

**BRAVE** **SPACE**  
**ALLIANCE**

# Letter From the CEO

Dear Friends of BSA,

March 2022 marked five years since I announced the founding of Brave Space Alliance on a frigid March evening, at the conclusion of the Trans Liberation March in the Loop—at the time the largest demonstration for trans rights in Midwest history.

These five years have been both magical and trying. We've gone from a two-person organization run out of a closet to a staff of twenty with a permanent location on the South Side. At the same time, we've seen a global pandemic ravage our city, with predictably disproportionate effects on Black and Brown queer people. We've also been faced with exacerbated violence against our community and continued inequity.

In the face of these challenges, BSA's capacity to react bravely, dynamically, and innovatively have been crucial to our success. *It's the essence of what makes us unique.*

Indeed, each time a crisis has emerged, Brave Space Alliance has been there on the frontline for our community, reacting in real-time to the evolving needs of our people and doing the work that needs to be done. In the pages that follow, you'll see just some of the many things our team does on a daily basis to advance our community—from our Community Pantry, which has served over 400,000 Chicagoans and become a permanent institution since its launch in 2020, to our first-in-the-country gender-affirming rooms (which provide free items like makeup, wigs, binders, packers, and more to Black and Brown trans people), to our Employment Justice Program.

There's a lot that we don't know about how the next five years will look. But one thing's for sure—***whatever happens, BSA will be there for our community, on the ground doing the work that needs to be done.***

Love and Light,

LaSaia Wade, MBA

she/they

CEO



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# BSA's Approach to Care



# Mission

Brave Space Alliance is the first **Black-led, trans-led** LGBTQ+ Center located on the South Side of Chicago, dedicated to creating and providing affirming, culturally competent, for-us by-us resources, programming, and services for LGBTQ+ individuals on the South and West sides of the city. We strive to empower, embolden, and educate each other through mutual aid, knowledge-sharing, and the creation of community-sourced resources as we build toward the liberation of all oppressed peoples.

## Strategic Priorities

### Health and Wellness

We view health and wellness as broad concepts, reaching far beyond getting tested or focusing on medical services. Queer and trans people face unique barriers to living full, healthy lives. We break down these barriers by offering programs that focus on the needs in our community, such as food insecurity, housing insecurity, and economic justice.

### Visibility and Expansion

We want Black and Brown queer and trans people to be seen, wherever and however they want to be seen. And we know our community deserves services that are accessible to them, in the neighborhoods in which they live. Brave Space is striving to expand our programming to all parts of the South and West sides; if you are located there. and want to partner with us, please reach out!

### Bravery and Solidarity

We step away from the language of safety because we know that queer and trans people can never truly be safe in spaces and communities that are not of our own making. We instead emphasize bravery-- living one's fullest, truest, and best life in the face of oppression-- and solidarity as ideals for the longevity of our communities and the best hopes for queer and trans liberation.



# Mutual Aid as an Organizing Strategy

All of BSA's programs, services, and resources utilize a mutual aid framework. Mutual aid understands that systems and institutions can't and won't sustain us, but WE can. BIPOC communities and community members have everything they need to sustain themselves when given the same access to resources and skills needed to ensure they create a life of their choosing.

We're an LGBTQ+ center that serves the entire community but we prioritize BIPOC transgender and gender-nonconforming (TGNC) individuals because they are most marginalized and vulnerable of the LGBTQ+ community. Most programs, services, and resources geared towards BIPOC TGNC individuals provide temporary solutions that do not address the root of their problems.

As BIPOC individuals of trans experience, we believe that we are the experts on our lived experiences and can better identify our needs which is why all programming, services, and resource provided by BSA give community members an active hand in development and implementation



# Staff, Consultants, and Interns

## Staff

**LaSaia Wade (she/they)**

CEO, Founder

**Stephanie Skora (she/her)**

COO

**Brittney Thomas (they/them)**

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**Jae Rice (he/him)**

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Housing Manager

**Moses Viveros (they/them)**

Community Pantry Manager

**Niya Rechiche (she/her)**

Mutual Aid Programs Manager

**Carbon Ratchford (they/them)**

Assistant to the CEO

**Katie Zhou (she/her)**

Senior Development Associate

**Ms. Albie (she/her)**

Community Pantry Network Coordinator

**Sudarshana Rao (she/they)**

Operations Associate

**Carla Hamilton (she/her))**

Services Coordinator

**T Smith (they/them)**

Employment Justice Coordinator

**Jacoby Johnson (he/him)**

Community Pantry Manager

**Olivia Lauryn (she/her)**

Office Manager

**Niya Rechiche (she/her)**

Mutual Aid Programs Manager

**Courtney McKinney (she/her)**

Community Outreach Coordinator

## Consultants and Interns

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Grant Writer

**Creola Kizart-Hampton (she/her)**

President/Founder, GREATERWORKS! INC

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**Melissa Lagowski (she/her)**

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## Board of Directors

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**Tracy Baim**

**Michelle Zacarias**

Secretary

**Lilly Wachowski**

**Tatyana Moaton**

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**Valerie Spencer**

President

**Channyn Parker**

# Programs

**BSA provides a wide variety of culturally competent, for-us by-us community programs and services. 2021 saw the expansion of our existing programs as well as the launch of several new programs.**

# 1 Trans Relief & Funeral Fund

## Trans Relief Fund

It is no secret that LGBTQ+ people are more likely than the general population to be jobless, homeless and poor. In fact, a recent study from the Black Futures' Lab showed more than 90% of LGBTQ+ respondents named low wages as their biggest problem. Studies and statistics continually show that of the LGBTQ+ population, Black, Brown, and Indigenous individuals bear the brunt of this economic disparity.

The Trans Relief Fund provides direct financial assistance to BIPOC trans and non-binary Chicagoans who are in need. Each recipient goes through an intake and interview process with the Community Outreach Coordinator, after which they receive a \$200 micro-grant.

The payments are used for a variety of vital purposes, from paying rent and bills, to purchasing groceries, to covering the cost of public transportation, to helping pay for medical expenses.

In order to better support our community, BSA will be increasing the micro-grant size for the Trans Relief Fund from \$200 to \$400 in 2022

The payments are used for a variety of vital purposes, from paying rent and bills, to purchasing groceries, to covering the cost of public transportation, to helping pay for medical expenses.

In 2021, BSA provided **\$46,200** in emergency financial assistance from the **Trans Relief Fund** to **231** Black and Brown trans Chicagoans.

### Testimonial

*A'reyonna is a Black trans woman. She resides on the South Side of Chicago, and was born and raised in Englewood.*

*A'reyonna describes herself as a beautiful, independent, and self-made woman. But when COVID-19 hit, money became hard for A'reyonna to come by. It was then that A'reyonna heard about Brave Space Alliance and the Trans Relief Fund. She applied and received \$200, which she used to pay outstanding bills. Since then, A'reyonna has continued to come to Brave Space Alliance to access services, especially the Makeup room.*

*"Just to know that the trans community has a strong support system helps," says A'reyonna. "It might not be much, but it helps. I've had a great experience with BSA and its programs. It's great that it's nearby too."*

*"I just wish there was something like this when I first started transitioning. At the time, it was so hard. It felt like nobody loved me, and nobody should ever have to feel that way."*



## Funeral Fund

There continues to be an epidemic of violence and murder with respect to Black and Brown trans and non-binary people, because our lives are devalued, our power is feared, and our truth is revolutionary. Indeed, there were fifty-three murders of trans and gender-nonconforming people in the United States in 2021, and five in the Chicago area alone. (Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/944726/murders-transgender-gender-diverse-people-us/>)

Moreover, many of the victims' families either cannot afford a funeral, or are unwilling to bury the victim in a way that is affirming to their identity (for example, burying them under their dead name).

The Funeral Fund supports families of murdered trans people while ensuring that our siblings have a proper and affirming burial. This includes providing monetary support for the burial under the right name, wake, funeral home costs, reception, and flowers.

In 2021, the Funeral Fund ensured **five** transgender and non-binary Chicagoans a proper, respectful, and affirming burial.



# Other Direct Mutual Aid

Brave Space Alliance is always looking for ways to support our community on the ground—to make sure that our siblings can not only survive, but thrive. In 2021, BSA additionally provided \$100,000 to 20 BIPOC trans people for assistance with monthly rent, keeping people housed and fed.



