



The
**Sheltering
Arms**
Foundation



**2024 - 2025
Annual Report**

Our Mission

The Sheltering Arms Foundation's mission is to invest in the lives of Minnesota's children so that they reach their full potential.

We fund non-profit organizations and support policies that benefit children and their families who have the least access to resources.



Our Vision

The Sheltering Arms Foundation envisions a Minnesota that is a vibrant, thriving state where the opportunity gap for children is closed and all children have high-quality lives, including broad and equitable access to the following:

- childcare and early childhood education
- high-quality out-of-school time (OST) programming
- mental, physical, social, emotional, and intellectual wellbeing
- supportive opportunities for families and communities.



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Leadership

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Diane Grossman,
Executive Director

The Sheltering Arms Foundation

PO Box 386027
Minneapolis, MN 55438
612.871.9210
www.sheltering-arms.org



Dear friends of Sheltering Arms,

This past year, Sheltering Arms provided \$599,000 in grants to support the meaningful work of 73 organizations across Minnesota. Our grantee partners are strengthening communities and expanding opportunities for children, youth, and families through early learning initiatives, youth development programs, faith-based service, and collaborative advocacy. Their work shows what's possible when commitment and compassion come together.

Our grants were distributed across the following focus areas:

- **Advocacy:**
5 grants totaling \$50,000
- **Collective Impact Partners:**
2 grants totaling \$35,000
- **SAF Discretionary Fund:**
6 grants totaling \$12,500
- **Early Childhood:**
25 grants totaling \$246,000
- **Episcopal Faith Communities:**
9 grants totaling \$9,000
- **Youth Development:**
26 grants totaling \$246,500

Throughout the fall, we meet one-on-one with grantees to learn about their programs, celebrate their progress, and understand the obstacles they face. This year's conversations revealed both familiar and emerging challenges: rising operational costs that strain nonprofit budgets, an acute shortage of mental health services, a workforce crisis in early childhood care that has reached a critical tipping point, and the weight of broader uncertainty that families and communities are carrying in these times. Despite these layered pressures, our partners continue to innovate, adapt, and serve Minnesota's most vulnerable children with remarkable dedication and resilience.

This year, our grantee partners gained access to a new online application and reporting portal designed to make working with Sheltering Arms easier and more transparent. The streamlined system reduces administrative burden for applicants, provides clearer communication throughout the review process, and simplifies grant reporting, allowing organizations to spend more time on their mission-critical work with children and families.

We are grateful to our donors, whose belief in and support of our mission empower the extraordinary work of our grantee partners. Your generosity extends the reach and impact of organizations working directly with children and families every day.

The following highlights from this past fiscal year, July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025, showcase how our grantee partners are helping children and families thrive and build brighter futures. Their stories reflect the dedication, innovation, and resilience that are found across our grantees.

Sincerely,



Diane Grossman
Executive Director



Cynthia Swan
Board President, 2024-2025

Early Childhood

Southside Family Nurturing Center

Early Childhood Music Therapy

Minneapolis 📍 \$9,500



For more than 50 years, Southside Family Nurturing Center (SSFNC) has been a steady presence in South Minneapolis, walking alongside children and families facing the challenges of poverty, systemic inequity, and trauma. As one of Minnesota's first nonprofits to embrace a holistic, trauma-informed approach, they work with families and community partners to nurture children, build on family strengths, and create pathways away from violence.

Sheltering Arms Foundation supports SSFNC's enhanced therapeutic music program for their youngest learners—children ages 15 months to 5 years in their early childhood education program. We are proud to support this innovative program, which uses early intervention strategies to support the emotional health of children experiencing family violence or other trauma. Each week, all children

participate in group music therapy in their classrooms, and up to 10 children per year receive one-on-one individual music therapy sessions to address specific developmental concerns.

The impact is remarkable. Through music therapy, these young children show growth across multiple areas—psychological, social-emotional, physical, and cognitive development. These gains ripple outward, creating stronger foundations for lifelong health, safety, and well-being that can benefit entire families for generations to come.

