



the blue bench

Ending sexual assault
through prevention & care

ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2023

The Blue Bench is a community of survivors, allies, and advocates working to prevent sexual violence and build a safe and supportive metro Denver. We work collaboratively to provide accessible, survivor-centered support services and empowering education.



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DIRECTOR STATEMENT

For over 40 years, The Blue Bench has connected survivors to the critical, life-saving resources and services they deserve.

With the unwavering support of our community, The Blue Bench meets survivors where they are and provides space for them to work toward healing, thriving, and self-sufficiency.

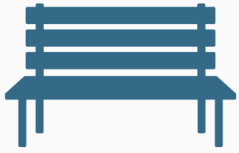
Thanks to our donors, volunteers, staff, and community partners, we continue to build a culture of safety and healing to put an end to sexual violence. Every day I am grateful to work alongside determined advocates, dedicated to the well-being and growth of survivors.



In our 40th year of service, we are proud to say our work did not go unrecognized. In 2023:

- The Blue Bench won the Partners in Philanthropy award from The Denver Business Journal, honoring our unwavering commitment to serving and supporting our incredible community.
- The Blue Bench won the Social Media Excellence Award from CCASA. This award recognizes our dedication to dispelling myths about sexual violence, breaking the silence surrounding this crime, and providing survivor-centered coverage of sexual violence and related topics.
- With support from new donors and foundations, we have built robust programs, expanded our community education strategy, and employed qualified professionals who reflect the diversity of today's community.
- Community partners strengthened our mission across Metro Denver. Major events like our second-annual RISE Survivor Art Show featuring 30 local artists, our 40th Anniversary celebration, and Change on Tap highlighted how businesses can support survivors.

In 2023, we grew our community, implemented new programs, and reached hundreds more survivors. You can read more about our impact further in our annual report.



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Nonetheless, the tumultuous atmosphere of the nation's economy and the confirmed 45% cut from the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) federal grant puts our organization and mission in danger.

Without our legislative leaders prioritizing crime victim services, we fear for the future of survivors and our communities. Without adequate access to resources, survivors face a host of harms including chronic illnesses, depression, anxiety, suicide, food and housing insecurity, absenteeism from work, and academic difficulties.

We urge you to take action by contacting your local representative and requesting their support for [Prop KK](#).

In addition to Prop KK, we depend on your donations to The Blue Bench to help keep essential services like case management, therapy, crisis intervention, and more accessible to all survivors.

Reflecting on our 40th year, it was those of you who stood by us, motivated us, advocated for us, and for survivors that got us this far. Thank you. Your belief in our mission has allowed us to overcome obstacles and positively impact the lives of survivors, loved ones, and countless community members.

We must remember that each milestone and every number represents an individual impacted by sexual violence. Please join our mission to prevent sexual violence and build a safe and supportive metro Denver.

*Sincerely,
Megan Carvajal, Executive Director*



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RISE

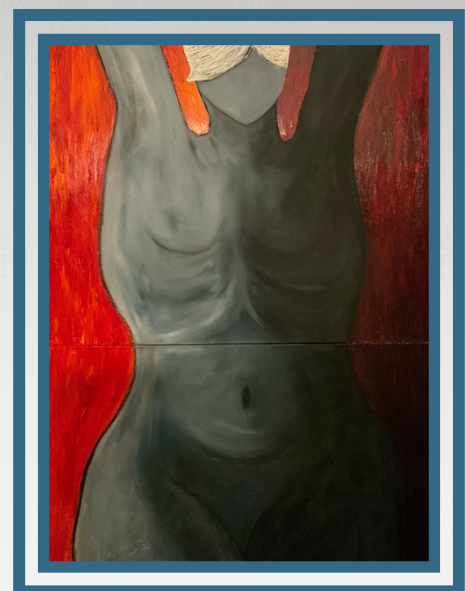
“By allowing myself to be vulnerable, I illustrated the emotional stages of my personal journey to achieve happiness and some level of enlightenment.”

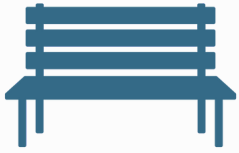
– Jenn Merz ColorQueen, artist of Diana (featured)

The Blue Bench hosted its second annual RISE Survivor Art Show in 2023. RISE featured a multitude of artwork made by 35 local survivors. Pieces ranged from acrylic paint to sculptures to written works.

