

2025 **ANNUAL REPORT**



**PROVIDING SUPPORT
AND RESOURCES IN
A SAFE, WELCOMING
ENVIRONMENT FOR THE
DIVERSE COMMUNITY
OF RACETRACK WORKERS
AND THEIR FAMILIES.**

DEAR FRIEND,

Our mission to provide support and resources in a safe, welcoming environment for the diverse community of backside workers and families on a daily basis encompasses a lot. It includes the 100 plus individuals who come through our doors each week for a brief reprieve from the elements. It includes the moms who have been up since 3:30 in the morning, but continue to show up with their toddlers after work so they will be ready for kindergarten. It includes the exhausted adult learners still prioritizing English classes in the evenings so they can better communicate with their trainers. It also includes those asking for guidance as they open a bank account, or those finding themselves in difficult times seeking food assistance. We serve as an entire support system for whatever the community needs.

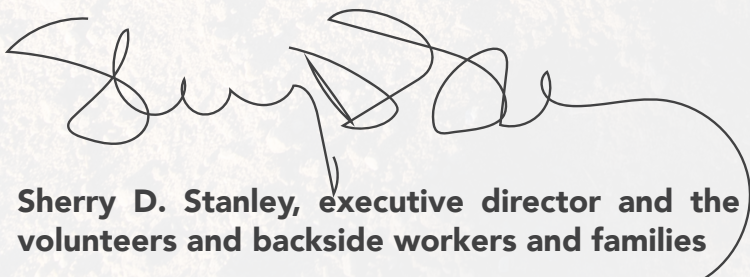
I could share hundreds of stories of people who have walked through our doors spilling their hearts out: the humble testimonies of those who have faced unimaginable challenges of acute poverty and the inability to survive off small-scale agriculture in their home countries, worsened by climate change, corrupt governments and social violence. Individuals who possess such determination have managed to migrate to this country in search of a better future for themselves and their families. As a mother, I am always touched by many grown adults who speak proudly of their own mothers. They work hard so their parents don't have to suffer. These are the kinds of people we are here to support.

The equine industry generates more than \$6.5 billion annually for Kentucky. Yet, our community's contribution to our state is so much more than that. They exemplify ingenuity, industriousness, the love of family, hard work, and generosity. This is why I am so incredibly grateful to have found myself embedded in this community that has taught me so much.

Your connection to our mission shows, without hesitation, that you support and respect these families and individuals and understand their value—not just as workers but as humans. I would like to invite you to engage with our mission in any way that works for you! Volunteering and doing acts of kindness have proven to boost happiness, psychological well-being, and quality of life. Also, research has shown that people who engage in volunteering and charitable donations even have lower levels of physical pain!

Please enjoy our 2025 Annual Report, and if you are able, we'd love to host you for a visit to the BLC so that you can see and meet the faces behind the numbers of those who enrich our lives every day!

Again, thank you for being a part of the wonderful community on the backside. Our work would not be possible if not for your support, whether it be past, present, or future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sherry D. Stanley', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Sherry D. Stanley, executive director and the entire team of BLC staff, board, volunteers and backside workers and families



MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS



3,000+
SERVICES PROVIDED



1,000+
PEOPLE SERVED



11+
COUNTRIES
REPRESENTED

BLC STAFF

Merlin Cano, Early Childhood Assistant (PT)
Amaray Coca, Admin. Coordinator & English Instructor
Andrew Crum, Grants & Events Manager
Beth Hartvigsen, Accountant (Independent Consultant)
Peyton Hobson, Communications & Marketing Manager
Daniela Jacuinde, Community Mental Health Coordinator
Michelle Lopez, Youth Programs Assistant
Usman Mustafa, Volunteer Coordinator (PT)
Taylor Ohlmann, Youth Programs Manager
Penelope Quesada, Adult & Family Programs Manager
Josefina Richardson, Youth Services Coordinator
April Smith, Director of Programs
Sherry Stanley, Executive Director
Enidza Torres, Director of Development
Luz Elena Valdespino, Social Services Manager
Ximena Villalobos, Youth Empowerment Coordinator
Micaela Vizcarrondo, Academic Support Coordinator

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Stephen Lin, President
Jeff Kennedy, Vice President
Annie Jessee, Secretary
Dave Burianek, Treasurer

MEMBERS:

William "Buff" Bradley
Caton Bedar
Victor Calderón
Paul Halloran
Glenn Kosse
Stephen Lin
Paola Morante
David Shanahan
Janisha Szabo
Xaimara Torres
Amy Zink



EDUCATION

The BLC provides a variety of educational programs and services for both backside workers and their children.