Sheltering Arms celebrates SSFNC's pioneering work and is honored to support its mission of promoting families' thriving in South Minneapolis.

www.ssfnc.org

Early Childhood Grants

A Chance to Grow
SMART Steps Expansion
Greater MN 🍕 \$10,000

Baby's Space
*Healing Our Children,
Healing Ourselves*
Minneapolis 🍋 \$10,000

Centro Tyrone Guzman
*Siembra Montessori
Early Learning Program*
Minneapolis 🍋 \$10,000

Change, Inc.
*FFN Program Expansion
to Southern MN*
Greater MN 🍋 \$7,500

CHUM
*Steve O'Neil Apartments
Early Childhood Education*
Duluth 🍕 \$10,000

Emma Norton Services
*Early Childhood
Program Development*
St. Paul 🍋 \$10,000

Invest Early
Conscious Discipline Training
Itasca County 🍋 \$10,000

**Lutheran Social Services
of Minnesota**
*Families Together
Therapeutic Preschool*
St. Paul 🍋 \$10,000

**Morning Glory
Montessori**
Intergenerational Program
Minneapolis 🍋 \$10,000

Neighborhood House
*Parent and Early Childhood
Family Home Visits*
St. Paul 🍕 \$10,000

**Northfield Healthy
Community Initiative**
Growing Up Healthy Program
Northfield 🍋 \$10,000

Northland Foundation
Thrive Initiative
Duluth + Arrowhead Region 🍋
\$12,000

**Northside Achievement
Zone**
Home Visiting Program
Minneapolis 🍋 \$8,000

**Nurse-Family
Partnership**
Home Visiting Program
Statewide 🍋 \$7,500

**Pillsbury United
Communities**
*Pillsbury House + Theatre
Early Education Arts Initiative*
Minneapolis 🍕 \$10,000

Project FINE
Early Learning Program
Winona 🍋 \$10,000

**Rise Early
Learning Center**
*Professional
Development Training*
St. Louis Park 🍋 \$10,000

Serve Minnesota
*Reading Corp in Licensed
Family Child Care*
Statewide 🍋 \$10,000

**Southside Family
Nurturing Center**
*Early Childhood
Music Therapy*
Minneapolis 🍋 \$9,500

**St. David's Center
for Child & Family
Development**
*Family Place Care Readiness &
Engagement Pilot*
Minneapolis 🍕 \$10,000

**Urban Ventures
Leadership Foundation**
Cornwell Early Learning Center
Minneapolis 🍋 \$10,000

**Walker West Music
Academy**
Early Childhood Music Program
Twin Cities Metro 🍋 \$7,500

**Washburn Center for
Children**
*Mental Health Home
Visiting Program*
Twin Cities Metro 🍋 \$12,000

Way to Grow
Parent Engagement Program
Minneapolis 🍕 \$10,000

Wilder Foundation
*St. Paul Promise Neighborhood -
Thrive by Five Initiative*
St. Paul 🍋 \$10,000

Youth Development

Relentless Academy
SMART Summer Program
Brooklyn Center ♥ \$10,000



Since launching their Smart Summer program in 2021, Relentless Academy has grown it by an impressive 220% to reach more students across their community. The program tackles summer learning loss while helping young people deepen connections to their neighborhoods and explore exciting STEAM opportunities.

While Smart Summer serves students in grades 1-8, Sheltering Arms support focuses on the youngest learners—children in grades K-4—who participate in age-appropriate activities designed just for them. In a safe, nurturing environment, these young students experience:

- ♥ Individualized academic support that meets them where they are
- ♥ Hands-on learning adventures in robotics, coding, and math

- ♥ Educational field trips that bring learning to life
 - ♥ Creative expression through art and music
 - ♥ Social-emotional growth through mindfulness, community service, and activities like yoga
 - ♥ Instruction from local teachers who bring culturally meaningful experiences
- This multifaceted approach does more than prevent summer slide—it helps children thrive. Students gain skills, confidence, and vision for their futures. Perhaps most importantly, they find a welcoming place where they belong, where they can dream big, and where caring adults invest in helping them succeed.

www.relentlessacademy.org



Youth Development Grants

826 MSP

Creative Writing Lab

Minneapolis 🟡 \$10,000

ACES

Afterschool Program

Minneapolis 🟡 \$10,000

Big Brothers Big Sisters

Free Arts Program

Twin Cities Metro 🟢 \$10,000

Boys & Girls Club of Rochester

Triple Play: Mind, Body, and Soul

Rochester ❤️ \$8,000

Boys & Girls Club of the Twin Cities

Little Earth K-5 Literacy Program

Minneapolis 💜 \$7,500

COMPAS, Inc.

Youth & Family Wellness through Art

Twin Cities Metro 🟡 \$8,000

createMPLS

Out-of-School-Time STEM

Twin Cities Metro 🟡 \$9,000

East Side Neighborhood Service, Inc.