# 2 Community Pantry Program

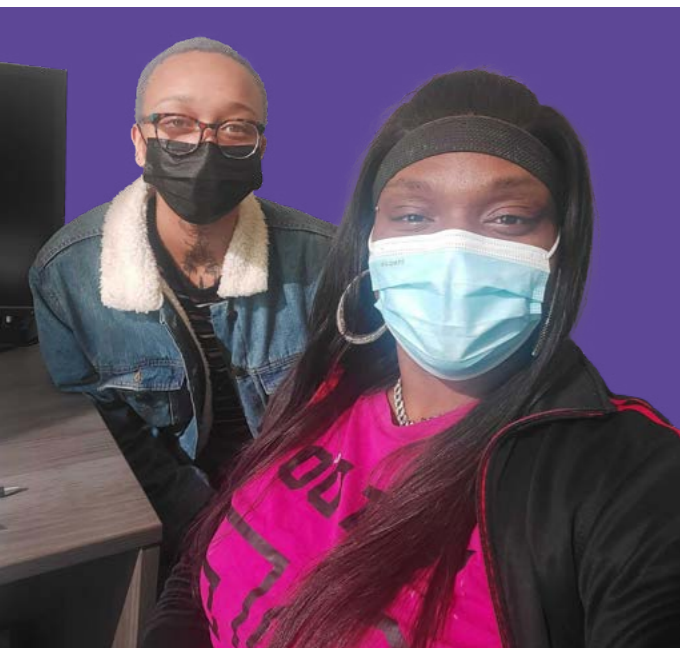
Food insecurity has long been an issue that disproportionately affects Black and Brown people. But its effect on Black and Brown trans people is even more pronounced. According to the Williams Institute, **36% of transgender people of color** experience food insufficiency, when compared to 13% of cisgender people of color.

We at BSA find **both** of these percentages to be unacceptable; for that reason, we launched our Community Pantry Program back in 2020, with the aim of driving these numbers down for all Black and Brown Chicagoans, both cis and trans.



“There are so many things this \$200 can go towards. You never know where someone is at in life, and this money can really help them get back up on their feet”

- Courtney McKinney,  
Community Outreach Coordinator





# The Community Pantry Network

To expand our reach and ensure that we are able to serve all Chicagoans in a culturally competent and affirming manner, the Community Pantry maintains a network of partnerships with other community organizations throughout Chicago. BSA recognizes the amazing work that each of our partners have been doing, and knows that together we are able to do so much more than we could as individual organizations.

Brave Space Alliance's Community Pantry serves as the primary supplier for each of our network members. In addition, BSA provides back-end operational support, from managing inventory, to providing critical infrastructure like storage space, shelves, and refrigerators.

We are so proud to announce that 2021 saw new partnerships with Renaissance Social Services and Taskforce Prevention and Community Services. These partnerships have doubled our capacity, and enabled us to reach thousands of more people who are food insecure.

## Suppliers:

Vegan Outreach, Method, Donation Pods

## Back to school drive:

During August and September, the Community Pantry Network organized a back-to-school drive to provide Chicago students with backpacks and school supplies. In total, **425** backpacks were distributed, with each backpack containing \$40 worth of supplies.

## Fixed Partners:

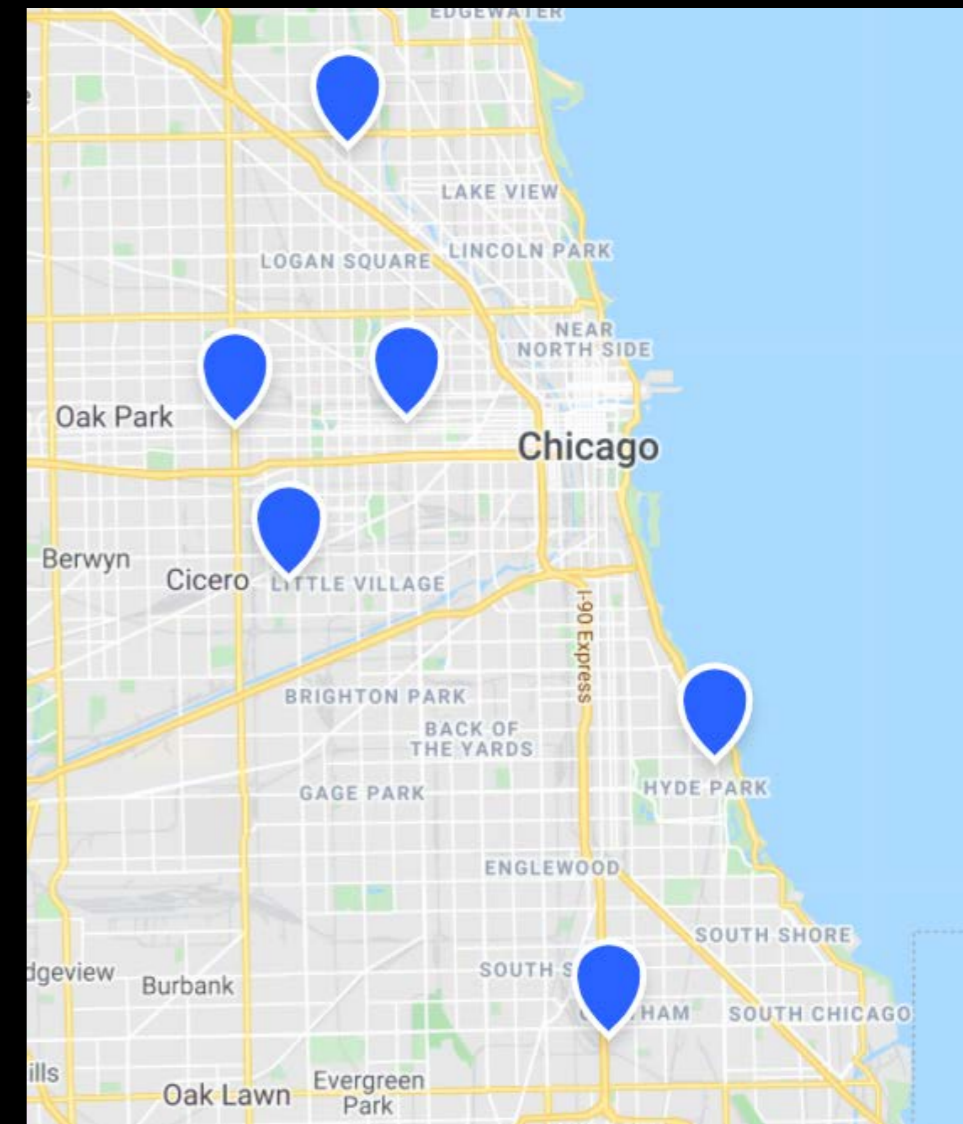
- Rincon Family Services
- Renaissance Social Services
- Taskforce Prevention and Community Services
- Project VIDA
- Chicago Food Sovereignty Coalition

## Mobile and Pop-up Pantry Partners:

- Thankful for Chicago
- Pride, Proud, and Fed
- Mobilize Creative Collaborative

BSA is also thrilled to announce that we are purchasing and renovating an additional warehouse in the South Side's Chatham neighborhood. The warehouse will allow us to streamline our processes, increase our capacity, and reach the South Side more effectively.

A map of our current fixed distribution sites, along with our warehouse. In addition to our permanent locations, we also partner with a number of pop-up pantry sites!



The network served **102,456** individuals in 2021.

## Testimonials

*“We always encourage youth to be their best selves. But in order to be your best self, certain necessities have to be met. Although we serve a hot meal, the snacks and hygiene kits provided by the pantry have really kept our youth going. We are only able to see our youth twice a week usually, so being able to give them non-perishable items to keep them fed during those in-between times really helps. We’re also so excited that the Pantry Network is helping give Our youth healthier snack options like granola, dried - **Taskforce Prevention and Community Services Staff Member***

*“Oftentimes, I don’t know where my next meal is coming from. Having to live on the streets doesn’t help the problem. Even though I receive Food Stamp Assistance, spending it at these local food desert convenience stores doesn’t allow me to have adequate food throughout the month. I’m grateful for Taskforce and BSA because that meal and those snacks help me get through the times when I have to go without food. A lot of people don’t look at it like “it’s just food” especially when that need has to be met by the hands of someone else. Thank you Taskforce & BSA.” - **Taskforce Prevention and Community Services Youth Participant***

*“Just wanted to say thank you - this partnership has been monumental for us in terms of how we can support our clients! Y’all are wonderful.” - **Renaissance Social Services Staff Member***



*“This work is absolutely necessary. There are so many families out there who depend on us to put food on the table each week. Even though we can’t fully supply a family, we are a critical part of the support and safety net that is keeping people fed.” - **Jacoby Johnson, Community Pantry Delivery Program Coordinator***

# The Delivery Program

In addition to the network, BSA’s Community Pantry also operates a Delivery Program for all Chicagoans who are in need of food assistance. On a weekly basis, volunteers deliver bags containing shelf-stable pantry items to community members’ doorstops. When available, fresh produce is also included as a part of the deliveries.

