



## Impact Report

July 2022–June 2023

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## Letter from Gina Stilp

### Executive Director

During the past year, as we continued to recover from the consequences of the pandemic, the Foundation prioritized the healing and stabilization of our social sector organizations and leaders. We focused equally on building trusting partnerships, mobilizing resources, and galvanizing action to improve some of our communities' biggest challenges. As we look back on another year of investments, I feel inspired by the Foundation's work and motivated by the opportunities ahead.

We know that our effectiveness as a funder depends on strong, trusting grantee relationships. In the past year, we invested our time and resources into building deeper partnerships and better grantmaking practice. For the first time, we commissioned the Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP) to conduct its Grantee Perception Report (GPR) as a means to gather unfiltered feedback from our grantee

partners on the Foundation's practices. We were honored to receive feedback that we're viewed as a thought leader, collaborator, and best practice funder. We also heard that partners value flexible funding and investments in organizational development. In response, we launched a Capacity Building program to help grantee partners build resilient teams and organizations ready to meet the pressing social and economic needs of our communities.

We believe in the possibility of cultivating a new and better society. We know it will take all of us working in partnership to succeed. We are proud to share the collective impact of our philanthropic investments and show our deep appreciation to our partners.

With gratitude,  
**Gina Stilp**  
 Executive Director



**We know it will take all of us working in partnership to succeed.**

# Zilber Family Foundation Mission and Approach



We are dedicated to enhancing the wellbeing of individuals, families and neighborhoods by investing in organizations to address basic needs and help ensure personal safety; increase access to social and economic opportunity; and improve the quality of life in neighborhoods.

The four approaches to living the Zilber Family Foundation mission:

- **We invest in solutions:** We align our financial resources in pursuit of our mission.
- **We build capacity:** We support organizations and their leaders to increase effectiveness and long-term impact.
- **We drive partnership:** We build and engage in cross-sector partnerships to align and leverage resources that accelerate impact.
- **We activate our learning:** We assess and adapt our performance and support our partners to achieve organizational excellence and continuous improvement.

Photo credit: Running Rebels Community Organization



**The Foundation is always one step ahead of other funders in their strategies and approach. One example is the neighborhood strengthening approach. Another illustration is their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.**

**- Grantee Testimonial**

## Grantee Perception Report

At the Zilber Family Foundation, we seek feedback from our grantee partners to assess the Foundation's practices, programs, and partnerships, and to help identify opportunities to improve. In 2022, we commissioned the Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP) to conduct a confidential survey of our grantee partners to learn about their experiences working with the Foundation so that we could improve the grantee experience and build stronger relationships with our partners. We received a 75% response rate from our partners, and consistently scored in the top 5% among a cohort of similar peer Foundations.

We were pleased and honored to learn that our grantees hold strong positive perceptions of the Foundation's impact on their fields, communities, and organizations, placing the Foundation in the top 15% of CEP's overall dataset for these measures. The Foundation also rated higher than the typical funder in CEP's dataset for our impact on and understanding of grantees' fields, and in the top 5% of CEP's dataset for its impact on and understanding of grantees' local communities.

We identified areas for improvement and developed an actionable plan to apply what we learned. For more information about our next steps, read the report [here](#).



THE CENTER  
FOR EFFECTIVE  
PHILANTHROPY



**The Zilber Family Foundation sets the bar in our community for what a best-practice funder looks like...They are a pillar in our community and the state of Hawaii is better as a whole thanks to their leadership and the example they set for other funders.**

**- Grantee Testimonial**

## Gratitude Grants

Across sectors, 2022 presented another challenging year. Rising costs, worker shortages, and lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic posed new obstacles for organizations of all sizes and industries.

Nonprofits, often already operating at capacity and in challenging circumstances, experienced especially high employee burnout. Responding to the current economic environment and to the needs vocalized by our nonprofit partners, the Foundation awarded 67

Gratitude Grants in December 2022 and increased grant award sizes to some existing partners to account for the rising costs of doing business.

The Gratitude Grants ranged from \$2,500 to \$7,500 and came with one restriction – that the funding be used to show appreciation for staff in some way. The grant awards adjusted for the rising cost of doing business afforded organizations a small sense of security during a time of rising economic uncertainty.