Afterschool Program

Minneapolis 🟢 \$10,000

FamilyMeans

Youth Development Program

Stillwater & Landfall ❤️ \$8,500

Friends of the Children

Fargo-Moorhead

Mentoring Program

Moorhead 🟡 \$7,500

Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches

Lake Street Youth Labs

Minneapolis 🟡 \$10,000

Greater Twin Cities

Youth Symphonies

Harmony Program

St. Paul 🟢 \$10,000

Hispanic Outreach of Goodhue County

Youth & Family

Summer Program

Red Wing ❤️ \$12,000

Indigenous Lacrosse Alliance

Youth Development Program

Greater Minnesota 💜 \$10,000

Interfaith Action of Greater St. Paul

American Indian Youth Enrichment

St. Paul 🟡 \$12,000

Keystone Community Services

Family Engagement Program

St. Paul 🟡 \$10,000

Liberty Community Church

21st Century Academy

Minneapolis 🟢 \$12,000

Project for Pride in Living

Child and Family Art Therapy

Minneapolis ❤️ \$12,000

Project Friendship

Mentoring Program

Northfield 💜 \$7,500

Relentless Academy

SMART Summer Program

Brooklyn Center 🟡 \$10,000

United Way of Northeastern Minnesota

Lunch Buddies

Chisholm 🟡 \$5,000

Urban Strategies, Inc.

Green Garden Bakery (Sprouts)

Minneapolis 💜 \$10,000

Watercourse Counseling

Immigrant & Refugee

Children's Leadership Circle

Minneapolis ❤️ \$10,000

YMCA of the North

Beacons Culinary Arts

St. Paul 🟢 \$10,000

Youth Farm

Youth Farmers

Twin Cities Metro 🟡 \$7,500

YWCA of Minneapolis

Beacons Program at Hmong Int'l Academy

Minneapolis 🟡 \$10,000

Episcopal Faith Community

St. John the Evangelist
Big Wonder Child Care
St. Paul 🍊 \$1,000

In summer 2023, Big Wonder Child Care opened a nonprofit preschool—a joyful place of learning for children ages 2.5 to 5 years, at St. John the Evangelist in St. Paul.

St. John's embraces Big Wonder's commitment to exceptional early education in a safe, nurturing environment where children learn to think, wonder, and create through play and inquiry. Through play-based learning, the program prepares young children for kindergarten while nurturing executive functioning and social-emotional skills, as well as anti-bias and anti-racist frameworks for a positive sense of self and community—the building blocks that help them thrive. Big Wonder supports the whole community, striving to honor the rights of all three stakeholders: children, families, and teachers alike. It offers affordable care that parents can trust, living wages and an inspirational

work environment for teachers, and nurturing, loving, and dynamic learning communities for children. Grants like this one enable us to provide exceptional care for children, offer thriving wages for teachers and provide scholarships for families in need.

Big Wonder has intentionally started small, allowing them to grow thoughtfully while empowering their teachers and building a community rooted in trust, innovation, and care. Enrollment has grown steadily each year. Sheltering Arms celebrates this partnership between St. John the Evangelist and Big Wonder Child Care, recognizing that the foundation built in early childhood shapes everything that follows. Together, they're creating that strong foundation for their community's youngest learners.

www.bigwonder.org



Episcopal Faith Community Grants

**Cathedral of our
Merciful Savior
Community Café**
Faribault 🟡 \$1,000

**First Nation's Kitchen -
North
Community Feasts**
White Earth 🔵 \$1,000

**St. John in the
Wilderness
Kids Hope Mentoring
Program**
White Bear Lake 🟠 \$1,000

**St. John the Evangelist
Big Wonder Child Care**
St. Paul 🟠 \$1,000

**St. John's Episcopal
Church
Good Counsel Learning Center**
Mankato 🟡 \$1,000

**St. Mary's Episcopal
Church
Back to School Giving Project**
Ely 🟡 \$1,000

**St. Nicholas Episcopal
Church
Food Share Ministry**
Richfield 🟡 \$1,000

**St. Peter's Episcopal
Church
A Place at the Table**
Kasson 🟠 \$1,000

**Trinity Episcopal Church
LGBTQ+ Youth Group**
Litchfield & Meeker County
🟡 \$1,000



Advocacy

Think Small
Child Care Affordability
Statewide ● \$10,000

At Sheltering Arms, we're committed to helping children thrive—not just through direct support but by advocating for better policies and systems.