The Delivery Program is designed to prioritize the needs of immunocompromised, elderly, and/or disabled folks, as well as people who lack access to transportation. These are community members who are not adequately served by traditional food pantry setups, which generally require recipients to show up at a physical location to pick up goods at a specified time.

In 2021, the Delivery Program fed 3,790 Chicagoans, through the support of 40 volunteer drivers. In 2022, we will be switching our delivery day to Saturday, in order to allow for an easier delivery process for both our volunteers and our recipients.

Many thanks to Taskforce Prevention and Community Services for helping us continue to operate this program while the elevator at our Hyde Park location was broken.



## Testimonials For Delivery Program

*“When the initial delivery arrived...I heard myself think, ‘I feel shrouded with love’ After 17 months of isolation homebound with critical illness, I was touched by the kindness of the volunteer deliverer and the feeling of a wonderful box of food and fresh fruit that I wouldn’t have had for 10 more days until social security arrived. It felt like a special gift from a close friend.”*

*“Thank you so much for making food accessible to my partner and I, we appreciate the delivery because we don’t have a car. Y’all are amazing!”*

# 3 Gender-Affirming Services

Transitioning is a necessity for many trans and non-binary folk, as it is what enables us to finally express our true and authentic selves. Nevertheless, the costs associated with transition often mean that it is out of reach for many Black and Brown trans people. The Makeup Room, the Den, and the QT Shop are designed to help close this gap.



## The Makeup Room & The Den

The Makeup Room is a trans-feminine affirming room open for BIPOC trans and queer folks and sex workers to pick up makeup for free, while The Den is a trans-masculine gender-affirming room open for BIPOC trans and queer folks and sex workers to pick up free items. These two gender-affirming rooms are open Wednesday - Friday from 12 pm to 5 pm and Saturdays from 10 am to 3 pm for pickups at our Hyde Park office.

The Makeup Room and The Den were founded in late 2020 as part of a makeup drive for sex workers, done in collaboration with the Chicago Black Drag Council. Since then, it has grown to become a permanent fixture at BSA, and remains the only service of its kind in the country.

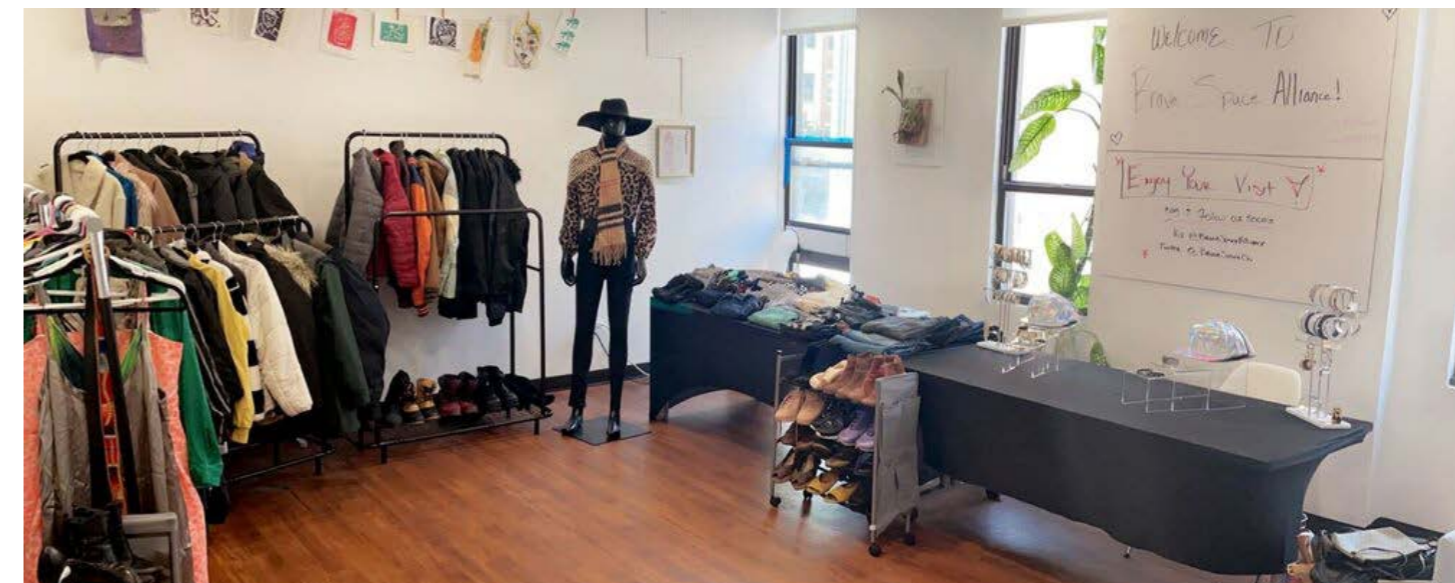
Items in the Makeup Room include wigs, makeup, and sports bras. Items in The Den include binders, packers, harnesses, ties, cufflinks, and beard oil.

The two gender-affirming rooms served 803 community members at our Hyde Park office in 2021, with the assistance of 4 volunteers.



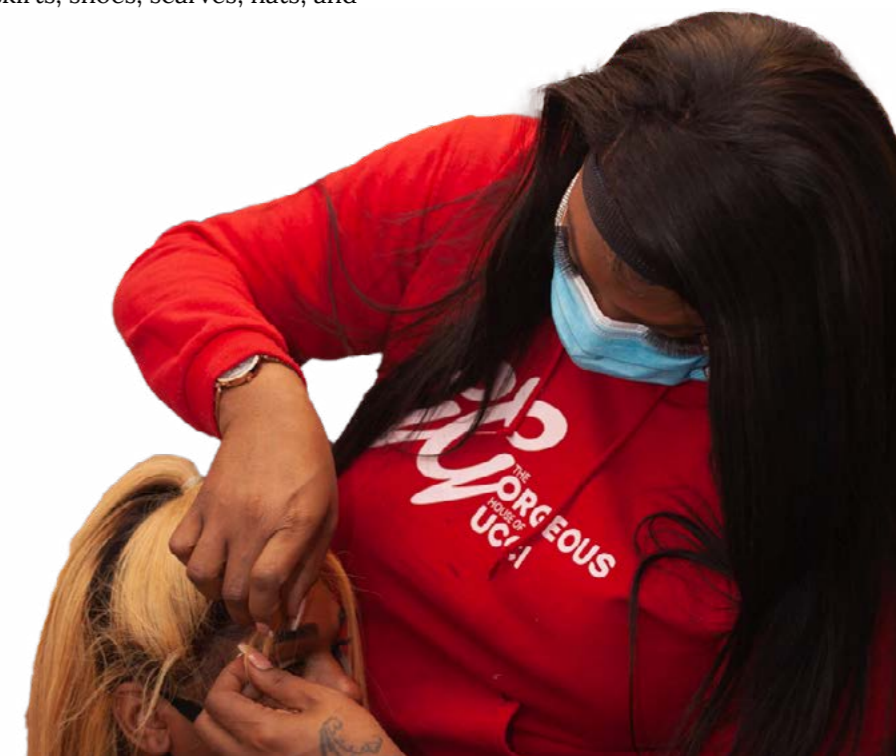
We were so excited to be able to extend the hours for both rooms to four days a week, a move that was crucial towards allowing us to reach this incredible number of individuals served.

In addition, 10-20 pre-made Makeup Room bags were given away monthly to community members at Vogue Knights (a popular community gathering event), serving another 150 community members.



## The QT Shop

After having been paused in 2020 due to the ongoing pandemic, the QT (Queer & Trans) Shop reopened in October 2021 and served over 150 community members. The QT Shop is open and free to community every Saturday from 10 am to 3pm, and is a free clothing and accessory resource for community members. Items available include jackets, blazers, pants, dresses, skirts, shoes, scarves, hats, and so much more!



# 4 Employment Justice Program

Brave Space Alliance's Employment Justice Program is a mutual aid and public health program that works to align trans people with jobs and opportunities in union/protected workplaces throughout the Chicago area, while simultaneously focusing on HIV prevention and education as a tool for self-empowerment and self-advocacy.

