

# ANNUAL REPORT



“Financial education isn’t just about teaching women to manage money - it’s about empowering them to build the future they envision for themselves and their families.”

SHANNA KUZDZAL, BOARD PRESIDENT

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**CHRISTINE POWELL**  
CEO



**SHANNA KUZDZAL**  
Board President

Looking back on this year at The Women's Resource, we are in awe of the resilience and courage of the women and girls we serve. Every day, we witness powerful transformations - moments where knowledge turns into confidence, skills become stepping stones, and financial stability shifts from a dream to a reality. Our impact keeps growing because of bold programming, incredible partners, and the unwavering generosity of this community. The expansion of YourLife Careers and the continued success of RISE! are proof that when we show up and meet women where they are, real change happens. But behind every number in this report is a woman who took control of her future, rewriting her story with strength and determination. Their perseverance fuels our mission, reminding us why this work is not just important - it is essential to Houston's future.

With deep gratitude for your belief in us,

**CHRISTINE POWELL**  
CEO

**SHANNA KUZDZAL**  
Board President



# MISSION

“

*I want to personally thank you for your assistance and support as I was navigating the job market. Your expertise and encouragement made a significant impact on my job search and success.*

*When I first reached out to The Women's Resource, I was feeling hopeless about ever attaining full-time employment. From day one you began building confidence in my abilities...*

**YourLife Careers Client**

”

## YourLife

### FINANCE CLASSES

**1,379**

PARTICIPANTS

**359**

CLASSES TAUGHT

**29**

CLASSES IN SPANISH

**91%**

REPORTED FEELING CONFIDENT IN HER ABILITY TO ACHIEVE A FINANCIAL GOAL AFTER CLASS

### POSSIBILITY GROUPS

**36**

PARTICIPANTS

**\$46,121**

TOTAL SAVED

**\$71,891**

DEBT PAID

### FINANCIAL COACHING

**201**

WOMEN  
COACHED

**\$1,402**

SAVED ON  
AVERAGE

**33**

AVERAGE CREDIT  
SCORE INCREASE

### CAREERS

**98**

WOMEN  
COACHED

**27**

WORKSHOPS  
HOSTED

### YOURLIFE PROGRAM TOTALS

**109**

VOLUNTEERS

**667**

VOLUNTEER HOURS

**1,796**

WOMEN SERVED  
(NOT INCLUDING RISE!)



# DRIVEN



## Meet **TAMMY**

Money Makes a Difference Essay Winner

I am a recovering coupon addict, bargain hunter, and deal finder.

Before participating in The Women's Resource's financial coaching program, I would spend money on frivolous things, and money would drain like water from my bank account.

Enter Geana, my financial coach, and budgeting became my new favorite game! She had me put money in all the places - 401K, HSA, High Yield Savings Account, emergency fund, and even a travel fund - making sure to get that employer match, paying myself first, and getting my finances in order. Now, watching those savings grow is way more exciting than the thrill of finding a bargain! From paying down my debt to working on improving my credit score and saving for my next trip, good deals and additional debt did not stand a chance. I have got quite a way to go but know that with each dollar earned, saved, and invested, I will surely get there.

Through the program, I have started to budget and track my monthly expenditures, cooking meals at home, shifting my mindset from buying to building up my savings and investments, and experiencing what Einstein calls the 8<sup>th</sup> Wonder of the World: compound interest. With the money I have saved, I have been able to fix my car, pay down debt, and visit my 96-year-old grandma in Hong Kong! Thank you, savings and travel fund bucket!

A few of my coworkers were lamenting their financial situation; one was in the negative each month, while the other had some debt and was living a life of excess. I asked them if they budgeted, and they said they did not. We looked at The Women's Resource page together and discussed budgeting, having a financial coach for accountability, and best of all, that it was a free resource - no additional cost! Since then, my coworker has done a complete 180; she now has extra money at the end of the month through budgeting, meal prep, and re-prioritizing things in her life. The other is working on it as well, though at a slower pace, and I know that she will soon be meeting her financial goals too. I am happy to have been a part of their journeys!

As an advocate for financial empowerment and having experienced a financial transformation, I am happy to share my story and introduce others to The Women's Resource and working with a financial coach. It is really heartwarming to be part of another's transition from financial turmoil to having surplus funds through small changes.