**Thank you so much. What a great idea! Always wanted to get a gift card for our staff to thank them but didn't feel it was appropriate to use our Funders money for this. Thank you for giving us permission to say thank you to our staff for their dedication and hard work. We greatly appreciate the gift.**

**- Grantee Testimonial**



**I can't even begin to tell you how grateful I am for this amazing unexpected, thoughtful gift. Wow! Thank you so very much! These last few years have been such a long rollercoaster, and going through the challenges has helped our little team be more transparent with each other about the support we need to get through all that life brings... This permission to use a grant to appreciate staff makes me think we need to examine our policies around all of this to make sure we have the flexibility to support and appreciate as needed going forward. Thank you, this is such a gift.**

**- Grantee Testimonial**

## Zilber Neighborhood Initiative Program

The Zilber Neighborhood Initiative (ZNI) is a coordinated, place-based strategy to improve the quality of life in Lindsay Heights, Clarke Square, and Layton Boulevard West neighborhoods in Milwaukee. Since 2019, the Foundation has targeted investments to support **affordable housing** and **community economic development** where there is alignment with resident and community priorities, capacity to drive measurable change, and opportunity to scale solutions.

**In FY 2023, The Foundation distributed \$6,161,200 to 53 nonprofit partners through its ZNI program.**

**Housing:** Our goal is to improve access to quality, affordable, and stable housing. To advance this goal, we partner with organizations that focus on:

- Expanding access to secure homeownership
- Improving property conditions
- Preserving affordable rental housing

## STORY OF IMPACT Milwaukee Community Land Trust

Milwaukee stands out among its peer cities for its stark racial inequity in homeownership.

According to estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau: Milwaukee's white homeownership rate was 55.8%, Hispanic homeownership rate 38.5% and Black homeownership rate 25.2%, the lowest among peer cities (Wisconsin Policy Forum's July 2022 report).

Milwaukee Community Land Trust (MCLT) is a new player in the housing landscape in Milwaukee that works with developers, philanthropies, and city agencies to acquire homes and sell them below market rate. This provides a pathway to stable, affordable housing, keeping the home permanently affordable to low-income buyers.

MCLT sold its first, forever-affordable home in June 2023. With four more houses in the pipeline for 2023, MCLT is poised to become a critical partner to advance the Community Development Alliance's approach to providing safe and affordable housing for all.

**Zilber Family Foundation awarded MCLT with a \$300,000 two-year grant in May 2022.**



Photo credit: Milwaukee Community Land Trust

**Community Economic Development:** Our goal is to increase economic growth and the income and net worth of residents in ZNI neighborhoods. To advance this goal, we partner with organizations that focus on:

- Improving conditions of commercial corridors
- Supporting small business development
- Expanding financial education and skill building

## STORY OF IMPACT YWCA Southeast Wisconsin

The Foundation has supported the YWCA of Southeast Wisconsin's Personal Financial Management (PFM) program since 2020. The program helps low- to moderate-income individuals increase their financial knowledge and create short- and long-term goals and action plans to improve their financial well-being. According to the FINRA Foundations' National Capability Study (2019), nearly 66% of individuals do not understand money or how it works. YWCA seeks to fill this void by providing this knowledge, coupled with individualized, culturally responsive support. This work is highlighted by a client success story:

RM is a 41-year-old, African American woman and entrepreneur who came to YWCA SEW looking for an opportunity to understand and improve her financial situation. RM recognized a pattern

of unnecessary spending and how it impacted her ability to maintain an effective budget and save for unexpected events. RM worked with her financial coach to review and consider her entire financial picture to gain a better understanding of what specifically motivated her spending. By identifying her spending type and having a grasp on where each dollar was being spent, RM was able to develop a realistic and achievable spending plan. She continues to make progress on her journey to financial wellness. RM remains determined to stay on track with budget and credit check-in meetings with her coach.

**Zilber Family Foundation awarded YWCA Southeast Wisconsin with a \$135,000 two-year grant in May 2023.**

## Zilber Neighborhood Initiative By The Numbers

The Foundation works with grantees and partners to track results that contribute to our shared housing and community economic development strategies, like homeownership

rates, property improvements, and increased financial wellbeing of residents. Grantees report on results annually. In the 2023 fiscal year, grantees reported the following outcomes.



# 477

ZNI residents educated on becoming homeowners



# 101

Households purchased homes in ZNI neighborhoods



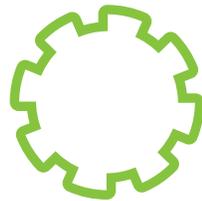
# 114

Homes improved in ZNI neighborhoods



# 45

ZNI residents avoided eviction due to mediation services



# 14

Capital improvements completed along ZNI corridors



# 271

ZNI small businesses received training or assistance



# 140

Small businesses secured financial resources

## Legacy Program

The Foundation recognizes the importance of meeting the basic needs of youth and families, supporting the critical work of human service agencies, and creating greater access to opportunity. We continue our long-time support of Milwaukee-based organizations dedicated to issues that held special importance to our founders, Joe and Vera Zilber.

The Legacy Program provides resources to organizations focused on:

- Basic Human Needs
- Youth Development
- Higher Education

When these basic needs are met, communities can thrive.

