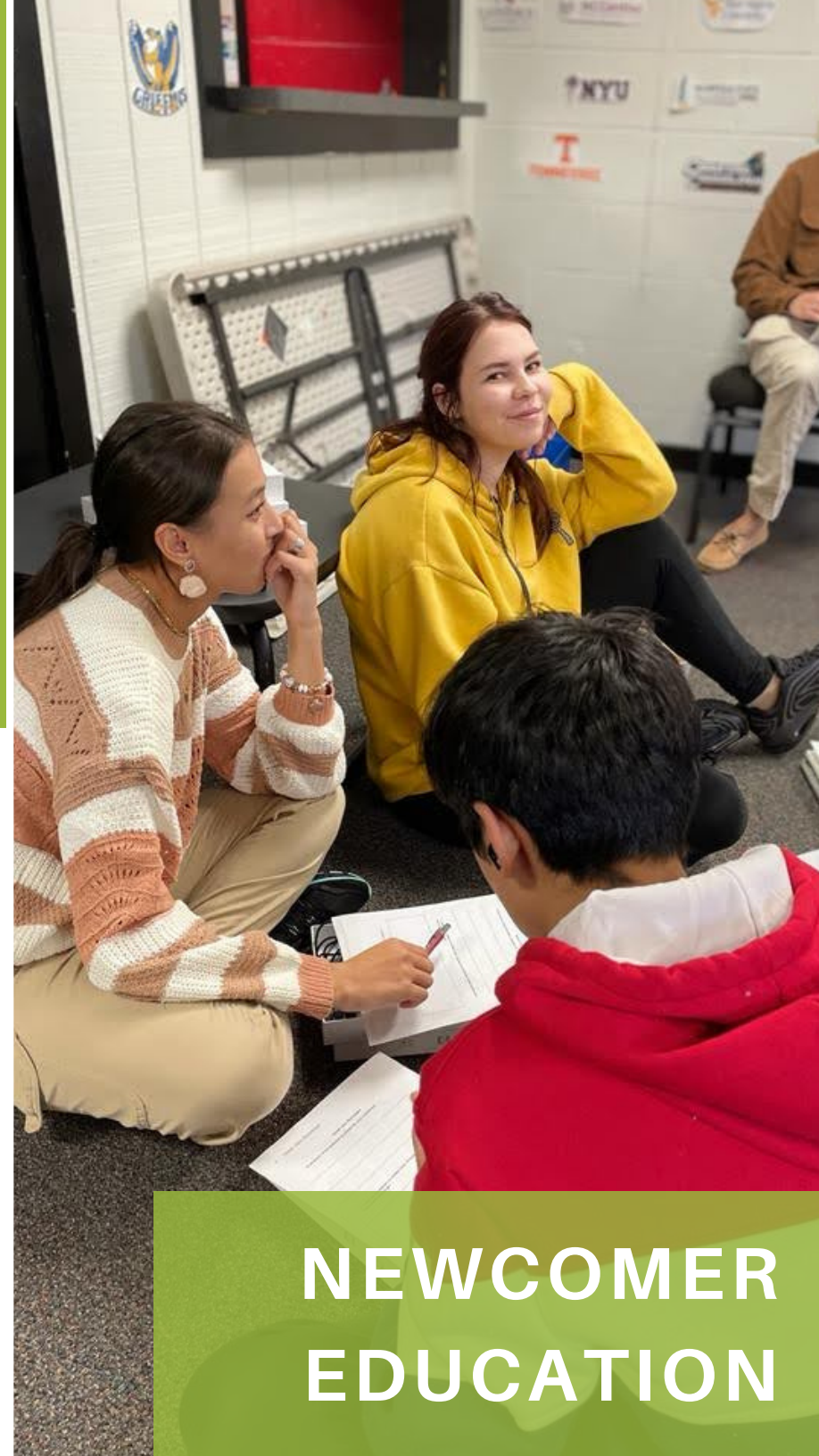
By working closely with trusted community partners, our Newcomer Education services **CONNECT** clients to group classes and educational opportunities that develop skills, build community, and enhance belonging.

106 clients successfully completed their group educational course

86% average attendance rate across all classes

49 volunteers provided support including transportation, childcare, classroom assistance, mentorship, etc.

15 community partners supported Newcomer Education programming



**NEWCOMER
EDUCATION**

English language learning is an essential **CONNECTOR** between newcomers and the systems and services they navigate here. This year we offered four beginner-level classes to fill gaps in the existing network of community English classes. These classes focused on vital, everyday conversation and literacy skills, providing clients the chance to apply these skills in real-life situations, such as getting a library card.