Our adult educational programming primarily centers around English language acquisition focusing on practical application in both the racetrack work setting and day-to-day interactions. They include beginner students in a classroom setting while intermediate and advanced English students receive one-on-one lessons with tutors.

Our youth educational programming focuses on literacy development, social and emotional learning, and advocacy thanks to an ongoing partnership with Jefferson County Public Schools. We work side-by-side with our youth to foster healthy communication and emotion management skills that are applicable to both

academic and social environments. Some of our youth-focused initiatives are our Front Runners after-school program, a summer reading program, and a youth leadership program.

In 2025, we began our first early childhood program occurring twice weekly, designed to help parents build the skills and confidence they need to prepare their children for kindergarten success. Each session focuses on key areas of development—literacy, math, and social-emotional learning—while also guiding families through practical steps like understanding early childhood milestones, completing preschool or kindergarten registration, and meeting school readiness requirements.



49

YOUTH IN
AFTER-SCHOOL
PROGRAMMING



17

STUDENTS GRADES
K-5 PARTICIPATED
IN OUR SUMMER
LITERACY CAMP



71

ADULTS ACTIVELY
ENROLLED IN
ENGLISH CLASSES



291

BOOKS READ
AT SUMMER
LITERACY CAMP



YOUTH & FAMILY EMPOWERMENT

The interests and concerns of equine worker families and youth were amplified by the continued growth of these major initiatives in 2025.

In addition to our early childhood initiatives focused on kindergarten readiness, we've continued our partnership with YMCA and their "Early Learning Readiness" program. For 29 weeks last year, 30 families including caregivers and their children 0 to 5 years old had the opportunity to WORK TOGETHER practicing physical, verbal, and social skills. Tremendous growth was noticed in parent-to-child communication and teamwork.

Early childhood participants who were identified as needing speech and occupational therapy were given the precious opportunity to receive that support thanks to the generosity of Lift a Life Novak Family Foundation at Mind Body Child Pediatric Solutions. This year, 10 children received direct support weekly and eight either graduated or moved into Kindergarten and shifted to JCPS internal support. This opportunity gives families a much needed support to help their children develop to the level needed to succeed in a mainstream classroom. Early childhood and parent support partnerships include Family Health Center, Louisville Department of Public Health and Wellness (HANDS, Healthy Start, & WIC), Head Start Program, JCPS ESL and Early Childhood, Mind Body Child, Spalding University, and University of Louisville Early Childhood Resource Center.

We've also worked to provide teens with opportunities in leadership and growth this past year, as 22 teens participated in the youth program titled "Teen Talks" honing in on presentation skills.

"I feel a little relieved in that [the BLC] is helping my kids. The difference, I see their progress. They also help me, because whatever I'm not able to do you guys help with."

-Ediberto, exercise rider

Father of students participating in the Front Runners program



47

INDIVIDUALS
BENEFITED FROM
MONTHLY
SUPPORT GROUPS



30

CHILDREN
PARTICIPATED
IN YMCA'S EARLY
LEARNING READINESS
PROGRAM



22

TEENS INVOLVED
IN YOUTH LEADERSHIP
PROGRAM



OUR IN-HOUSE SERVICES:

- Translation and interpretation
- Housing support
- Community financial resources
- Youth-specific services
- Legal advocacy
- Mental health support
- Transportation access
- Churchill Downs mail distribution
- Digital literacy
- Internet/printing/daily coffee
- Referrals to partner agencies

HUMAN SERVICES & WELLNESS

Our office is centrally located in the heart of the racetrack community where our clients live and work, giving us the unique opportunity to be within and a part of the community we serve. Because of our unique location and longstanding commitment to partnering with our families, our clients entrust us with their challenges, losses, and accomplishments. Every day looks different at the BLC as we adapt to the needs and interests of the community.

Clients with more complex needs may participate in our comprehensive case-management programming. A case manager will work in tandem with clients to create short and long-term goals and work towards their achievement. We often refer clients to partners and local community resources that have the specializations needed to most effectively meet our clients' needs. We seek to continue to provide a safe environment where clients can feel they have a home away from home. Our ultimate goal is to encourage clients to form long-lasting connections to the larger Louisville community.