Throughout the course of an intensive eight-month program, participants were given basic training on finding and maintaining a job, ranging from resume and cover-letter writing workshops to building time management and conflict resolution skills. In addition, participants were connected to free HIV testing, and received assistance with signing up for Medicaid.

**In total, the Employment Justice Program helped 34 community members find and maintain a job in 2021.**



# 5 Support Groups

Brave Space Alliance was created to fill a gap in the organizing of and services to trans and gender-nonconforming people. Currently, very few LGBTQ+ social services or advocacy networks exist on the South and West Sides of Chicago. Furthermore, the few trans-specific resources in the city are located in majority-white neighborhoods on the North Side, which are inaccessible geographically, and also regularly result in the hyper-policing of trans people of color who attempt to access them. BSA's support groups were created to provide a safe space for members of the LGBTQIA+ community to meet people who identify like them and share their experiences.

Each support group functions as places for socializing and community building, where people can find others who have been in similar situations, share resources, and bond. These groups are entirely free and there is no waitlist to join/capacity limit. Each support group occurs twice a month, and is run by a dedicated facilitator.

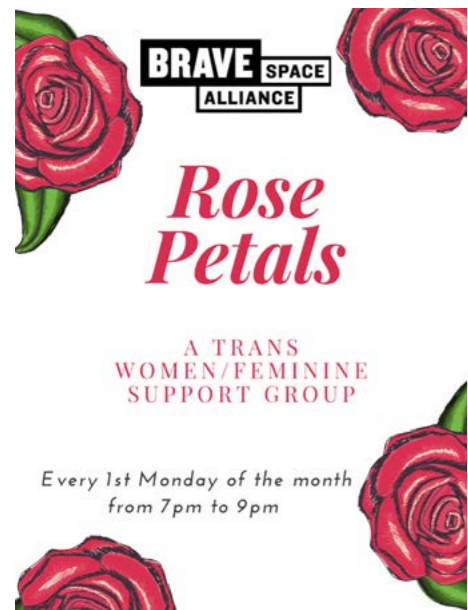
In addition to our three already established support groups, 2021 saw the launch of Queery, our support group dedicated to building community for folks who are questioning their gender and/or sexuality.

Since the pandemic began, our support groups have been meeting virtually. A few of our groups were able to conduct some in-person meetings sporadically during 2021, when COVID-19 conditions allowed.

In 2021, our support groups reached over **100 community members**, with each group having roughly **10-12 regular attendees**. Although we hope to begin meeting in person again when conditions allow, the virtual nature of the groups has actually also allowed the groups to expand their reach, with many of the groups having attendees who join meetings from across the country!



### Full list of the groups that we offer:



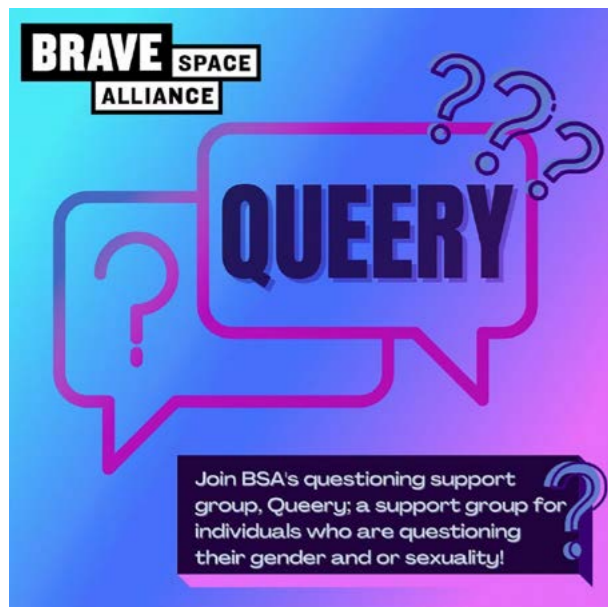
A social support group for trans women, trans feminine people, AMAB people, and those that are questioning.



A social group for trans men, trans masculine people, AFAB people, and those that are questioning. This support group is a space for finding community and friendship with people who identify as you.



A social support group for non-binary, gender-queer, gender-fluid, other individuals who identify outside of the gender binary and those that are questioning. This support group is a space for finding community and friendship with people who identify as you.



A social support group for non-binary, gender-queer, gender-fluid, other individuals who identify outside of the gender binary and those that are questioning. This support group is a space for finding community and friendship with people who identify as you.

**These spaces are body-positive, LGBTQ-friendly, and welcoming to people of all genders and gender expressions. Sexism, homophobia, and gender policing are not tolerated.**

### Testimonials

*"I'm always listened to here when I'm being vulnerable."*

*I always leave the group with new tools or perspectives on what identity can mean and I really appreciate that."*

**-Queery Participant**

*"It was so great to have a Black facilitator and another Black person in the group. I almost didn't join on bc I was like there's not about to be any black folks anyway...but I'm so glad I did!"*

**-Boi Talk Participant**

*"This space felt many times safer & more open than trans community groups I've attended at predominantly white affluent Pride Centers."*

**-Fluid AF Participant**

*"Boi Talk Participant: It was really nice to finally be in a space with other trans-masculine people in real time. It was very healing, and I'm excited to come back in a few weeks"*

**-Boi Talk Participant**



# 6 Mutual Aid Program

Our Mutual Aid Program is an 8-month long program with a suite of subprograms designed to promote access, resources, justice, and health within our communities by providing people with the tools and skills they need to create community-oriented solutions for the barriers they face in their everyday lives.

These mutual aid groups are part of Brave Space Alliance's VAMP (HIV AIDS Manifesting Prevention) program. VAMP is an innovative program aimed at reducing or eliminating new HIV infections among Black and Brown transgender and gender-nonconforming people in Chicago, IL. The philosophy of VAMP is that if we help our communities improve all parts of our lives, our health will improve as well.

Each mutual aid group is part support group and part actionable community outreach and empowerment. The goal of each group is to provide continuous social support and educational resources to members while developing and implementing an initiative that addresses the group's chosen issue in their general focus area. The three focus areas addressed by the groups are food insecurity, housing insecurity, and sex work safety and advocacy. Each cohort consists of 10-12 participants.

In 2021, BSA welcomed our second cohorts for each of our three mutual aid groups. Each group met regularly to share knowledge, build community, and strategize to keep our communities safe and cared for.

In 2021, BSA welcomed our second cohorts for each of our three mutual aid groups. Each group met regularly to share knowledge, build community, and strategize to keep our communities safe and cared for.



Check out the Beet Street Zine created by the Food Insecurity Mutual Aid Group! The Zine is a collaborative project that tells the story of our food system through artwork, poems, love letters, calls to action, recipes, and various other mediums. It provides a platform for Queer, Trans, and/or BIPOC folks to dream about and build towards a more radical and liberated food system. The first edition featured a resource guide, interviews and recipes from longtime BSA supporter and community pillar Chef Fresh, a recipe for corn pone, a tutorial on measuring quantities with your hands, and more!

## An update regarding the future of the Mutual Aid Program

The original vision for the Mutual Aid Program when it was launched in 2019 was for each of the three mutual aid circles to meet, organize, and design a unique program that could serve as an important piece of community infrastructure and mutual aid in each area of need, areas of need that were all identified as critical social determinants of health, in particular with respect to HIV. In 2022, this vision has come to fruition. The work of our Food Insecurity Group directly led to the creation of our Community Pantry; the countless hours put in by our Housing Insecurity Group has resulted in the creation of the Lucy Hicks Anderson Housing Program (launching in 2023), which you can read more about below; and last, but certainly not least, our Sex Worker Safety and Advocacy Group has led to the creation of not only The Makeup Room and The Den, but also the Trans Relief and Funeral Fund.

With the program's purpose now complete, BSA will be shifting in 2022 to focusing entirely on the amazing programs created and envisioned by our mutual aid groups. In addition, we will be launching a revamped HIV Program, which will focus on connecting Black Trans Women and Sex Workers to education and care around both living with HIV and HIV prevention.

# 7 Housing Programs

Housing insecurity is a critical problem faced by many Black and Brown trans people. Not having a place to call home makes almost every other part of health, wellness, and self-care impossible to carry out, from getting a job to getting tested for HIV. In recognition of this pivotal issue, Brave Space Alliance has adopted a multi-pronged approach to both preventing and ending housing insecurity in our community.