We focus on early childhood and after-school issues, aiming to improve outcomes across the developmental continuum. We support this work through strategic grants to advocacy organizations, such as Think Small.

Since 1971, Think Small has championed quality early childhood care and education across Minnesota. Their mission is clear: ensure every child has access to affordable, high-quality care that prepares them for kindergarten and beyond.

Minnesota's long-term vitality depends on a robust, accessible child care system—yet many families struggle to afford it. Currently, a typical Minnesota family with an infant spends 21% of their income on care; families with both an infant and preschooler pay a staggering 37%. Think Small is working to change this through two key strategies:

Parent Education and Engagement: Think Small educates and empowers parents and caregivers of young children to advocate for the state's Child Care Affordability Proposal. In 2024, they launched an innovative Child Care Calculator

(www.thinksmall.org/child-care-calculator/) that shows families what they would pay if Minnesota met its affordability goal—between 0-7% of income based on earnings.

Sheltering Arms support helps Think Small reach more families through strategic social media outreach, test what messages resonate most effectively, and build a parent advisory group, creating a community of

Continued on next page...



informed advocates who can champion childcare affordability from personal experience.

Policy Advocacy: They partner with coalitions including the MN Child Care Association, Children's Defense Fund of MN, ISAIAH Kids Count on Us, and others to influence legislation that increases high-quality, affordable early learning slots. Think Small is focused on amplifying parent voice.

"At Think Small, we know that real progress in child care affordability starts with listening to providers and families," shares Cisa Keller, Think Small's President and CEO. "Their voices guide our advocacy and inspire innovative solutions that make high-quality care and education accessible for all. With support from the Sheltering Arms Foundation, we're building bridges between parents, communities, and policymakers, advancing equity and opportunity for Minnesota's youngest learners."

Child care isn't just a family issue; it's an economic imperative. Young children's rapidly developing brains need well-trained teachers and nurturing environments. Think Small's leadership helps ensure Minnesota families can access the quality care their children deserve.

www.thinksmall.org

Advocacy Grants

Child Care Aware of MN
*Transforming the Early
Childhood Workforce*
Statewide ● \$10,000

**Minnesota Coalition for
Family Home Visiting
Advocacy Program**
Statewide ● \$12,000

Family Wise
Parent Leadership Program
Twin Cities Metro ● \$10,000

Think Small
Child Care Affordability
Statewide ● \$10,000

First Children's Finance
*Facilitating Advocacy for
BIPOC Childcare Providers*
Statewide ● \$10,000