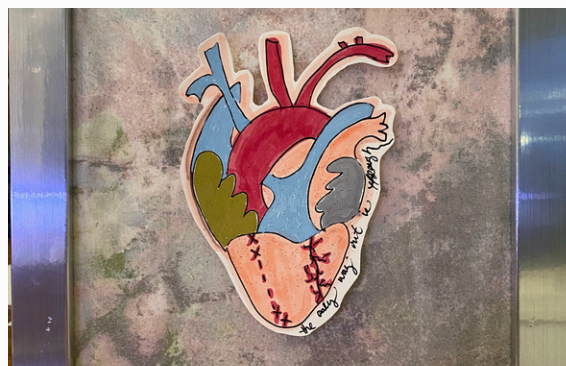
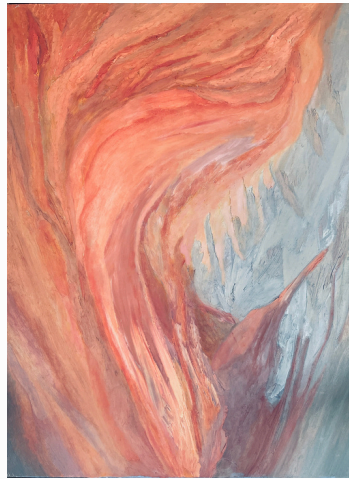
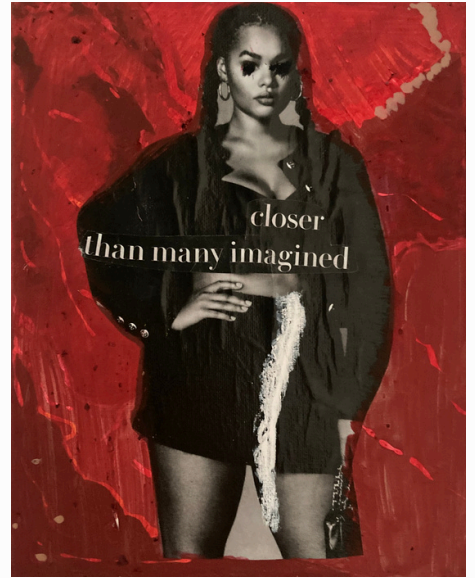
RISE amplifies the stories, voices, and healing journeys of survivors in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month (SAAPM).

The Blue Bench is grateful for the community of artists who came together and created bonds to last a lifetime.





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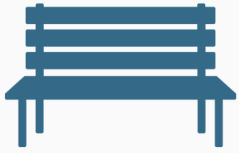


List of artwork:

Row 1: Heart of the Matter by Kathy OConner;
The Gorgon by Sam Wuestman; Prototype: A
Broken Heart Healing by Megan Carvajal

Row 2: Aziel by Tlalli; Difficult Women's Rage by
Suzanne Frazier; Hidden by Tamara Folven
Andersen; Alice au Revoir by BJ Yost

Row 3: Closer-Veil by Brianna Janae; Admiration
2 by Audrey Miklitsch; Remembrance by Alane
Holsteen