## Emergency Rental Assistance Program

In late 2021, BSA participated in the second round of the City of Chicago's Emergency Rapid Rental in partnership with The Resurrection Project. Our efforts ensured that city-allocated funds got into the hands of LGBTQ+ folks who needed it to stay housed, and who weren't being adequately reached by the city prior to our involvement.

All told, BSA was able to link **34 BIPOC LGBTQ+ people to \$272,000 of rental assistance**. This money helped with back-rent, overdue bills, and also gave them a three months head start on rent to make sure they can stay on their feet.

## Housing Referral Services

In addition, Brave Space Alliance worked to match BIPOC LGBTQ+ community members actively experiencing homelessness with trans friendly shelters and other housing resources. Towards that end, BSA created a trans friendly resource guide after thoroughly vetting partner orgs, in order to ensure that our clients find safe and affirming care.

*In 2021, BSA's housing staff referred **64 community members** to housing assistance.*

Before making a referral, BSA staff conduct a thorough interview with clients in which we get to the root of a person's struggles so we can understand what kind of support they need to really begin thriving, and make sure that we connect them to the right resources, both here at Brave Space Alliance and at other organizations.



# Lucy Hicks Anderson Housing Program

**Launching in 2023!**

Nevertheless, it became apparent in 2021 that Black and Brown trans Chicagoans need a housing program that is dedicated to our specific population, and which has the unique factors influencing our lives built into its very program structure.

For that reason, Brave Space Alliance is excited to announce the Lucy Hicks Anderson Housing Program, a transitional housing program for BIPOC trans people that will launch in 2023.

This program will be Black, Indigenous, and trans-led, and will utilize BSA's own specially designed Transcendence Intensive Empowerment Initiative. The program is an 18-month long intervention, during which participants receive not just housing, but intensive coaching and support that address the root causes of homelessness. The first cohort in 2023 will aim to serve 12 BIPOC transgender people, with another 12 per cohort thereafter.

Most of the program design work was done in 2021, and our main goal in 2022 will be purchasing and renovating a space to house the program and its residents.

Special thanks to the JB and MK Pritzker Foundation and also Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois for making this project a reality.

**LUCY HICKS ANDERSON HOUSING**

Lucy stated, "I defy any doctor in the world to prove that I am not a woman. I have lived, dressed, acted just like what I am, a woman."

“  
*Brave Space Alliance is currently developing a transitional housing program for BIPOC Trans individuals in Chicago. This program is named after the Black, trans pioneer Lucy Hicks Anderson who purchased a boarding house where she ran a speakeasy and brothel for trans and cisgender women in Oxnard, California.*



**BRAVE SPACE ALLIANCE**

# Communications & Outreach

“Brave Space Alliance is committed to engaging our community while also advocating for meaningful policy changes.

In 2021, we hosted and/or sponsored 33 community events, while also accomplishing meaningful legislative change that will have ripple effects across Illinois.”



Supporting Black and Brown Art:

# Ballroom Events Sponsored by BSA

The Ballroom scene has long functioned not only as a place for Black and Brown trans people to express their artistic genius and creative prowess, but also as a site for community-building and mutual aid. Brave Space Alliance honors this legacy through its ongoing support of the Chicago ballroom community. In 2021, BSA provided over \$80,000 in support to Chicago's vibrant ballroom scene, with funds being used for space rentals, prize money, and more.

## Virtual Blackout Ball

March 4th, 2021

## Pride Ball

June 26th, 2021

## Sneaker Ball

## Chicago Awards Ball

December 11th, 2021

## Virtual Black Out Ball

## Pride Ball 2021

## My Time to Shine Mini Ball with Legendary Pooda 007

## 7 Vogue Knights with Legendary Kentrele Gorgeous Gucci

## 5 Taskforce Mini Balls with Legendary Demario Khan



# External events hosted in our space

Trans woman meetups

Plant Swap

# Other Community Events and Outreach

Protect Trans Folks at CCJ (Protest) #ACTCCJ (Affirming Care for Trans People at Cook County Jail)

Community Days at Overton (8/28 and 9/12)

Trans day of Visibility 3/31/2021

Trans Beach Pride Day (8/28)

COVID-19 Vaccination Information Session and Event (5/17 and 5/22)

Talks with Toni (9/14)

Mural Unveiling

National Coming Out Week (10/11 to 10/16) / Game Night

Brave Beat Makeup Classes @ The Makeup Room and The Den

Trans Day of Remembrance Community Gathering and Town Hall (11/20/21)

Market Days (8/6 to 8/8)

Sex worker group events hosted by Lynzo. Recurring Wednesday at 3pm

Mutual Aid Program Outing to Plant Chicago (8/7/21)

# Trainings

Brave Space Alliance offers a comprehensive suite of training for organizations, groups, collectives, and individuals who are looking to learn. We support individuals and organizations who are hoping to build networks and strategies to dismantle oppression in all forms.

Workshops are available on a sliding scale depending on the length of training, the number of people who are planning to attend, and the budget of the organization requesting the training.

## Human Resources and Liberation in the Workplace: Anti-Racist and Pro-Trans HR Training

This training tackles how to address a key problem in hiring and workplace culture: White and Cis Supremacy. The workshop breaks down how to develop an actively anti-racist and pro-trans hiring process, and how to create a workplace culture that centers the needs of Black and Brown queer and trans people.



**Brave Space Alliance provided 21 trainings in 2021. In 2022, BSA is excited to begin offering a Sexual Assault and Consent Training, and a Sexual Harassment Compliance Training!**

## Out of the Closet and Into The Streets: A Comprehensive Sexuality 101

This training is ideal for an organization needing help with both truly beginner-level concepts of LGBTQ identity and diversity, and one looking to refresh their sexuality training. The workshop takes a traditional LGBTQ 101 and conducts it from a sexualiy analysis, breaking down identities, LGBTQ history, and sexuality as it relates to gender.

## Understanding Transness: A Comprehensive Trans 101 (best if done in conjunction with Trans 201)

This training is ideal for an organization looking to create a culture of trans affirmation and centered around the unique needs of trans people in service provision, in the workplace, and in everyday life. The workshop breaks down basic ideas about gender, dos and don'ts of interacting with trans people, the difference between sex and gender, and the diversity of trans experience.

## Understanding Trans Lives and Liberation: A Trans 201 (best if done in conjunction with Trans 101)

This training is created for an audience looking to advance their trans competence, or gain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of trans people. It is an ideal companion training for our Trans 101, described above. The workshop addresses the complexities of transphobia and how the world is built to cater to cisgender people, as well as breaking down how to achieve trans liberation, and a history of the trans liberation movement.

## Anti-Racism from a Black Trans Liberation Perspective

This training is aimed at building an anti-racist praxis specifically by dismantling anti-Blackness societally and interpersonally, and addressing racism through a trans liberation lens. The workshop addresses the foundational history of race, gender, racism, and gender policing, and how to effectively fight back against those forms of oppression.

## Decolonization from a Pan-Africanist, Trans Liberatory Perspective

This training looks at the construction of power structures and expands on how a decolonized mindset is a medium for expanding a personal and collective vision for a new world independent of what we know and experience today. The training is an ideal complement to our anti-racism training above.

# Name Change Clinics

Having our chosen names recognized and reflected on government documentation is vital for all trans people.

In collaboration with the Transformative Justice Law Project, Brave Space Alliance hosted two name-change clinics at our Hyde Park Office. Over the course of two sessions, we helped **27 community members** file paperwork and begin the process of getting their name legally changed.

We are excited to announce that due to the success of our first two clinics, BSA and TJLP will begin hosting monthly name change clinics in 2022 at our Hyde Park Office. Follow us on social media for announcements regarding exact dates!



# Grassroots Policy, Organizing, & Advocacy

# 2021 Highlights

Years of Brave Space Alliance advocacy led to Governor JB Pritzker's signing of HB1063, which ended criminal penalties for people living with HIV in Illinois. The passage of this law is a crucial step towards decreasing stigma around HIV positivity and increasing access to testing and care.

In addition to HB 1063, BSA advocacy also led to the concurrent signing of the three following pieces of legislation, each of which represents an important step in

HB 3709 - diagnosis and treatment of infertility shall be provided without discrimination based on age, gender identity, sexuality, etc.

HB 2590 - creates a process for Illinoisans to correct or remove gender-identifying language on their marriage certificate

SB 13 - Creates a streamlined process for county clerks to issue new marriage certificates when a person has a legal name change



# Our focuses in 2022

HB 2542 - This piece of legislation, sponsored by BSA, will repeal and amend restrictions and outdated provisions in Illinois' name change law, which is one of the most restrictive in the nation, and allows for Illinoisians with felony convictions to be denied the ability to legally change their names.

