

ANNUAL REPORT FISCAL YEAR 2022

FROM THE DIRECTORS

Building a Cathedral

FINANCIAL REPORT

Balanced Growth

IMPACT SNAPSHOTS

Innovation & Leadership

THE ABORTION TALKS

Our Legacy, Today

A Note from the Directors

Polarization thrives in the spaces between us. These inner spaces—the gaps between what we believe and what we're able to say, the leap from uncertainty to conviction, the void that separates fear from hope—are made manifest within physical spaces such as schools, conference rooms, back yards, and town halls.

It is within these critical spaces that the work of Essential Partners has the greatest impact. We give people the means to strengthen relationships, deepen belonging, and renew hope in their communities.

In the growing field of bridge-building organizations, Essential Partners stands apart. We remain unique for the depth and rigor of our training, the flexibility and resilience of our approach, as well as the endurance of our impact, influence, and commitment.

Our theory of change builds from the ground up, community by community. We empower leaders who shape cornerstone institutions like schools, faith centers, public institutions, and workplaces, which instill the culture of a community and comprise the fabric of this nation.

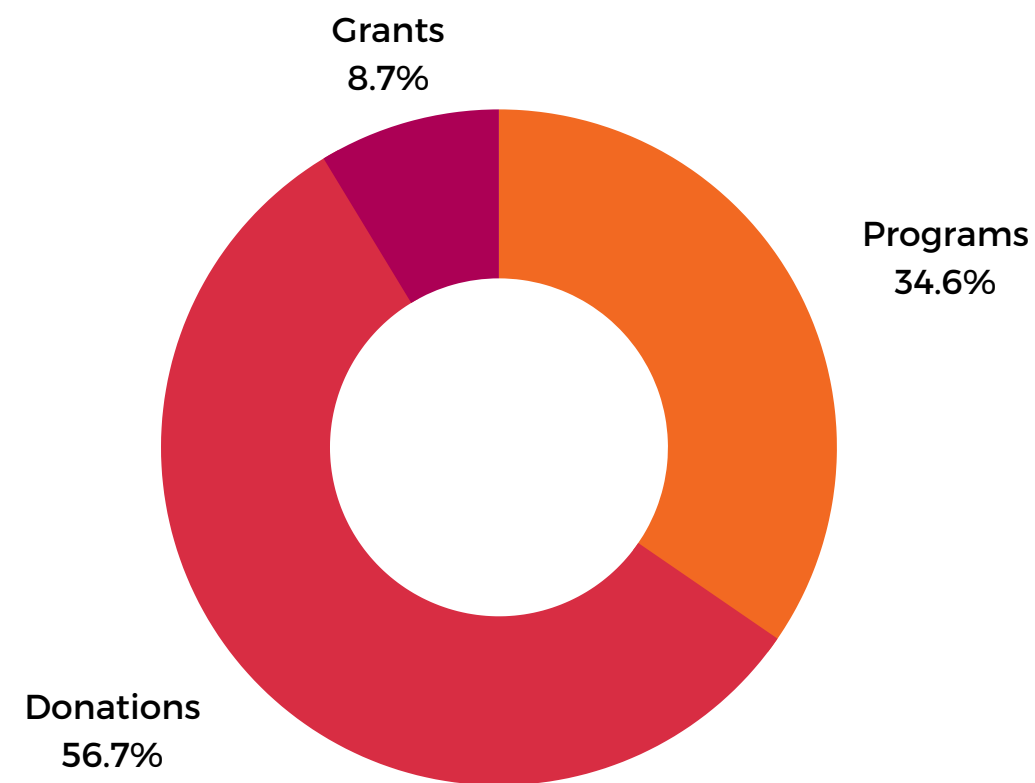
That's why we provide in-depth training *and* offer scalable group workshops *and* engage partners in culture-change initiatives *and* support people through our Community of Practice. With a critical mass of local change, we can transform the country—and the world.