**Zilber Family Foundation awarded \$2,921,320 to 29 organizations to support our Legacy partners.**

## STORY OF IMPACT Sojourner Family Peace Center

Sojourner Family Peace Center, Wisconsin's largest domestic violence service agency, has partnered with the Zilber Family Foundation since 2010. Established in 1975, the mission of Sojourner Family Peace Center (Sojourner) is to transform lives affected by domestic violence. In 2016, Sojourner and Children's Hospital of Wisconsin partnered to create one of the first child advocacy and family violence centers in the country.

The Zilber Family Foundation has funded a director of evaluation and outcomes position since 2016, which allows the organization to document its leadership in the domestic

violence field. Recently, Dr. Erin Schubert, Director of Outcomes & Evaluation led development of a research project to examine domestic violence survivors' experience in family court when litigating custody and placement of their children shared with abusive partner. Collecting data and analyzing court records improves the experience and safety of survivors and children.

**Zilber Family Foundation awarded Sojourner Family Peace Center with a \$392,000 two-year grant in December 2022.**



## Hawaii Program

The Foundation supports nonprofit organizations in Hawaii, especially those focused on supporting and empowering vulnerable individuals and families, particularly on Oahu. As an island community, Hawaii contends with one of the highest costs of living in the country, driving the need for resilient human service agencies. Recent

grants have support organizations focused on youth development, housing and homelessness, substance use treatment, and anti-sex trafficking programs.

**Zilber Family Foundation awarded \$1,255,500 to 25 organizations to support the Hawaii program.**

## STORY OF IMPACT Habilitat

Founded in 1971, Habilitat is the largest capacity residential substance abuse treatment center in Hawaii and the only program with intensive workforce training and reentry preparedness. Habilitat serves the whole person through three mandatory phases: comprehensive therapy, workforce development, and reentry preparedness.

With the Foundation's funding, Habilitat was able to enhance its construction services and facility management program by replacing outdated equipment and purchasing PPE for participants. The purchase of a new forklift enabled Habilitat to add a forklift certification program that participants can obtain as part of the training program. In addition, the culinary training program secured a contract with the US Vets program to provide food for homeless veterans in Waianae and Barber's Point.

**Zilber Family Foundation awarded Habilitat with a \$50,000 two-year grant in December 2021.**



Photo credit: Habilitat

## Capacity Building Program

In 2022, the Foundation launched Capacity Building as a new program area. Capacity building investments help organizations increase specific capabilities to increase effectiveness and impact.

The Foundation's capacity building investments are tailored to the needs of each partner, but frequently fall into the following categories: board and leadership development, planning, internal operations, peer learning and collaboration, and employee well-being and self-care. Capacity building grants are awarded to current Foundation grantee partners.

**Zilber Family Foundation awarded \$747,500 to 17 organizations to support the Capacity Building program.**



### STORY OF IMPACT

#### Running Rebels Community Organization

Running Rebels Community Organization's (RRCO) finance and accounting department plays an important role in the success of the agency. In 2022, RRCO experienced unusually high staff turnover in its accounting department. With the support of a Capacity Building grant, RRCO contracted with an accounting agency to provide accounting services and supports to backfill for lost staff capacity. In addition, the agency conducted a departmental audit and recommended future staffing structure and software upgrades. This engagement provided short-term stability and long-term sustainability by helping to revamp processes and systems.

**Zilber Family Foundation awarded Running Rebels Community Organization with a \$50,000 capacity building grant in December 2022.**

## Corporate and Employee Giving

The Foundation is the majority owner of Zilber Ltd., a full-service real estate company founded by Joseph Zilber over 70 years ago. We support workplace giving campaigns throughout Zilber Ltd.'s Milwaukee headquarters and regional offices. These employee-driven campaigns are a crucial component to our giving strategy.

**The Foundation awarded \$1,361,185 to support Corporate and Employee Giving.**

### WORKPLACE GIVING

Long-time beneficiaries of Zilber Ltd.'s workplace giving campaigns are for the United Way and the United Performing Arts Fund.

**The Foundation matched employee contributions for a total match of \$224,916 to United Way and the United Performing Arts Fund.**

### ZILBER GIVES BACK

Zilber Gives Back is a joint effort of the Zilber Family Foundation and Zilber Ltd. to support Zilber Ltd. employees' commitment to making a difference in their communities. Each year, a Zilber Ltd. regional office selects a nonprofit organization whose purpose fits the Foundation's mission, and then works with that organization to develop a volunteer service day for Zilber employees. This year, the West Florida regional office selected Habitat for Humanity of Sarasota as the recipient.