Full decriminalization of sex work

Expungement of cannabis-related offenses from criminal records



# Brave Business Network

2021 also saw the launch of BSA's Brave Business Network, an alliance of **eight** Chicago-based businesses dedicated to increasing trans inclusivity and hiring across the city. The Network works in conjunction with our Employment Justice Program, with network members providing mentoring and training to EJP participants, while also informing them about any available job opportunities.

# Announcing a special and new partnership with Taskforce Prevention and Community Services!



***We are so excited to announce that, beginning in late 2021, Brave Space Alliance became the fiscal sponsor of Taskforce Prevention and Community Services.***

Founded in 1990, Taskforce, located on Chicago's West Side in the Austin neighborhood has been a pillar for Chicago's BIPOC queer community for over thirty years. TaskForce Prevention & Community Services is a grassroots organization committed to improving the sexual health and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ youth of color in Chicago by providing a safe space for fellowship, HIV/STI screening and education, and on-site referrals to medical, housing, and other social services. Many staples of the Chicago queer community, including [the Vogue School](#), were begun by Taskforce and are still hosted by them today.

Under this exciting new arrangement, Taskforce will become an autonomous subsidiary of Brave Space Alliance, with BSA providing financial and administrative support, in addition to our already existing partnership with them through the Pantry Network. This partnership will not only help BSA build a stronger presence on the West Side, but will also enable us to more actively serve LGBTQ+ youth.



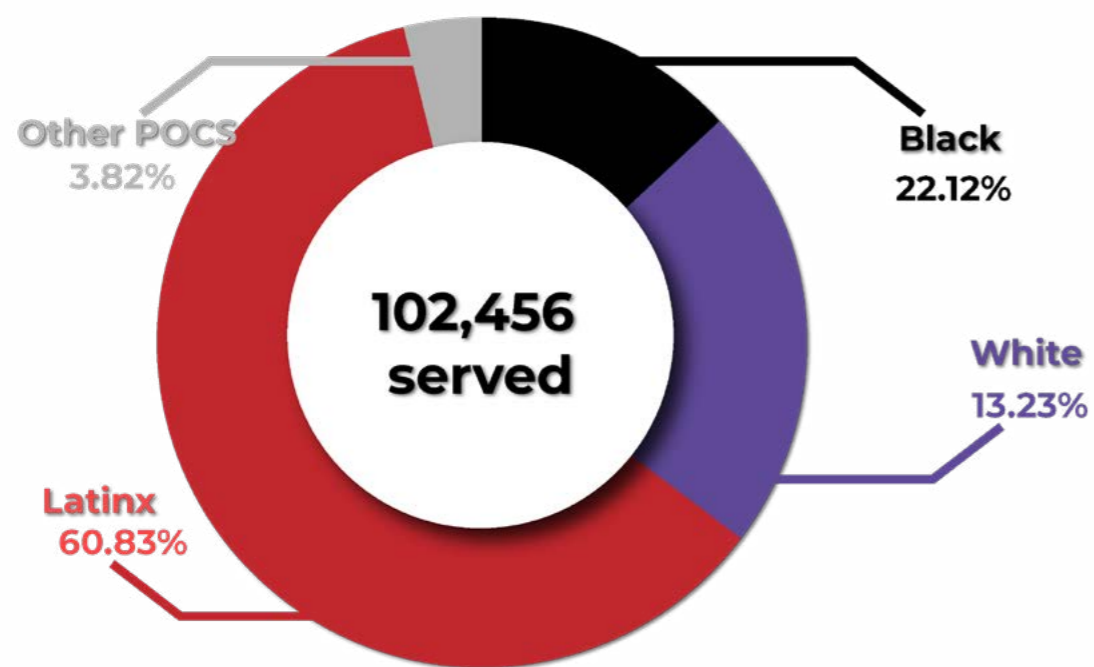
# Impact Summary

# Demographic Breakdown of Community Pantry Participants

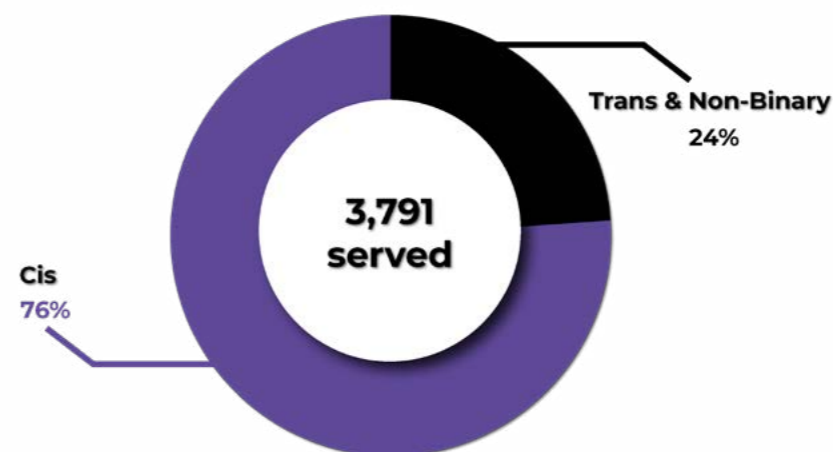
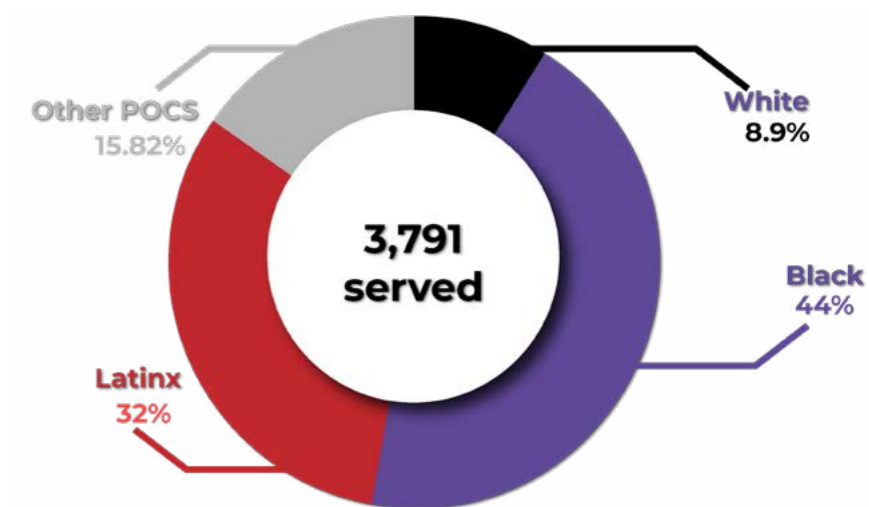
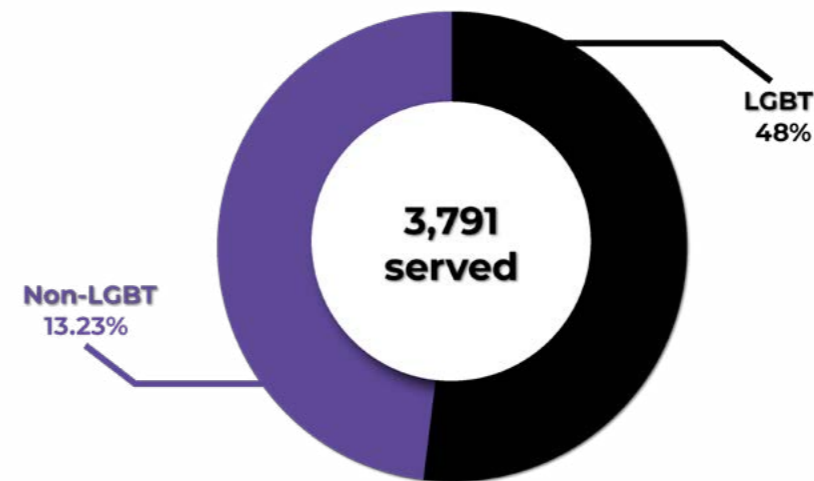
## 108,804