It takes sustained investments of expertise, time, and resources to do this work. It's not quick and it isn't easy. **In those crucial spaces between people, we are not just laying bricks. We are building a cathedral.**

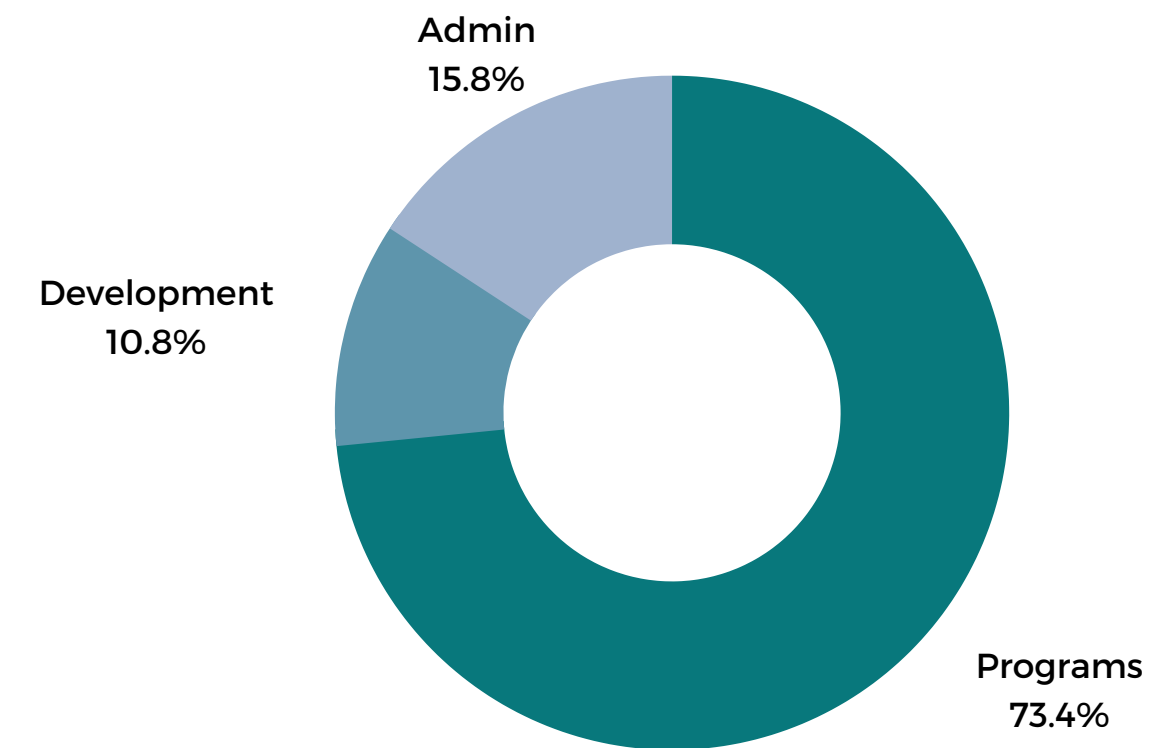
KATIE HYTEN & JOHN SARROUF
CO-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS



FY22 REVENUE: \$1,739,648



FY22 EXPENDITURES: \$1,540,488



Financial Report

The demand for Essential Partners' transformative approach remains robust.

Our FY22 growth was driven by grants and individual donations, which allowed our program team to pursue continued innovations to our approach, particularly in the civic and school sectors.

Our long-term strategic goals continue to strike a balance between grant-funded innovations and sustaining high-impact partnerships with cornerstone institutions such as schools, workplaces, faith centers, colleges, and civic groups.

