



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023





## OUR MISSION

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**Our House empowers homeless and near-homeless families and individuals to succeed in the workforce, in school, and in life through hard work, wise decision-making, and active participation in the community.**



## To Our Community,

The fundamental mission of Our House has always been the same—to build a pathway out of homelessness for families and individuals in central Arkansas. After almost four decades, we have learned many lessons and adapted our campus and programs to better execute this mission every single day. We’ve built the physical spaces needed to serve more clients. We’ve listened to our client’s challenges and brought them the care they were seeking, like recovery support, mental health services, and health care. We’ve made the connections to refer our clients to outstanding community partners that compliment and elevate our own services. In the process of building the Our House program, we’ve learned that when you go the extra mile to meet the holistic needs of families, the impact is life-changing.

In 2023, we were involved with nearly three-thousand people. Whether they came to our campus to find a safe place to sleep, to open a bank account, to find childcare, to search for a job, or simply to find help getting life back on track, Our House was there to offer a helping hand. It is because of daily contributions from compassionate community members like yourself that we can be a **home to new beginnings** for men, women, children, and families seeking to change their lives for the better.

With deepest appreciation,

**Ben Goodwin**  
Executive Director



**"My heart was already big, but Our House helped stitch my heart together."**

**- Jamye, Our House resident**

# 2023 At A GLANCE

CLIENTS SERVED

**2,764**

UNIQUE DONORS

**1,023**

NEW PROGRAM SPACE

**27,300** SQ FT

MEALS DONATED

**33,800**

UNIQUE VOLUNTEERS

**931**

GOODS DONATED

**\$1M**

COMMUNITY EMPLOYERS

**288**

# HOME TO NEW BEGINNINGS



## LAURA

Originally living in California in a domestic violence situation, Laura removed herself and her three children, twin girls and a son, from that environment after someone referred her to Our House. Already with plans and goals for her family in mind, Laura came to Our House seeking support and resources to get back on her feet. To Laura, the Our House campus is a nonjudgmental environment that is “open and accepting” and a place where you are “free to be yourself.” Through the support of her case manager, Laura was able to keep up with maintenance for her vehicle and to receive gas vouchers, allowing her to maintain a reliable form of transportation to commute to Our House’s Resale Store, where she works and participates in the job training program. There, she says she learns something new every day and credits the store manager for helping her to settle into her role. Laura says she and her coworkers are all very close to one another, and she considers them family. Since becoming an Our House client in November of 2023, Laura has taken the steps to save her earnings and to secure stable housing. She is now only waiting to receive her key to an apartment in a subsidized complex! Laura’s story is a prime example of Our House succeeding in its mission to empower individuals towards success through their own efforts, with our team lending a supporting hand.

## JOHN

John has been an Our House client since November of 2022. When he first found himself at Our House, John was without a license or vehicle, and he had incurred several warrants and fines. Having had previous experience mowing lawns, he joined our job training program working with the Facilities Manager to do on-campus maintenance. John gained many additional skills through his job training term, and he saved up enough to purchase a truck. With the money he has saved and the help and support of the team members in the Career Center, John is paying off his fines, taking classes to regain his license and is planning to get his GED. John has also become sober during his time at Our House and has maintained his sobriety for 17 months. Despite having other options locally due to the added experience and skills he gained through the job training program, John is interested in returning to Our House and applying for a staff position after he completes his time in our Housing program. When describing the role of Our House in his pathway to success, he formed his hands into the shape of a heart, saying “it’s in the logo,” and that it is the feeling of being loved while on campus that continually encourages him.



## MARLEY

Marley is in the 9th grade and has been a member of our out-of-school time program, Our Club, since she was in middle school. Marley enjoys being able to participate in the fun activities that Our Club provides, like summer field trips, and she thinks that the program is a good opportunity for any young person who wants to be engaged. For Marley, Our Club is a chance for her to interact with her peers outside of a school setting or with those students who do not belong to her school. She describes Our Club as being a positive environment, with AmeriCorps members and Our House staff acting as role models and mentors. Marley says they create a space where “you can be yourself and not try to be anyone you’re not,” and she feels that she can always come to them for help or to talk!



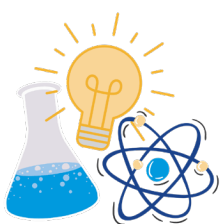
# MEASURABLE IMPACT

Our Children's Center reached new heights in 2023—receiving a Better Beginnings Level 6 rating (the highest in the state), voted Little Rock's Best Daycare or Preschool by the Kid's Directory, and becoming **nationally accredited** by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, one of few centers in the state to do so and the only one that accepts childcare vouchers. Our Bright Beginnings team made a commitment to improved education, with six teachers earning their Child Development Associates degree.