Thank you to The Women's Resource - you have changed my life and those around me for the better!

"With the money I've saved, I've been able to fix my car, pay down debt, and visit my 96-year-old grandma in Hong Kong! Thank you, savings and travel fund bucket!"

# INSPIRE



## MISSION STATEMENT

RISE! (Your Road to Independence, Success and Empowerment) is a comprehensive four-year program that combines financial education with leadership development for economically disadvantaged young women.

## CORE PROGRAM STRUCTURE

### YEAR 1

#### Foundation Building

*Financial goals, budgeting, and savings*

### YEARS 2-4

#### Skills & Opportunities

*Career exploration and college preparation*

Since 2006, RISE! has created pathways to economic independence for young women in Houston's underserved communities.

## PROGRAM REACH

**460** Participants currently enrolled

**10** Schools

**80%+**  
in economically disadvantaged communities

**60%**  
First-generation college students

## OUTCOMES

**\$163,346**

TOTAL PARTICIPANT SAVINGS

**92%**

DEMONSTRATED BUDGETING COMPETENCY

**73%**

ESTABLISHED BANK ACCOUNTS (JUNIORS)

**98%**

ACHIEVED OR PROGRESSED TOWARD PERSONAL GOALS





# CHANGE



## Meet **BRI**

RISE! Money Makes a Difference Essay Winner

In a family of six, I am the middle child. It was always hard for me growing up, either sharing with my older brother or younger sister. We lived in a trailer home for 13 years with my grandparents until we could lease our own home. My dad would work endlessly as an 18-wheeler driver, but it did not matter what he did - the job just was not stable. On top of that, we never really saved money even though we wanted to. It was always, "Oh, your dad's truck broke down. We need to take out money from our savings," or "We need to make truck payments." I eventually picked up on the same bad habits; when I was younger, I would spend all my money on one trip to the mall.

My dream school is Columbia University, and I have the grades to get me there, but what concerns me is if I have the money for it. When I tell my family about it, they tell me, "You can do whatever you put your mind to. Just get on those books and get the

scholarships." Why is it that the only way I can go to Columbia is if I get scholarships? Why can't it be with my own money? It was not until I joined RISE! that I learned if I save my money now, I do not have to heavily rely on others for money. What I did not know after joining the program was that RISE! would change my habits for the better.

My ninth grade RISE! instructor, Keishawna Jolivette, always talked about money and how saving it is a big deal. She made me think about my family's decisions on money, which made me realize that I do not want to handle money like they do. Additionally, Jennifer Flores, a guest speaker, came and talked to us, which led me to act toward my money goal I had set earlier that year. Jennifer talked to us about how we should save money and put it in the bank. She explained that the money saved can collect more money instead of just having it in the house with no reward. RISE! inspired me to save my money.

When I had a quinceañera and got over \$4,000, my first decision was to open a savings account and put \$3,000 in it. I have also set up a savings system for myself. When I get money, I keep half of the total and put the rest in my savings account. Both of my parents are proud of my smart decisions and how I am creating my own future. I have talked to my younger sister about how it is so important to save money and how it can benefit her in the future.

I am so glad that I joined RISE!. I will carry the lessons with me for the rest of my life.

"When I had a quinceañera and got over \$4,000, my first decision was to open a savings account and put \$3,000 in it. I have also set up a savings system for myself..."

# WHO WE SERVE

The Women's Resource reaches **over 2,000 women and girls annually** who stand outside the financial mainstream. Through our network of **over 40 partner agencies**, we deliver accessible financial education and coaching to some of Houston's most vulnerable populations.

## THE CHALLENGE WE ADDRESS

### ECONOMIC DISPARITIES

In Harris County, women earn just **84 cents for every dollar** earned by men, with Black and Hispanic women facing the most significant wage gaps relative to white male earnings.



### FINANCIAL INSECURITY

**Two-thirds of Houston-area residents** lack enough savings to sustain themselves for three months, creating vulnerability to financial emergencies.



### DECLINING ECONOMIC MOBILITY

Young women who grew up in low-income households in Harris County experienced a **2.1% decrease in economic mobility** when comparing those born in 1978 and 1992.