**Start Early Funders
Coalition**
Early Childhood Advocacy
Statewide ● \$25,000

Ignite Afterschool
*Partnership, Education &
Advocacy*
Statewide ● \$10,000



Funding Impact

73

Organizations
funded

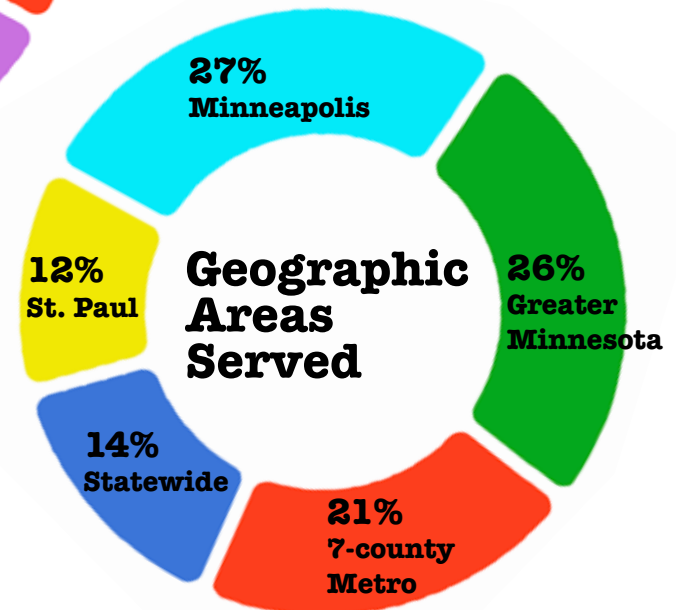
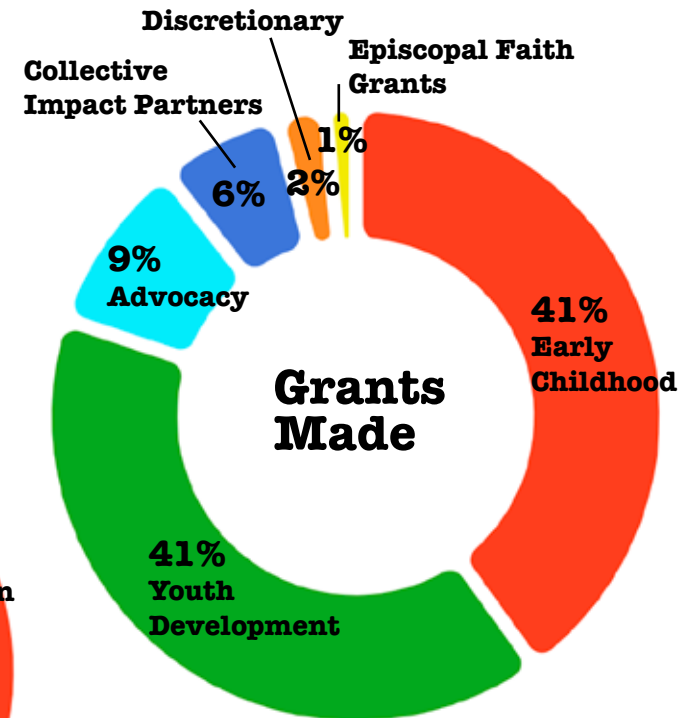
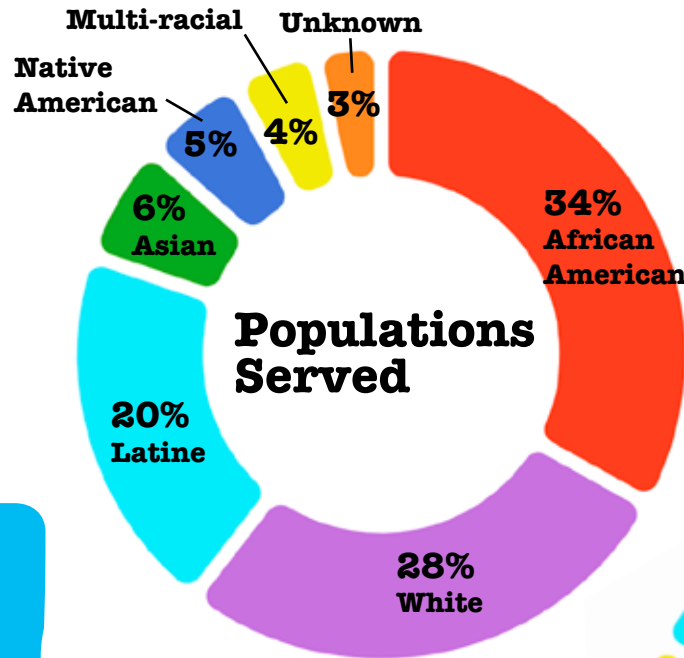
Just over

9,800

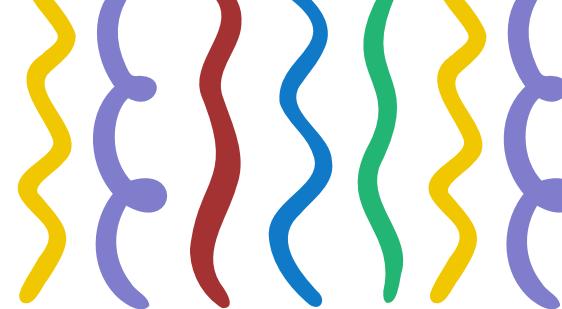
children served

\$599,000

Granted



Thank You, Donors



Anonymous
Elizabeth Ashcroft
Jeannette Bach
John and Aimee Bateman
Brittany Beach
Wyatt Beazley
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Kathleen Bizal
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Timothy Pera
Tina Pfau Gonzales and
Victor Gonzales
Patricia Powers
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Sally Reynolds and
Hampton Smith
Linda and Dave Rosedahl
Todd and Jeannette Sample
Gary and Julie Savold
Kathryn and Steven Schlafge

Kathy Schweikart and
 James Johnson
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 Nicholas Minderman
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 John Williams
 Margaret Wirth-Johnson and
 James Johnson
 Kim and Gregory Wiseman
 Nancy Zwickey