Total Number of People Served

## Network

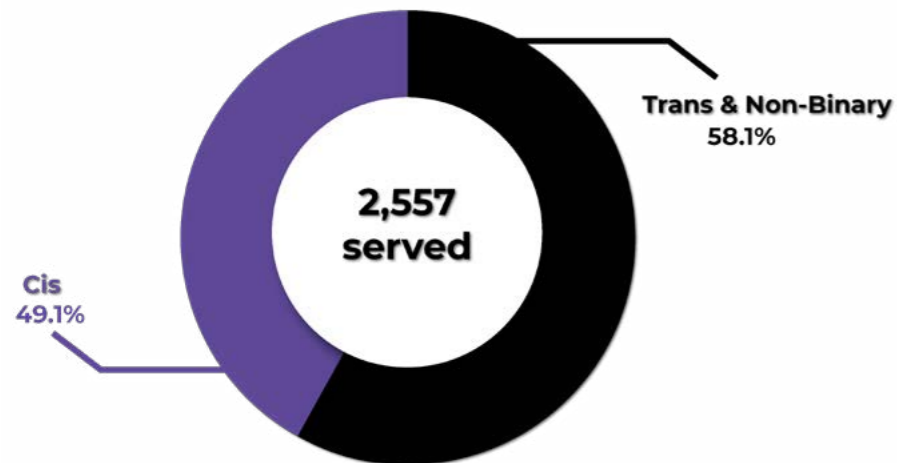
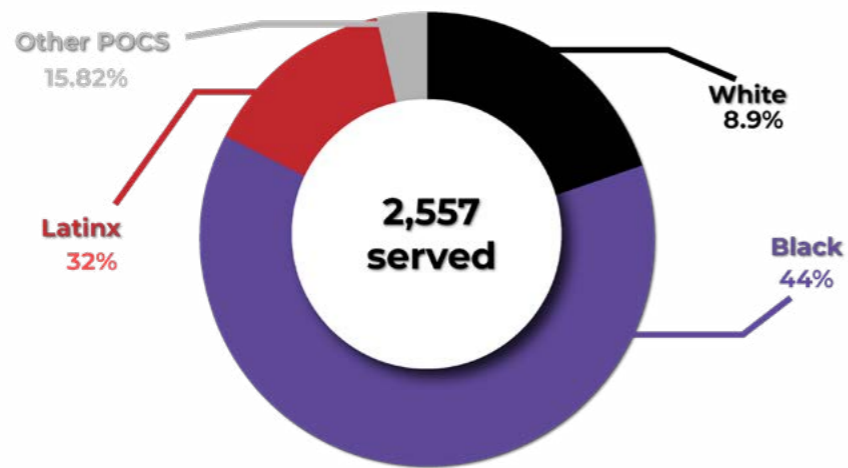
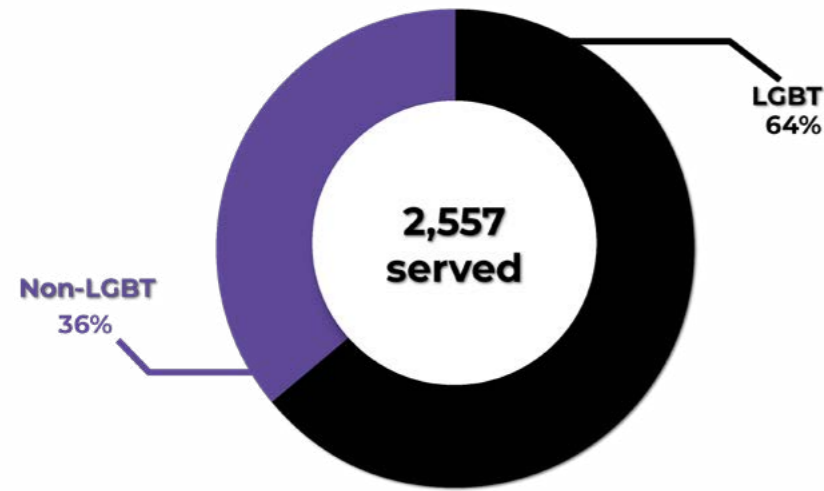


# Delivery Program:



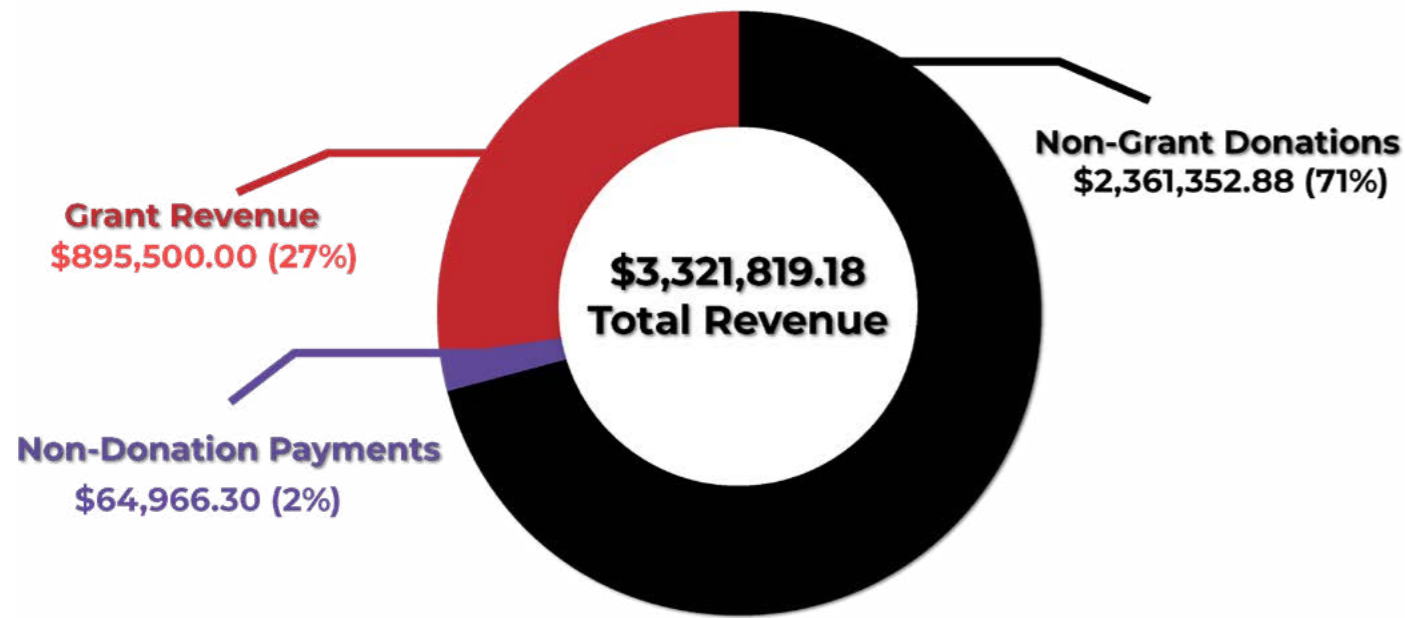
# All Other Programs:

(Gender-Affirming Rooms, Trans Relief/Funeral Fund, Support Groups, Mutual Aid Groups, Direct Mutual Aid, Housing Programs, Name Change Clinics):