“As a student, I learned a lot of things, and I had very happy feelings about my teacher and the volunteers. (Everyone) worked hard to support us during the class. I appreciate them a lot.”

Female client from Afghanistan

120 hours of instruction by certified instructors

80% of clients in our fall English class increased one or more levels at post-testing



English Classes

Our Heela Sewing Course **CONNECTS** newcomers to two levels of professional, detail-oriented machine sewing skills as well as one-time craft workshops. While learning together, clients work toward individual goals like finding sewing-related employment, meeting other people with shared interests, creating original designs, and making clothing for themselves or their children.

"The class helped me learn new skills, and the videos helped me learn to sew. I met new people, and I liked seeing everyone in class. I enjoyed all the projects we worked on, but my favorite projects were sewing the bag and the apron."

Female client from Afghanistan



41 clients participated in Heela Beginner Level sewing classes

Heela Sewing Course

This year's Narratio fellows met for a month-long summer art intensive at the Virginia Museum of History and Culture, culminating with a trip to New York City where they gave poetry performances at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Throughout the school year, youth fellows continued to meet monthly with artist-in-residence Celine Anderson and also worked toward their academic and career goals through ongoing **CONNECTIONS** with community partners, volunteer matches, and workshops.

"I enjoyed meeting new people and seeing our Fellows having an opportunity to share their stories through Narratio. It made me really happy."

Arya, a 2022-23 Narratio Fellow who returned as an alumna facilitator

11 youth participated in this year's Fellowship



**Narratio
Fellowship**

OUTREACH

Our Outreach program embodies our dedication to fostering community. By bringing people and service providers together to strengthen networks of support, we **CONNECT** interested individuals and groups with the resources needed to understand and effectively support the integration of newcomers through:

Community Education
Volunteer Engagement
Newcomer Networking

This year, we also helped to guide and inform an *immigrant and refugee regional strategy and vision* for the greater Richmond area.

137 people from **82** community groups participated in regional Newcomer Dialogue meetings

44 volunteers and faith community members joined United in Welcome support calls



The wider Richmond community is eager to **CONNECT** with resources to better understand and welcome newcomers. We cultivate continued growth and learning by sharing insights on the resettlement experience, building capacity within community groups, and offering professional development opportunities.

“The things I value most are the interactive, deep-dive trainings, the careful attention to include voices from a range of refugee and immigrant communities, and the awareness that knowledge and expertise come in so many different forms.”

Katie Logan, volunteer and RAIVS participant



25

events engaged and educated local civic organizations, corporations, faith communities, schools, and universities

102

volunteers joined this year's Refugee and Immigrant Volunteer Summit (RAIVS)

**COMMUNITY
EDUCATION**

By training volunteers to work directly with newcomers, we provide invaluable support for both parties. These **CONNECTIONS** foster mutual respect and appreciation while helping clients navigate unfamiliar systems more easily.

"I would absolutely recommend this to anyone interested in volunteering! It's a limited time commitment but can make a huge difference in someone's independence and self-sufficiency. It's also knowledge that almost all of us have, so you don't need any particular expertise."

Hannah Dahl Slechta, volunteer for learner's permit study support

126 volunteers oriented and trained

257 volunteers engaged and active

97% retention rate



**VOLUNTEER
ENGAGEMENT**

Celebrating and strengthening newcomer community networks is a natural extension of our ongoing efforts. In June, we again partnered with Richmond City's Office of Immigrant and Refugee Engagement (OIRE) to cohost the Imagine: Multicultural Festival, **CONNECTING** people across diverse backgrounds and highlighting the richness of belonging in our shared community.

"My favorite part of the festival is witnessing the joy and pride that radiates from the participants as they share their culture with others. Every moment is infused with a sense of authenticity and warmth."

Roxana Talavera-Denson, Language Access Coordinator, OIRE

57 exhibitors (organizations + cultural groups)

47 volunteers supported this year's MultiCultural Festival

14 performances representing **11** countries



photo credit: - Richmond City Office of Immigrant and Refugee Engagement (OIRE)