In Memory

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 by Irene Joseph

Peggy Larson and Marnie Lind
 by Lucy Hogan

Marguerite Lundeen
 by Gail Lundeen Brand and Ron Brand

Dan Panshin
 by Patricia Panshin

Joshua Schumacher
 by Adelheid Langenfeld

In Honor

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 by Terra Construction

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 by Anonymous
 by Dean Topliff

Dave and Cara Holmberg
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 by Julie Hicks

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 by Thomas and Katherine Swan

Cynthia Swan
 by Carrie Hefte and James Hanton
 by Alex Stephenson
 by Thomas and Katherine Swan

Lisa Westberg
 by Judith Dumke-Emery
 by Patty Fossen
 by Judith Gregor

Katie White
 by Jeannette Bach

Sister Annette Relf SAF Sustainers' Circle

Sister Annette Relf founded Sheltering Arms in the late 1800's, and the Foundation we have today is her legacy. We have named our sustaining membership in her honor. You can become part of the Sustainers' Circle simply by making a monthly donation of any amount.

This is now your legacy, too.

A special thank you to our Sustainers' Circle members for your continuous support!

Sheltering Arms Legacy Society

The names listed below represent those individuals who have designated The Sheltering Arms Foundation as a recipient of a charitable bequest in their estate planning. We thank you for your ongoing commitment to our mission.

Elizabeth Ashcroft
Brittany Beach
Blake Berquist and
Andrea Larson
Sue Bizal
Leslie Brunfelt
Merlynne and Patrick Byrne
Renee Champion
Cecily Cutshall
Barbara Dennis
Nancy Diener
Elizabeth Gage
Christabel Grant
Diane Grossman and
Dean Topliff
Joan Gudorf
Julia Gutz Moller
Wendy Johnson
Heidi Kim
Kay Kramer and
Sally Johnson

Adelaide Cline
Susan Dingle
Christabel Grant
Diane Grossman
Margo Herman
Jacqueline Sullivan
Denise Mayotte
Edie Meissner
Cynthia Swan
Jill Thompson
Joyce Walker

Phyllis Lehmberg
Denise Mayotte and
Warren Hanson
Maria Mitchell
Edward and Sarah Murray
Judith Parr
Tina Pfau Gonzales and
Victor Gonzales
Fiona and Ravi Pradhan
Emily Reichenbach
Bronwyn Skov
Barbara Swan and
Paul Stephenson
Cynthia Swan and
Robert Gage
Jill G Thompson
Lisa Westberg
Kim and Gregory Wiseman

With the generous support of these individuals, The Sheltering Arms Foundation is able to make a difference in the lives of children and families in the state of Minnesota. All gifts, regardless of size, are important to The Sheltering Arms Foundation and its future. We make every effort to ensure that each donor is properly recognized. Please let us know of any omission or corrections.



Tribute to Adelaide Cline

Sheltering Arms Foundation would like to honor the memory of Adelaide Cline, a former trustee and a kind and generous supporter of our organization. Adelaide's passing is deeply felt by all who had the privilege of working alongside her.

In a final act of generosity, Adelaide left a legacy gift that will continue to advance our mission for years to come. This enduring contribution reflects the values she championed throughout her life: compassion, commitment, and belief in a better future for the children of Minnesota. We are profoundly grateful for her lasting impact on the Foundation and will carry her spirit forward.

2025 Financials

Statement of Activities

Revenue

Investments, net	\$1,501,450
Contributions	\$266,562
Miscellaneous	\$0
Total Revenue and Support	\$1,768,012

Expenses

Program Expense (Grants Awards)	\$599,000
Program Expense (Advocacy & Grants Mgmt)	\$150,342
Total Program Expenses	\$749,342

Management & General	\$137,675
Fundraising	\$6,508
Total Expenses	\$893,525

Change in net assets

Net increase in assets w/o donor restriction	\$874,487
Net increase in assets w/ donor restriction	\$76,479

Total Change in net assets	\$950,966
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Statement of Financial Position

Assets

Cash	\$104,440
Investments	\$14,745,269
Beneficial Trusts	\$1,686,749
Other Assets	\$4,911
Total Assets	\$16,541,369

Liabilities

Grant Commitments	\$552,000
Other Liabilities	\$2,651
Total Liabilities	\$554,651

Net Assets

Unrestricted Net Assets	\$14,299,969
Other	\$1,686,749
Total Net Assets	\$15,986,718

Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$16,541,369
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Complete audited financial statements are available upon request from the Foundation office. Audit performed by Boyum Barensheer.