### POVERTY'S IMPACT

**Nearly one in four children** in Harris County lives in poverty, creating barriers that can echo throughout their lives.

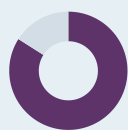
## OUR APPROACH

We recognize that financial empowerment looks different for everyone. About half of our clients are employed, while others are students, job seekers, or managing life transitions. We meet clients where they are through:

- In-person classes at partner locations
- Virtual sessions for increased accessibility
- Public classes open to all women
- One-on-one coaching for personalized support
- Classes and financial coaching offered in English and Spanish

We are building a foundation for lasting economic empowerment in the Houston community through strategic partnerships and our evidence-based model.

## CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

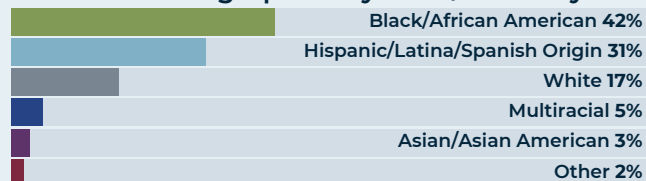


**84%** of our clients fall within the **low-to-moderate** income range.

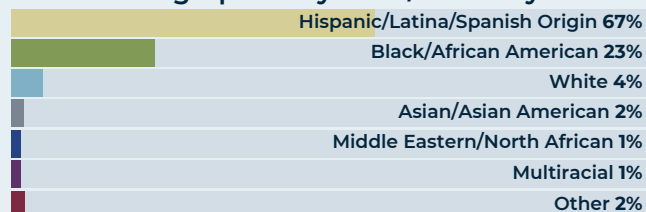
Many are from **ALICE households** (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed), representing **32% of Harris County residents**.

Household costs for our clients are typically well **above the Federal Poverty Level of \$13,590** for an individual.

### YourLife Demographics by Race/Ethnicity



### RISE! Demographics by Race/Ethnicity





# FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

## CAMPAIGN SUCCESS & ENDOWMENT STRENGTH

**\$1.5M GOAL**

**\$1.7M RAISED**

### CAMPAIGN SUCCESS

**\$1.7 million** raised in early 2024, surpassing our \$1.5 million campaign goal.

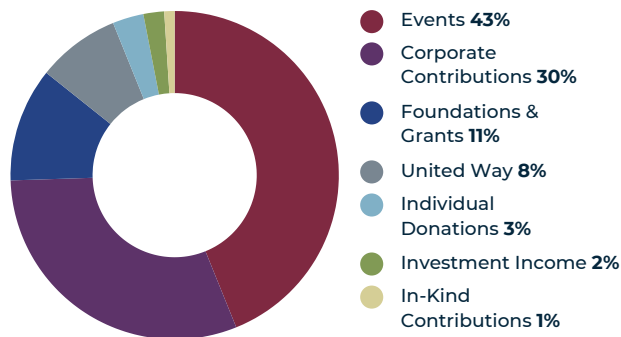
**\$1.8M**

**ENDOWMENT**

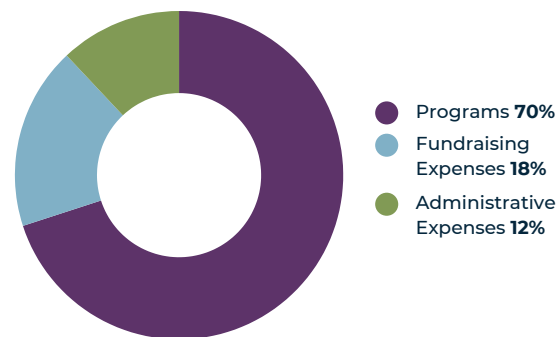
### ENDOWMENT STABILITY

Three-decade-old endowment valued at \$1.8 million, providing ongoing organizational stability.

### REVENUE SOURCE BREAKDOWN



### EXPENSE ALLOCATION



### KEY FINANCIAL METRICS

**\$1,313,435**

TOTAL  
REVENUE

**\$1,092,658**

TOTAL PROGRAM  
INVESTMENT

**\$318**

COST PER  
CLIENT SERVED

**\$21,303.98**

VOLUNTEER VALUE  
CONTRIBUTION

### FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP STATEMENT

At The Women's Resource, we are deeply committed to financial transparency and stewardship, ensuring that every dollar entrusted to us is used wisely to further our mission. Just as we empower women with the knowledge and tools for financial stability, we hold ourselves to the same high standards - practicing responsible money management, operating with integrity, and making strategic financial decisions that reflect the values we teach.