As an organization rooted in Trauma Informed Care, our staff holds a deep understanding of these issues and strives daily to equip our community with tools that promote physical and mental well-being. For six weeks, participants gathered weekly for a mental health workshop. They formed lasting friendships, shared stories and learned strategies to address anxieties, stress and trauma in a healthy way. The focus on emotional and physical well being was well received and is expected to continue and grow in the upcoming year.





"I'm grateful to the Backside Learning Center for providing English classes so I can improve at my job, understand it a little better and understand the trainer more."

-Mike, groom
English class participant



381
CASE MANAGEMENT
SERVICES REALIZED



3,619
WALK-IN
SERVICES
PROVIDED



15
STUDENTS PARTICIPATED
IN MENTAL HEALTH
SUPPORT GROUP

PURSES FOR A PURPOSE

Purses for a Purpose was introduced in 2020 as an initiative for providing horse owners a way to give back to those who are the backbone of the horse racing industry. Thanks to the generosity of his part-owner Brook Smith, Sierra Leone was enrolled on our team. In 2024, Sierra Leone finished a close second in the Kentucky Derby and won the Breeder's Cup Classic. In 2025, Sierra Leone won the Whitney Stakes, and placed in the Breeder's Cup Classic, the Jockey Club Gold Cup Stakes, the Stephen Foster Stakes, and showed in the New Orleans Classic Stakes. Donations made as a result of this success will go directly toward programming and resources supporting backside workers and their families in Louisville. A sincere thank you to Rocket Ship Racing, LLC for spearheading this initiative!





CULTURE & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In collaboration with numerous local organizations, the BLC offers outings and excursions focused on creating meaningful, ongoing connections with the greater Louisville community. Many of these partnerships take place during the school year, as well as the summer, and include scholarships for summer camps. In the past year, some of our community partners supporting mental and physical well-being have included:

- Bernheim Forest & Research Arboretum
- Food Literacy Project: Field to Fork
- Passionist Earth & Spirit Center
- Louisville Nature Center
- Compassionate Schools Project



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UNIQUE SUMMER
CAMP EXPERIENCES

Moreover, we facilitate unique opportunities to engage with the arts in our diverse local community. We've had the opportunity to collaborate with organizations such as:

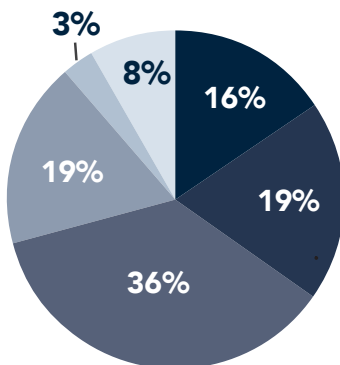
- Fund for the Arts (HeARTS Program)
- Kentucky Museum for Arts and Crafts
- Speed Art Museum
- Kentucky Shakespeare
- Louisville Visual Arts

In addition to our direct educational assistance, we've partnered with education-focused community organizations in our after-school programs and summer connections, including:

- Breakthrough Louisville
- JCPS Office of Multilingual Learners
- Adelante Hispanic Achievers
- Louisville Free Public Library
- Book Spot Bus
- Know Waste
- Junior Achievement

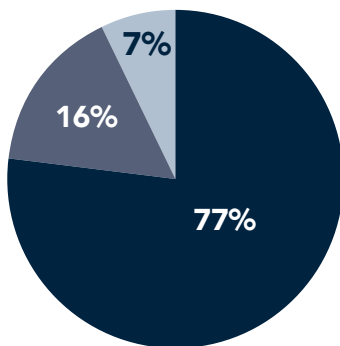
FINANCIAL INFO, 2025 FISCAL YEAR

OCT. 2023–SEPT. 2024



TOTAL REVENUE: \$1,216,490

- Individual Donations: \$189,838
- Corporate Donations: \$235,326
- Grants: \$439,892
- Special Events: \$216,447
- In-Kind Contributions: \$34,986
- Purses for a Purpose program: \$100,000



TOTAL EXPENSES: \$1,242,087

- Programs Expenses: \$958,667
- Direct Fundraising Expenses: \$198,284
- Administrative Expenses: \$85,136

MAJOR FOUNDATIONS & CORPORATE PARTNERS



THE GHEENS FOUNDATION



JPMORGAN
CHASE & CO.