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IMPACT REPORT

3,278

Youth Served
Through Prevention
Education

1,549

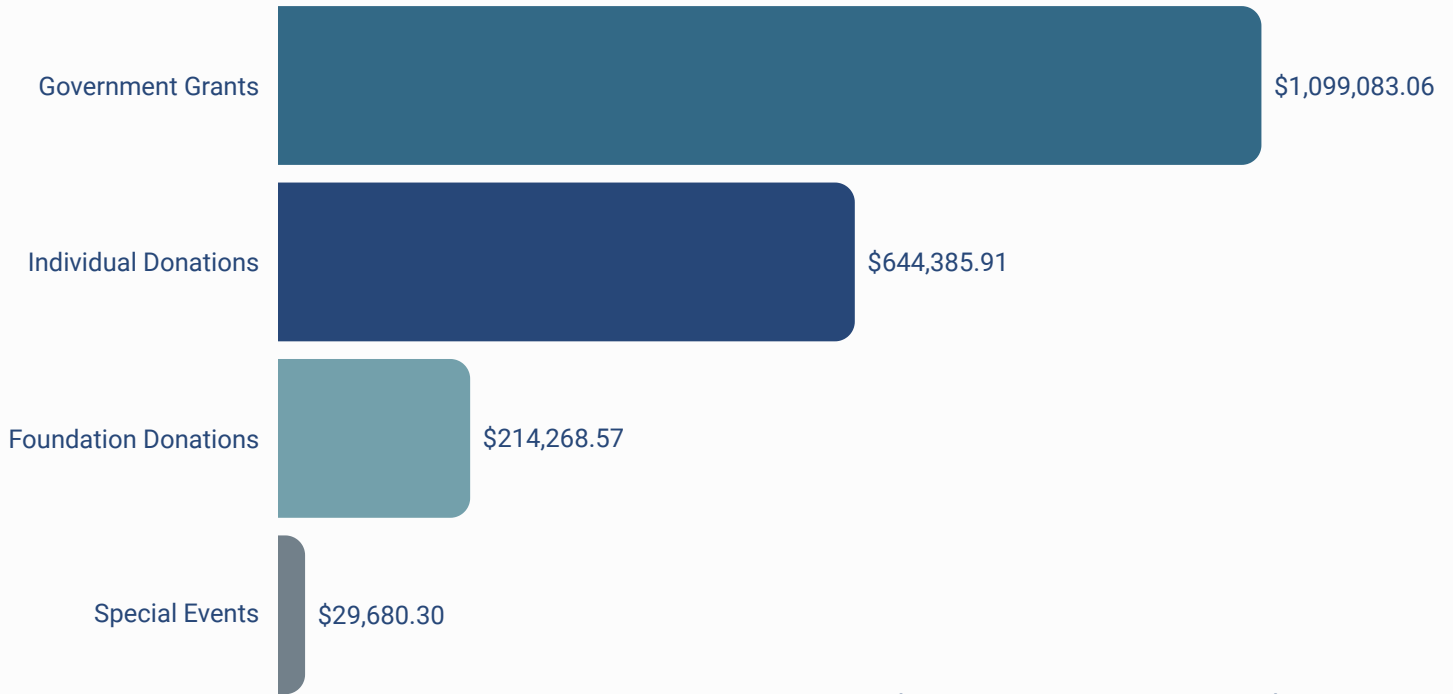
Crisis
Line Calls

1,504

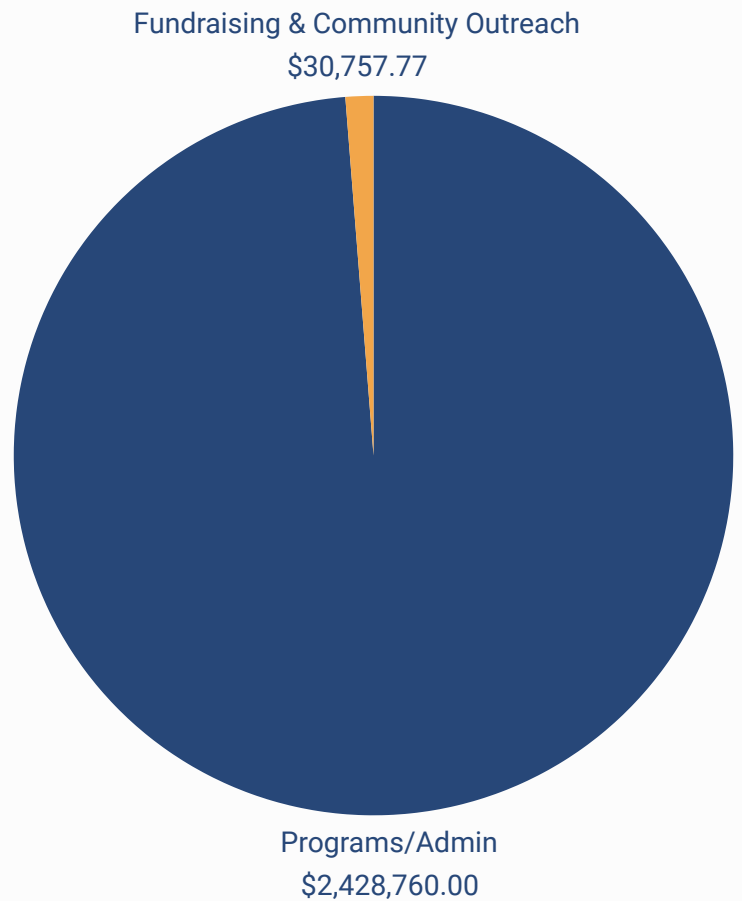
Clients
Supported



FINANCIAL REPORT



PROGRAM EXPENSES





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24-Hour Sexual Assault Hotline:
303-322-7273

Linea de Crisis Sobre La Violencia Sexual:
303-329-0031

Resource Line: 303-329-9922 ext. 302

thebluebench.org