### LOOKING FORWARD

As we step into the year ahead, we are leaning into growth, deepening the impact of our most transformative programs. Financial coaching, career coaching, and RISE! are not just services; they are lifelines that have the power to break the cycle of generational poverty and rewrite the future for women. When you look at our finances, you will see the heart of our mission - Houstonians showing up with generosity and belief in what is possible. We do not rely on government funding; we rely on each other. It is going to take all of us, doing what we can where we are, to keep moving this mission forward.

# 33RD ANNUAL LUNCHEON

The 2024 Annual Luncheon was a remarkable success, with 550 guests raising over \$350,000, exceeding our fundraising goal. The event featured our prestigious Outstanding Women in Banking and Finance Award, which celebrates exceptional female leaders in the banking and finance industries. Carrie Colbert, founder of Curate Capital, served as our dedicated host committee chair, while Sallie Holder, founder and CEO of The Brimm, delivered an inspiring keynote address as our featured speaker.



## EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



**\$350,000+**  
Raised



**550**  
Attendees

## OUTSTANDING WOMEN IN BANKING & FINANCE AWARD HONOREES

### **Kristen Habich, CFA, CFP**

Managing Director and Market Manager,  
JPMorgan Private Bank

### **Kim Latimer, CFP**

Managing Director and Private Wealth Advisor,  
Ameriprise Financial Services

### **Laura Lemun Genung, J.D.**

President and Trust Officer  
Chilton Capital Management

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TETRA  
Texas Capital Bank  
The Leman Family  
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# Power OF THE Purse



The 2024 Power of the Purse event transported 400 guests to “A Night in Paris,” raising over \$221,000 and exceeding our fundraising goal. The evening featured an exclusive silent auction showcasing 28 luxury handbags, including special “Purseonality” bags donated by prominent Houston women, including our dedicated event chair, Roslyn Bazzelle, as well as a raffle for a stunning Lady Dior burgundy handbag valued at \$27,000. Guests were treated to a fashion show of the handbags available for auction modeled by our clients and event Purseonalitys while enjoying a champagne bar and live entertainment, including a fashion sketch artist, mime, and dancers. The event honored Laura Whitley, Market President of TDECU, for her exceptional leadership and support of women’s financial empowerment.

## EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



**\$221,000+**  
Raised



**400**  
Attendees



## MYSTERY GRAB BAGS SPONSORED BY



**DIAMONDS DIRECT**

Featuring a 14-carat tennis bracelet valued at \$2,300

## FEATURED PURSEONALITY DONORS

**Roslyn Bazzelle**

Oscar de la Renta Crystal Pave Mini TRO Bag

**Christy Lynn**

Wandler Jo Tote

**Edna Meyer-Nelson**

Prada Bronze Metallic Tote Handbag

**Stephanie Tsuru**

Bottega Veneta Padded Cassette Bag

**Hallie Vanderhider**

Prada Saffiano Lux Medium Tote

**TITLE SPONSOR**

**TDECU**  
YOUR CREDIT UNION

# 2024 PARTNERS

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Angela House  
BakerRipley  
Brigid's Hope at The Beacon  
Bristol Apartments  
Career and Recovery  
Catholic Charities  
Community Family Centers  
First Line Brands  
Harris County Jail Reentry Program  
Harris County Senior Division  
Houston Area Women's Center  
Houston Housing Authority  
Humble Area Assistance Ministries  
Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston  
Jane Cizik Garden Place  
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Mabee WholeLife Service Center  
Main Street Ministries Houston  
Mercy Street  
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Montgomery County Women's Center

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The Women's Home  
United Way of Greater Houston  
University of Houston-Downtown  
Volunteers of America Texas  
Wellsprings Village, Inc.  
West Houston Assistance Ministries  
Workforce Solutions Westheimer



“A woman  
who controls  
her finances  
controls her  
destiny.”



*We help women and girls make choices toward becoming independent, productive, and financially stable.*

A United Way partner



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