For the first time post-pandemic, our Children's Programs brought back **community building** events like Family Fun Nights and our annual Boo Bash celebration to reinforce our two-generation approach and include all members of the family in their child's development.

Our Club brought in new partners to enhance their focus areas of STEM, arts, and life skills, recruiting volunteers from AR Kids Read, the Innovation Hub, A Different Stroke of Art, and Gaston's Martial Arts. For the first time ever, our team took students on **overnight college visits!**

## OUTSTANDING GPAS



**Orange Team** reached a **3.8 average GPA** in Science



**Green Team** reached a **3.3 average GPA** in Social Studies



**Orange Team** reached a **3.6 average GPA** in Math

**132 CHILDREN** RECEIVED QUALITY CHILDCARE



**179 YOUTH** ATTENDED AFTER SCHOOL CARE



**85%** of toddlers hit their developmental milestones.



**100%** of PreK kids met their milestones in motor skills, literacy, mathematics, and social-emotional development.



**"I was digging myself out of a hole, but now I'm at the top, and I can see my future in front of me."**

**- Ronald, Our House resident**

In 2023, our Career Center hosted an outstanding twenty-three on-site **hiring events** with companies like Amazon, FedEx, and ARDoT to provide low-barrier access to full-time employment to our clients. Our **Resource Hotline** fielded over one-thousand calls a month, connecting community callers to housing, financial, and employment resources.

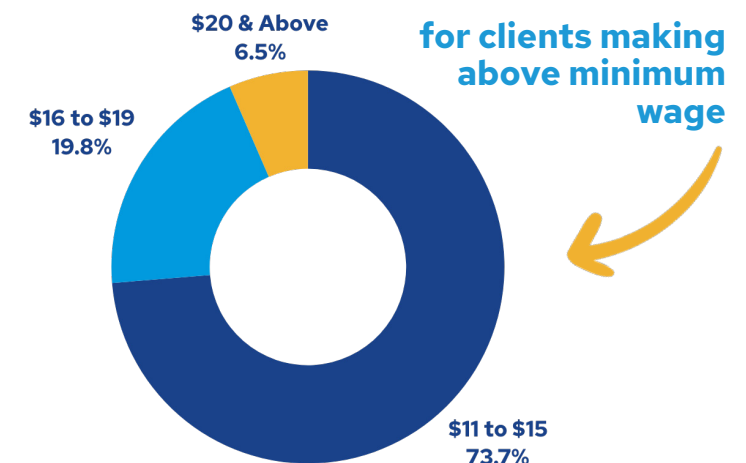
Training remained at the forefront of our minds, and ninety-three participants entered our on-campus **job training** program, while we referred other clients to training programs to obtain a CNA license, CDL, culinary certifications, and more. We worked with First Security Bank to connect clients to **second chance bank accounts**, and for the first time all participants in our job training program opened a bank account!

Our Career Center remained packed with classes to help our clients succeed—GED, legal aid, tenant readiness classes, computer skills, credit repair, and much more.

**469 ADULTS** FOUND FULLTIME EMPLOYMENT



**AVERAGE WAGE** OF **\$13.67/HOUR**



# MEASURABLE IMPACT

Our Mental Health team continues to expand the services offered on our campus. 2023 brought back many of our **health and wellness classes** like anger management, mindfulness and meditation, healthy love, and seeking safety. Our Children’s Mental Health Coordinator dove into an intensive **play therapy** certification to learn innovative methods to support our youngest clients. We hired a new **Disability Coordinator** position who provides support to clients as they navigate their disability benefits. Our on-site **health clinics** continue to adapt to the needs of our clients, with ARcare now providing transportation for patients needing labs and exams off-site, and Arkansas Children’s is now delivering prescriptions directly to campus.

In partnership with UAMS, the Home Together program expanded its eligibility so that any parenting person with children of any age are eligible for behavioral health services. Our Stability Program, Children’s Programs, and Mental Health team worked in conjunction to offer multiple rounds of evening **parenting classes** on campus.

**732 CLIENTS**  
ATTENDED THERAPY SESSIONS  
OR MENTAL HEALTH CLASSES



**INCLUDING**  
**200 CHILDREN**



**282 FAMILIES**  
SERVED IN THE STABILITY PROGRAM



**87% OBTAINED**  
STABLE HOUSING



**81% AVOIDED**  
A SCHOOL TRANSFER



families who completed  
the **Stability Program**  
saw on average a

**100% increase**  
in income



“If it wasn’t for the **community of love and support** around me at Our House, I wouldn’t have made it this far. I’ve tried on my own before and failed.”