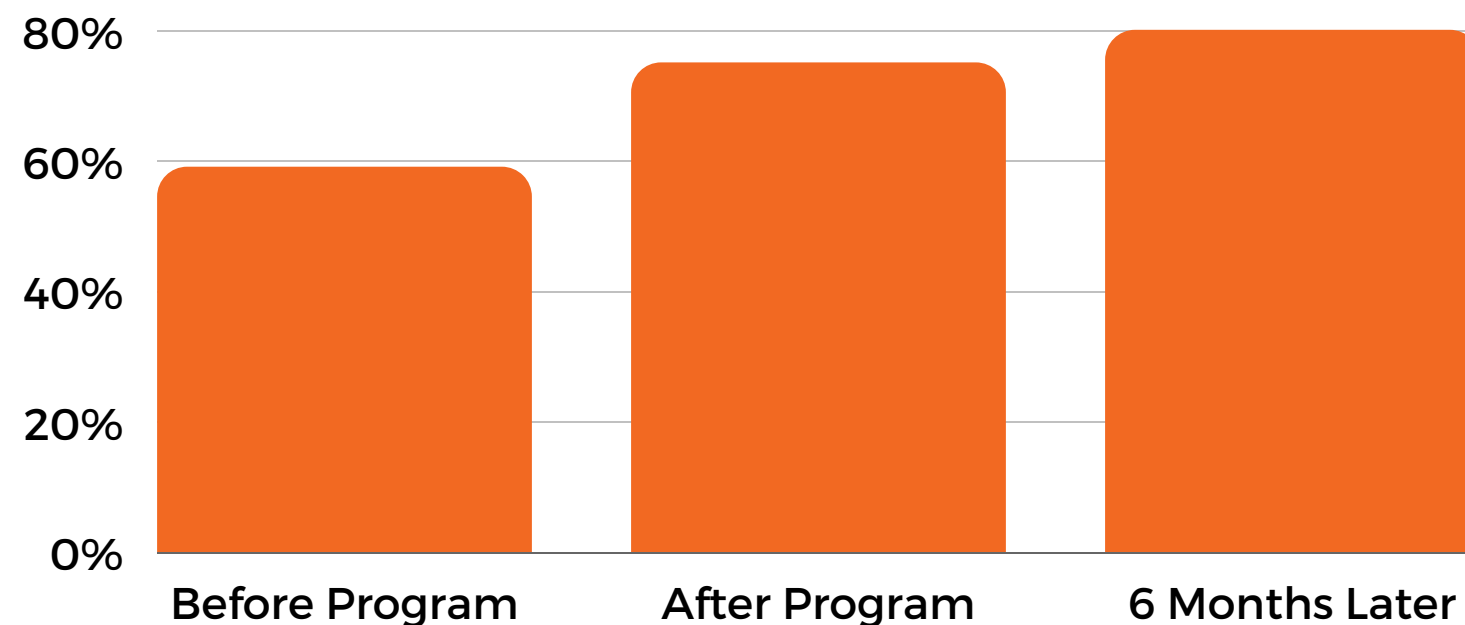
In FY23, we will be giving up our Cambridge, MA, office space. EP has been largely virtual since 2020, with great success. This move will reduce overhead and allow more investments in high-impact collaborations.



FY22 Impact: By the Numbers

42 CORNERSTONE PARTNERS AND
1,772 BRIDGE-BUILDERS TRAINED
IN 23 STATES + 9 OTHER COUNTRIES

After an Essential Partners program ends
+21% more people agree with the statement:
“I feel that my community is cohesive.”

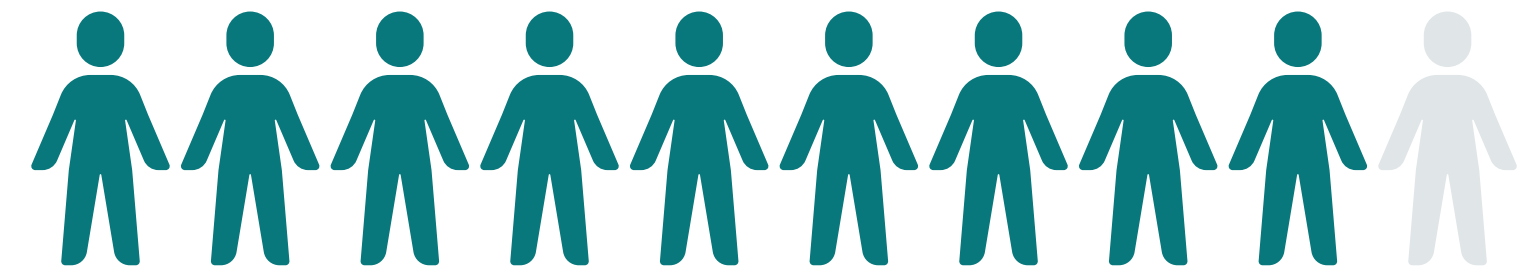


88% of participants see new connections forming across differences up to twelve months after an EP program ends.



89% of participants feel more understood by “the other side” after an EP program.

91% of participants experience greater trust in people with different identities, values, or perspectives after an Essential Partners program.





GRANT-FUNDED INNOVATION

Essential Photovoice

Thanks to a grant from the Fetzer Institute, EP is leveraging the power of our Reflective Structured Dialogue with Interfaith Photovoice, an image-based community engagement methodology. This new joint initiative, **Essential Photovoice**, will empower leaders in 12 regions across the US to transform their communities.

“This approach breaks down cultural barriers, misunderstandings, and miscommunications. I don’t believe there is a more opportune or critical time in our country’s history for this work.”

MITCH, A PARTICIPATING POLICE OFFICER
RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA



Mt. Vernon School

Mount Vernon School in Atlanta, Georgia is collaborating with Essential Partners to create a self-sustaining dialogue program that will encourage student growth, curiosity, and deeper understanding across differences. EP has equipped students, educators, and parents with the capacities to navigate diverse identities, values, and perspectives.