**The Foundation provided a \$25,000 donation.**



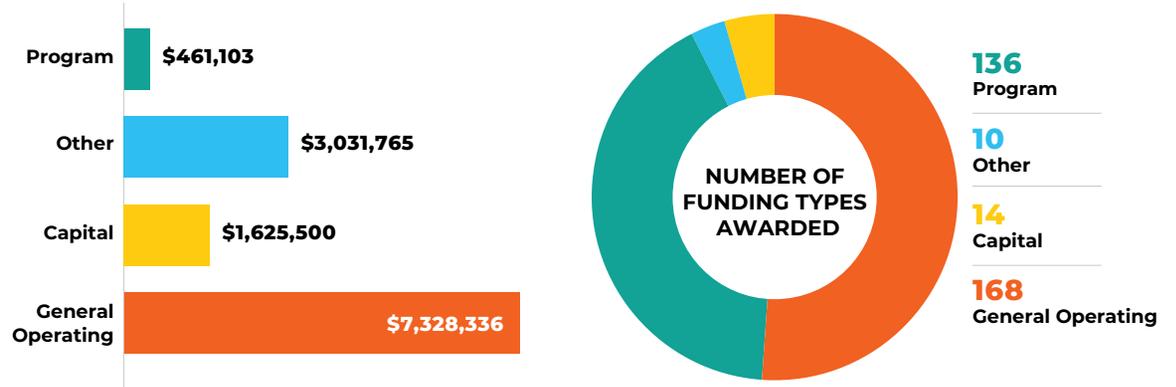
# Financial Information

The Zilber Family Foundation is a private, independent foundation dedicated to enhancing the wellbeing of individuals, families, and neighborhoods. Across all program areas, about half of the Foundation's grants provide multi-year general operating support for partners. This long-term, flexible funding allows organizations to allocate resources where they are most needed. We believe this approach helps build trusting relationships, mutual accountability, and better outcomes.

**The Foundation paid out a total of \$12,446,705 through grantmaking in FY 2023.**

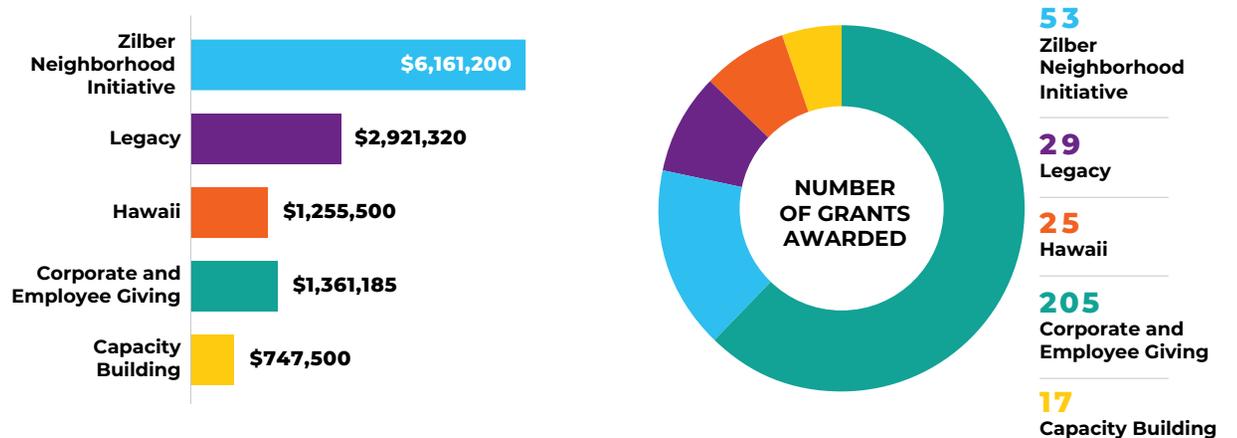
## GRANTMAKING ACTIVITY BY TYPE OF GRANT

July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023



## GRANTMAKING ACTIVITY BY PROGRAM

July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023



## About Zilber Family Foundation

The Zilber Family Foundation (ZFF) is a private grantmaking institution dedicated to enhancing the wellbeing of individuals, families and neighborhoods by investing in nonprofit organizations to address basic human needs and help ensure personal safety; increase access to social

and economic opportunity; and improve the quality of life in neighborhoods. We have mainly focused our neighborhood efforts in the Lindsay Heights, Clarke Square and Layton Boulevard West neighborhoods in Milwaukee. We also do some grantmaking in Hawaii.

### Board of Directors

Marcy Jackson, President  
 James Janz, Vice President  
 Mark Madigan, Secretary  
 Shane Jackson, Treasurer  
 Melissa Jackson  
 Michael Mervis  
 Paul Tilleman  
 Marilyn Zilber

### Foundation Staff

Gina Stilp, Executive Director  
 Lianna Bishop, Operations Director  
 Camille Davis, Program Officer  
 Erin Frederick, Program Director  
 Demetria Smith, Senior Program Officer  
 Meredith Trockman, Program Associate, Hawaii