KLEIN FAMILY
FOUNDATION



MACKIN FAMILY
FOUNDATION



A HUGE THANK YOU TO:

MONETARY DONORS FROM OCT. 2024–DEC. 2025

\$25,000+

- Anonymous
- Brook Smith
- Carol & Thomas Meeker
- Churchill Downs Inc.
- Impact100
- Jewish Heritage Fund
- Lift a Life Novak Family Foundation
- Thoroughbred Charities of America

\$10,000–\$24,999

- Beth & Richard Klein
- Brown-Forman
- Cheryl Silvey-Slusher
- FanDuel
- Gheens Foundation
- JP Morgan Chase
- Julie Ardrey & Bill Bishop
- Keith Sant
- Kosair for Kids
- Metro United Way
- Sandra Frazier
- U.S. Bank Foundation

\$5,000–\$9,999

- Adele Dilschneider
- Anita Ebert
- Beechmont Neighborhood Association
- Bill Wetterer
- Cherie DeVaux & David Ingordo
- Christian Word Ministries
- Community Foundation of Louisville
- Cralle Foundation
- Cristin & Jason Richey
- Fastline Media Group
- Helen Peter
- Humana
- Jean Zehnder
- KY Thoroughbred Farm Managers' Club
- Lindy B. Street
- Snowy Owl Foundation
- Susan & Lee Bishop
- The Sam Schubert Foundation

\$1,000–\$4,999

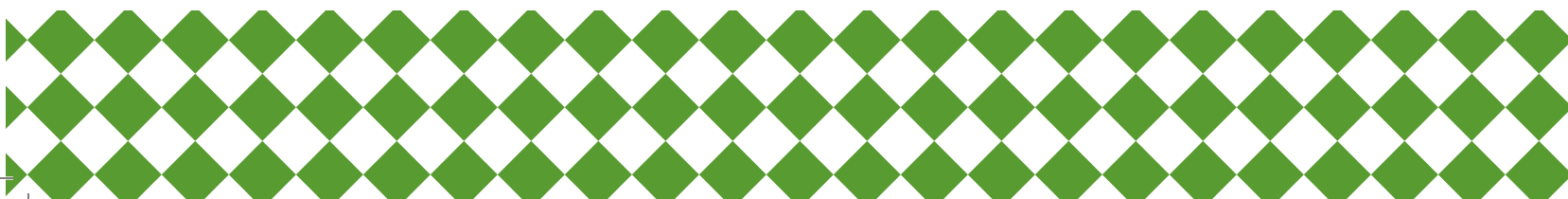
- Allie & Masey Goatley*
- Amber & Paul Halloran
- Anne Carrico
- Arbor Homes, Elite Homes
- Audrey & Michael Haynes
- Barbara & Neil Webster
- Beth Stremel
- Blackout Racing Stables
- Bridget & David Burianek
- Brook Ledge Transportation
- Bruce White
- Cardinal Pointe Financial Group LLC
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- Janisha Szabo & Chad Hutchison
- Jewish Family & Career Services
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- Julie Asmussen
- Karen & Gordon Crum
- Kathleen Pellegrino
- Kristin Stuedle*
- Laura Herberholz & Hazel Sanders*
- Leisa & Tom Drexler
- Louisville Metro Government

- Mark T
- Mary & Ted Nixon
- Mary Susan & Bob Meyer
- Mike Schoenman
- Moises Altamirano
- Nancy Martin & Fred Hendler
- Nathan Lindemeyer
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- Pam & Jim Ratterman
- Paul Stanley
- Paula Burke*
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- Smith Rodes
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- Stephen P Imhoff
- Stock Yards Bank & Trust
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- Tanya Higgins & Jim Carrico
- The Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels
- Theresa Bondurant
- Thomas Sherman
- Tri-Arrows Aluminum
- Vicki & Mike Tomlinson