“EP's model provides tools and principles that are flexible enough to meet our myriad needs and priorities around teaching, learning, and human development. In our journey to becoming a dialogic community, EP makes the work manageable and supports learning along the way.”

STACEY LEE, CHIEF OF INCLUSION, DIVERSITY,
EQUITY AND ACTION, MOUNT VERNON SCHOOL



Reducing Polarization Preventing Violence, Sustaining Democracy

On the anniversary of the January 6th Capitol attack, Co-Executive Director Katie Hyten published an article at *The Fulcrum*, which was syndicated across the country.

In it, she argues that the way out of spiraling political violence is to engage the people around us with curiosity and compassion.

“Democracy is not merely a political institution. It is a way of life. It’s a way of living with one another, being able to agree and disagree, embracing our different perspectives and individual histories.”



**“The bonds we forge in compassion
will be stronger than the forces
tearing this country apart.”**

KATIE HYTEN, EP CO-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Catholic Civil Dialogue Initiative

Last year, Essential Partners trained Catholic diocesan leaders, youth ministers, theologians, and campus ministers to help young people explore their values in the context of Catholic Social Teaching, leading dialogues on topics such as the dignity of human life, racial justice, and immigration.

“With all of the things going on the past few years, such as COVID-19, the different movements, the recent election, and more, it is refreshing to be able to discuss the dignity of life with others, whether they agree with your opinion or not.”

FRANCESCA D’AMICO, ’22
IMMACULATE HEART ACADEMY (NJ)

ACCORDING TO A JERSEY CATHOLIC ARTICLE ON NOVEMBER. 8, 2021



THE ABORTION TALKS



DOCUMENTARY FILM

The Abortion Talks

“Excellent, important, timely, urgent, and needs to be seen and discussed widely.”

PETER COLEMAN, AUTHOR OF *THE WAY OUT*

The Abortion Talks, a new independent documentary, tells the story of a 1994 clinic shooting in Boston and the secret dialogues between pro-life and pro-choice leaders that were convened and led by EP's visionary co-founder Laura R. Chasin, with colleague Susan Podziba. It is an urgent, timely documentary of courage, transformation, and hope.

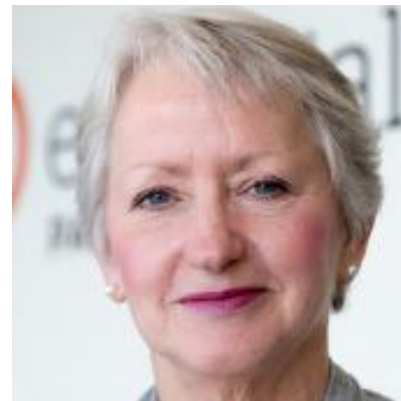
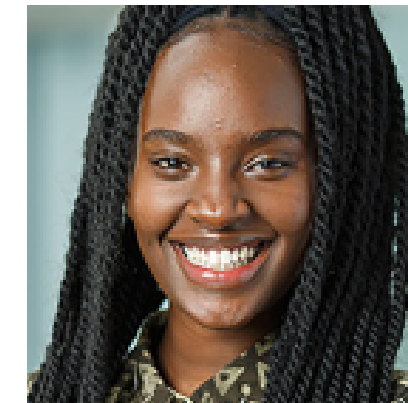
To arrange a screening of *The Abortion Talks* in your community, contact Daniel Pritchard:

daniel@whatisessential.org

Today, through donor-funded resources like our [Guide to Dialogues About Abortion](#), community collaborations, and influential thought leadership, Essential Partners continues to transform the way people build community across their differences on this explosive issue.

Our Expert Practitioners

Located across the country, our practitioners bring a wide array of experiences to their work with Essential Partners. They include veteran educators, lawyers, mediators, and faith leaders.



Our Leadership

Ten Directors serve on the Essential Partners Board. These board members draw on diverse professional backgrounds to provide organizational guidance, with the co-Executive Directors serving in an ex-officio capacity.



Brendan Abel,
Board Chair



Jeanne Emanuel,
Board Vice-Chair



Darwensi Clark,
Board Secretary



Molly Zuker,
Board Member



Robert O'Hara,
Board Treasurer



Katie Hyten,
Co-Executive Director



Gary Sandhu,
Board Member



Nisha Mongia,
Board Member



Kara Boyle,
Board Member



Rev. Branden S. Polk, MSW,
Board Member



John Sarrouf,
Co-Executive Director