- **Hannah, Our House resident**

In 2023, our team stepped up to make supportive services more accessible to our Housing clients. We started to offer **evening therapy**, so that our residents working full-time jobs can get the support they need to overcome the trauma that homelessness can bring. Evening **financial empowerment classes** ensure that residents are staying on track with their savings and that they have a financial plan upon exiting the Shelter.

With our partners at Alcoholics Anonymous and the Wolfe Street Foundation, we are investing in support for residents in recovery by offering **community recovery meetings**.

2023 was a year of **major upgrades** to our campus and Housing programs—new furniture and paint in the Family House and a face-lift to the Shelter bathrooms—as we continue to ensure our Housing programs feel like a safe, comforting home.

**OVER 750**  
RESIDENTS HOUSED



**INCLUDING**  
**128 CHILDREN**



**ON AVERAGE EACH NIGHT**  
**103 PEOPLE**  
CALL OUR HOUSE HOME



**69% LEFT**  
WITH SAVINGS



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



## SUMMER PROGRAM



Summer is always a blast in our Children’s Programs! In Bright Beginnings, our toddlers and PreK went “Around The World” with their lessons, and, thanks to generous donations to Project Swim, spent many sunny mornings splashing around on the playground. 84 students participated in Our Club’s Summer Program, engaging in fun, interactive activities to prevent summer learning loss and taking field trips to the Little Rock Zoo, Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts, the Arkansas Skatium, and DEFY Trampoline Park!

## NATIONAL SERVICE



Throughout 2023, 49 AmeriCorps members made a lasting impact at Our House. Public Health AmeriCorps, who are also completing their Master of Social Work internship, brought innovative mental health groups to our clients. AmeriCorps members in Our Club and Bright Beginnings provided hands-on support to all of our teachers, and in the Career Center, AmeriCorps members played a pivotal role in the Employment Hub. We were honored to be visited by the CEO of AmeriCorps, Michael Smith, to share this great work that AmeriCorps members do at Our House.

Since 2010, **437 AmeriCorps members** have served at Our House in all of our programs!



## FOOD SECURITY

With the support of the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance, we distributed 700 pounds of fresh, nutritious food to our community clients throughout the year. Potluck Food Rescue saved food that would have otherwise gone to the landfill to feed over 90 families in our Stability Program. Partnerships with CALS and the Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program brought daytime and evening cooking classes to both residents and community clients, including grocery store visits to learn how to shop healthy on a budget.



## COMMITMENT TO DATA

Our House continues to commit ourselves to data-driven results, and in 2023, we hosted two Speak Up Week events to gather feedback from clients in all of our programs, with a record 173 participants in our Fall survey. We also created, for the first time ever, a specialized Youth Survey to ensure that the voices of youth in our after-school program were heard. For the 5th year in a row, Our House tracked the number of people seeking housing in our Shelter in a single month –419 people—showing that our role in the community is more necessary than ever.



## QUALITY TRAINING

Our leadership and team continually applied themselves to improved learning in 2023 with trainings in Youth Mental Health First Aid, PACES (Positive & Adverse Childhood Experiences), and Plain Language in conjunction with UAMS to help our staff better communicate with all of our clients. Our Stability Program team members worked with Arkansas Children’s to be car seat safety technicians. Our Disability Coordinator became SOAR certified to better help clients navigate public benefits. Our Children’s Therapist became certified in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, just to name a few!



# GET INVOLVED

## 1 SERVE a Shelter meal

A healthy meal prepared and served with love lets our residents know their community is behind them.

[ourhouseshelter.org/meals](https://ourhouseshelter.org/meals)

## 2 SHOP at the Our House Resale Store

Your dollars directly support Our House programming, and you will meet clients working in our job training program.

[ourhouseshelter.org/store](https://ourhouseshelter.org/store)

## 3 VOLUNTEER

Come as a company, family, or individual! We have opportunities in all of our programs to get connected.

[ourhouseshelter.org/volunteer](https://ourhouseshelter.org/volunteer)

## 4 INVITE a friend to Open House

Help us spread the word about Our House by inviting someone out to an Open House - every first Thursday at 10:00 am.

[ourhouseshelter.org/openhouse](https://ourhouseshelter.org/openhouse)

## 5 DONATE monthly

Become a monthly donor today! \$35 dollars a month can buy bus passes for a job seeker to attend their interviews. \$50 a month can purchase new bedding for a Shelter resident moving in off the street.



SCAN TO GIVE!

"I was up and down, but now I'm clean, and even my daughter can see that I'm happier."

- David, Our House resident







 [ourhouseshelter.org](http://ourhouseshelter.org)

 (501) 374-7383

   @ourhouseshelter



**Our House**  
HOME TO NEW BEGINNINGS