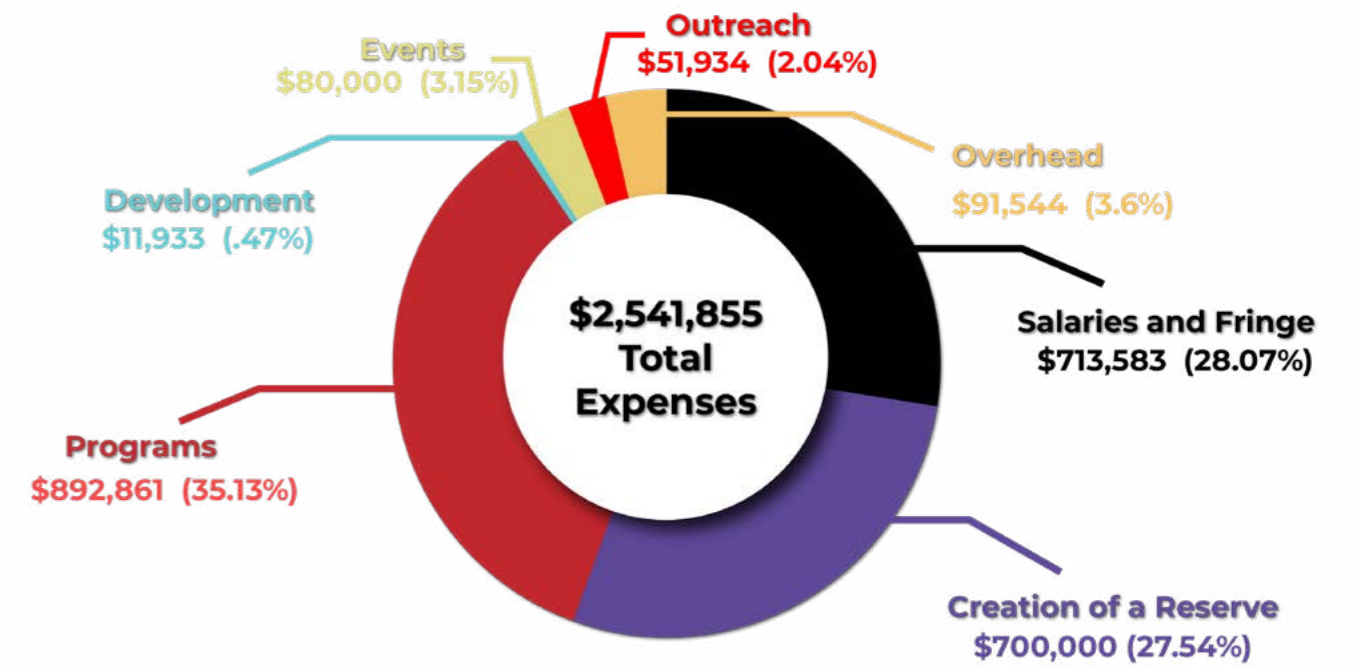


# Finances

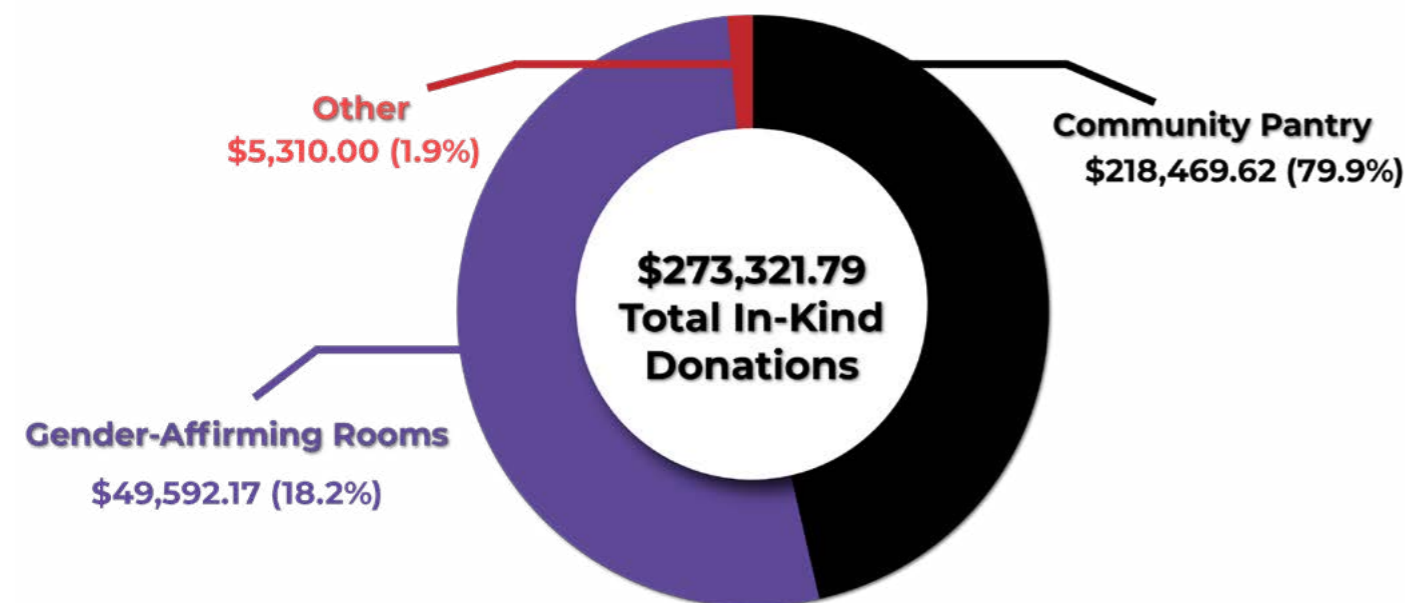
# Revenue



# Expenses



# In-Kind Donations





# Organization Giving Recognition

## (Internal Cutoff >= \$10,000)

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois  
 Black Lives Matter Foundation  
 Howard Brown Health Center  
 JB and MK Pritzker Family Foundation  
 Chicago Community Trust Foundation  
 Groundswell Fund  
 AIDS United  
 Chicago Foundation for Women  
 Kraft Heinz  
 Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors  
 Forefront  
 Chicago Region Food Systems  
 AIDS Foundation of Chicago  
 Elton John AIDS Foundation  
 Conagra Brands Foundation  
 Woods Fund of Chicago  
 The Nature Conservancy  
 The Field Foundation of Illinois  
 Joyce Foundation  
 Jackson National Life Insurance Company  
 DTS Chicago Inc.  
 Polk Brothers Foundation  
 Ms. Foundation  
 Markel Corporation  
 Amalgamated Foundation  
 Alphawood Foundation Chicago  
 Art Institute of Chicago  
 Julian Grace Foundation  
 Kirkland & Ellis LLP  
 Three Floyds Brewing



Herbert V. Kohler, Jr. / Natalie Black Kohler Foundation  
 For Giving Back  
 ViiV Healthcare  
 Sprout Social  
 Green Thumb Industries  
 DRW Foundation

## Major In-Kind Donors

Vegan Outreach  
 Imperfect Produce  
 Nike  
 DECIEM  
 Real Techniques  
 Stealth Bros  
 Early to Bed

## Brave Business Network Members

The Neofuturists  
 Reverb.com  
 MUSE Community Design  
 Woman Made Gallery  
 Skeleton Key Brewery  
 Early to Bed  
 Hopewell Brewing  
 Eye Eaters LLC

## Leslie Feinberg Advocate Level Unicorn Ball Sponsors

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois  
 Practical Audacity LLC

# Individual Donor Recognition

## >\$20,000

David Stanford  
 Maria Plaxco  
 Steve and Shannon Elkins

## \$10,000 to \$19,999

T.A.G. Fund  
 Martha and Donald Farley  
 Tyrell Huey  
 Anonymous  
 Patti Clower  
 David and Bici Pritzker  
 Spencer Neiman  
 David Stanford

## \$5000 to \$9999

Brent and Luis Holman-Gomez  
 Mark Liberson  
 Eric Pynnonen  
 Kara Lessin

Cody Scott  
 Elizabeth Howard

Anonymous  
 Martha Stair  
 Todd Herbert and Jody Mandel-Herbert  
 Peter and Stacey Chieng

## \$2500 to \$4999

Jordan Harrison  
 Rebecca Norling-Ruggles  
 Mike Shively  
 Steve and Jessica Sarowitz  
 Richard Stewart  
 Abby McEnany  
 Dan Roller  
 Brandon Hunter-Haydon  
 David and Erin Solow and Yancey  
 Dnaiel Rothschild  
 Cheryl Lulias  
 Jeff Grigsby  
 Anonymous  
 Elyse Schauer  
 Erica Mazza  
 Brandon Thomas  
 Matthew and Tina Schubert  
 Anmarie Kolinski

# Our Vision for 2022

As we celebrate our fifth year anniversary as an organization, Brave Space Alliance is excited to continue rapidly expanding and growing.

2022 will see the final preparations for our Lucy Hicks Anderson Housing Program, which will begin accepting clients in 2023, and will provide a critical housing and support resource to Black and Brown trans Chicagoans. In addition, our Community Pantry will launch its warehouse location in the South Side's Chatham neighborhood, a move that will exponentially increase our capacity to feed our people. We will also be adding to our suite of gender-affirming services with the launch of a laser and electrolysis room at our Hyde Park office, which will provide free hair removal services to our community.

In even more exciting news, Brave Space Alliance is currently looking to purchase an additional location on the South Side to house our Programs Department, as we are quickly running out of space in our Hyde Park location. This new space will function as a community drop-in center, and will significantly increase our reach across the South Side. We also plan to expand our mental health programs—stay tuned for more information!

In addition, Brave Space Alliance looks forward to growing our partnership with Taskforce Prevention and Community Services (see above for more details). This partnership is both crucial and groundbreaking for queer Chicagoans on the West Side, as well as LGBTQ+ youth across the city. 2021 has already seen many amazing points of collaboration between our two organizations, and we are confident that 2022 will bring even more.

Finally, as always, BSA will continue its commitment and dedication to the well-being and growth of its Black and Brown trans staff by emphasizing self-care and providing funding for professional development opportunities.