**NEWCOMER
NETWORKING**

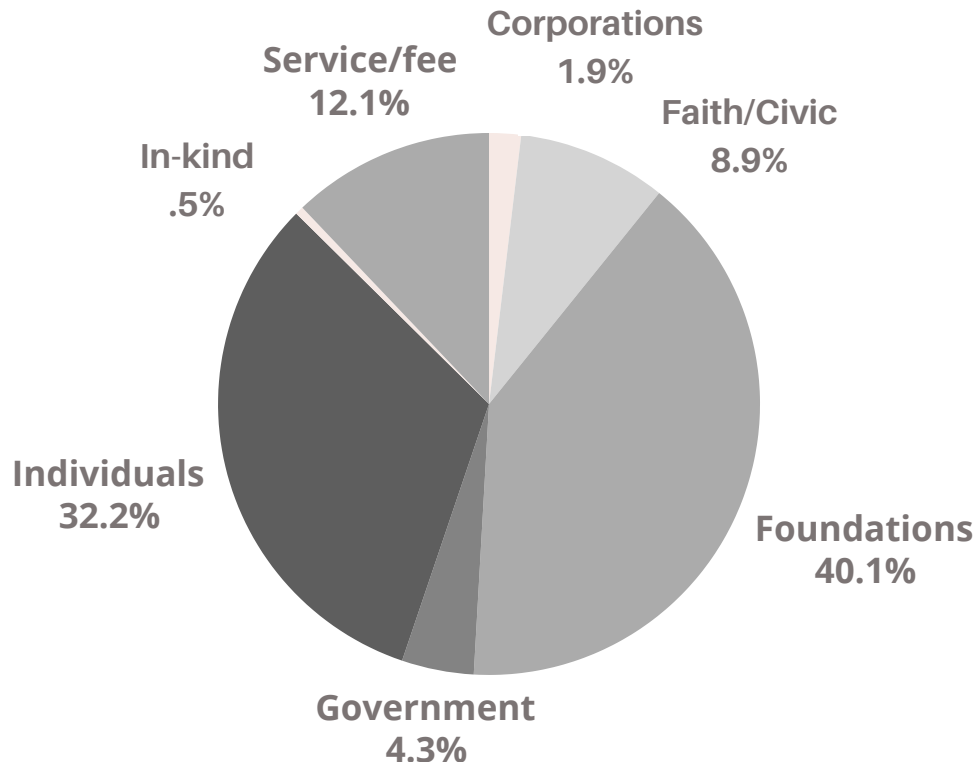


FY23 FINANCIALS

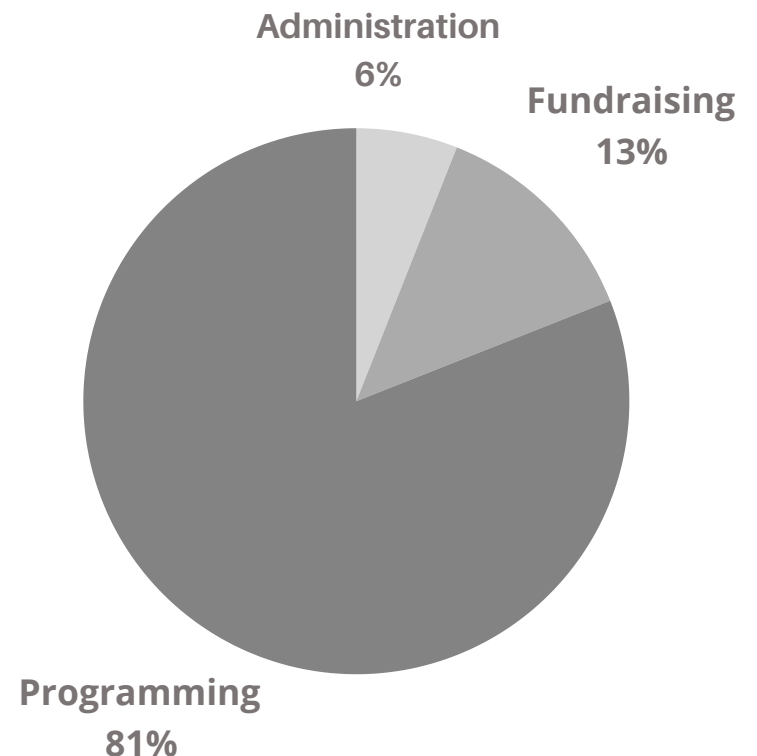
We are committed to financial strength and fiscal responsibility. Despite an operating deficit in FY23*, we continue to maintain a reserves fund with 6 months of operating costs. This year we focused on growing networks of support by including additional fees for services, fostering new relationships with foundations and corporations, and implementing event sponsorships. These efforts support not only our growth but also the expansion of our staff and programming to better serve the community, ensuring our long-term financial stability.

**Note that in FY22, we had an operating surplus due to funds related to COVID-19 and the evacuation of Afghanistan.*

Total Income: \$634,602.15



Total Expenses \$790,583.57



A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR VOLUNTEERS AND DONORS FOR YOUR VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS WORK

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