\$250–\$999

- Alicia Gunn
- Amy & Matt Landon
- Amy Lapinski
- Andea Woodner
- Angelica Shea & Joseph McMahan*
- Ann Thompson
- Annie & Bill Jessee
- Anonymous
- Barbara & Larry Lamade
- Barbara Donaldson
- Brenda & Jeff Guernsey
- Brendan Walsh
- Bret Calhoun
- Carla Grego
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- Cheryl & Mike Anderson
- Chris Hartman
- Connie & Will Hobson
- Craig Wong
- David Bass
- Elizabeth & Paul Schneider
- F.P. Sprinkle
- Friends of the Fern Creek Library
- Heath Harlem
- Heather Mammen
- James Jozefowicz
- Jan & Brett Landow
- Jeff Kennedy
- Jenny & Kenny Pritchett
- Joanne & Brian Lynch
- Joe Krill
- Joe Sharp
- John Conway
- John Lierseemann
- Julia Karcher
- Karen Nelson*
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- Kelly & Ian Ramsey
- Kelsey Danner
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- Kristie Harned
- Kristin Gaydos
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- Lauren DeGeorge & Matt Riggle
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- Linda & Lewis Carlisle
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- Lucy Sweeney
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- Mary Beth & Bill Comer
- Mary Lou & Glenn Whitfield
- Mary Michael & Sam Corbett
- Michelle Lovell
- Mike Maker
- Mike Wolf
- Monica Lakhwani
- Myrna & Abelardo Saavedra
- Nancy & Frank Herron
- Oxmoor Auto Group
- Pam Wessel*



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- Patty & Tom McEachron
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- Peter W. Ronald
- Rambler Garden Club
- Rebecca Siebel
- Richard & Stephanie Blaho
- Riley Mott
- Robert Florian
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- Sara Foerster
- Sarah Hunter
- Sharon & Greg Woods
- Stefanie Jordan
- Stu Crum
- Sue & Richard Pickeren
- Sue Visliser
- Suzanne House
- Suzanne Houston
- Taffy Beam
- Tammy Fox & Dale Romans
- Tawana Edwards & Larry Nau
- Thomas Butler
- Thomas Fischer
- Thomas Wills
- Tracie Starr
- Tracy Scott
- Valerie & David Hall
- Vanita Farrow
- Victoria Haberman
- William E Farmer

\$100-\$249

- Abby Murphy
- Al Stall Jr.
- Alayne Wright
- Amy Barber
- Amy Gregory
- Andie Biancone
- Andrew Drawe
- Ann Botula

- Ann L. Swope
- Ann Roberts
- Anna & Robb Shrader
- Anne Kaiser-Harryman
- Anne M Arensberg
- Anthony Calo Jr.
- April Smith
- Barbara Hedspeth
- Bart Attaya
- Beatriz Vides
- Bernie Steen
- Beverly McIntosh
- Bob Heleringer
- Bradley Davis
- Brent Bresser
- Bruce Thomson
- Carol & Tony Butcher
- Catapult Now, LLC
- Cheri Hill
- Chris Cutitto
- Chris French
- Christopher Murphy
- Ciara Warren
- Claudia Schindler
- Clay, Jillian, & Jane Murray
- Cynthia Lee
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- Deanna Smith
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- Donna Simmons
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- Edith Wells
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- GJ Alcock
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- Laura Hernan & Lee Lockwood
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- Lindsey Precious
- Lorie Michaels
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- Susan Smith
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- Victoria & Gary Manella
- Virginia Cromer
- Virginia Gregory
- William Craig Brydwell
- William Johnson
- William Torres
- Yvette & Dallas Stewart

***PARTICIPANTS OF THE WINNER'S CIRCLE SUSTAINING DONOR INITIATIVE**





WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING, SCAN THE QR CODE ON THIS PAGE OR CALL 502 634 6543.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

- "Front Runners" after-school program
- One-on-one tutoring
- Adult English classes
- Early childhood assistance
- Transportation services
- Community outreach/tabling events
- Moving furniture and/or delivery of donations
- Special events assistance
- Contact us about how to use your expertise as an act of service

HELP US IN OTHER WAYS:

- Designate the BLC as the beneficiary for your Derby pool or other fundraiser
- Join our "Winner's Circle" monthly sustainer initiative
- Check out our wish list on our web site
- Leave a legacy
- Add us to your Kroger card as your community rewards recipient
- Attend fundraising events
- Invite us to present at your workplace lunch and learn



PHYSICAL ADDRESS

3716 Oakdale Ave
Louisville, KY 40208

MAILING ADDRESS

3131 S. 2nd St. #389
Louisville, KY 40208

SCAN HERE:



BACKSIDELEARNINGCENTER.ORG
502 634 6543



Backside Learning Center
AT CHURCHILL DOWNS