

ANNUAL REPORT COURAGE MKE 2023



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COURAGE MKE'S MISSION IS TO FUEL
A COLLABORATIVE MOVEMENT TO
PROVIDE THE RESOURCES LGBTQ+
YOUTH NEED TO THRIVE.

ADVOCACY & AWARENESS

HOUSING & RESOURCES

YOUTH PROGRAMS

GIVE BACK PROGRAMS

#QUEERKIDSNEEDYOU

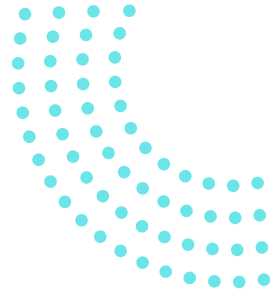
STRATEGIC PLAN

2024 Areas for Key Development

1. Programming
2. Fund Development
3. Marketing
4. Human Resources

Programming:

- In 2024 we will continue to develop and execute successful and positive community based programming for Queer youth in the Milwaukee area with our partners. These events will firstly provide safe and affirming spaces for youth to meet others like themselves. Secondly, as an organization we will allow us to gain added knowledge about gaps in service both locally and statewide while simultaneously expanding mission awareness.
- This year we will be launching one or more virtual GSA groups. Many schools across the state have not yet developed this program, or have cut funding for them. This initiative aims to address the issue of isolation amongst Queer youth in parts of the state who do not have access to LGBTQ community centers or other types of Queer focused programming.
- Our third initiative will be selected upon hire of a new Director of Programming in June 2024!



Fund Development

- Our organization and scope of services are growing fast! To ensure our budget continues to grow in proportion we will be recruiting for a Director of Development. By the end of year one, the position will be self-funded in addition to increasing revenue by 10% or more.
- This year we will begin the research, task group, and planning to open a Courage Salon that will focus on providing physically affirming services to Queer youth. This is currently a 3 year initiative.

Marketing

- In 2024 we are working with a local marketing firm to capture the essence and story of Courage MKE through branding and storytelling. It's imperative our mission and services reach not only those who need it the most, but those who have the ability and passion to support Queer youth.
- In the upcoming years, our focus is to extend our movement and presence. This year, we're specifically committed to visibly advocating for Queer youth by introducing yard signs as a means to amplify our message and raise awareness of our brand.
- Lastly, starting in 2024 we will be increasing our social media presence among Queer youth as a way to engage, market programs, and learn more about the current service gaps.

Human Resources

- Courage MKE continues to grow, which means we must scale our operations to appropriately match that growth. In 2023 we hired a Director of Operations who is working to revise existing policies and procedures while documenting and implementing new ones. This will reduce both monetary and time cost to the organization.
- By 2025 we are planning to hire a Director of Fund Development to increase our annual budget and capacity to expand our services.

A WORD FROM OUR LEADERS

To our Courage family,

Reflecting on 2023 fills us with immense pride and gratitude for our collective journey. Through highs and lows, we've embraced it all with unwavering determination.

Last year brought extraordinary milestones and triumphs. We soared to new heights with record-breaking donations and a remarkable turnout at our Gala, showcasing our community's generosity and commitment. Valuable partnerships with local businesses and organizations expanded our reach and enriched our mission. The successful opening of the C2 Apartments symbolizes our dedication to serving our community.

Despite challenges faced by the LGBTQ+ community nationwide, our solidarity has triumphed. This reinforces our dedication to advancing and broadening our advocacy endeavors, ensuring that every Queer LGBTQ+ youth receives the care and safety they rightfully deserve.

To all who've joined our Courage family's journey – donors, partners, volunteers – thank you. Your support propels us forward as we build a more inclusive Wisconsin together.

Courageously,
Daniel D. Terrio & Brad Schlaikowski
Courage Board President & Executive Director





STAFF

BRAD SCHLAIKOWSKI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
BRENNA CREAMER, C2 APARTMENTS CASE MANAGER
BRITTINY QUALLS, COURAGE HOUSE MANAGER
RON RIVERA, CRISIS STABILIZER MANAGER
MARISSA BRAY, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DAN TERRIO, PRESIDENT
ROBIN MATCHETT-SCHMIDT, VICE PRESIDENT
KB PALLO, SECRETARY
TREVOR BENNETT, TREASURER
JACI RUBEN
JAMILA DAWN MITCHELL
ERIN FAY
CRISTIN BOCK
WILL ANDERSON
BRODERICK PEARSON
PABLO NAVARRO
KATHERINE QUINN
BRANDON HERR
RALPH SNYDER

COURAGE HOUSE

RESIDENT CARE WORKERS

TYWANDA GRAY
FAYOMI AGBONGBON
KJ JOHNSON
QUINCY TOLIVER
CONSTANCE CROCKETT
CYNTHIA CURRY
SUNDANCE DUCHOW
PHOEBE WOOD
CELESTE HOFF

CRISIS STABILIZERS

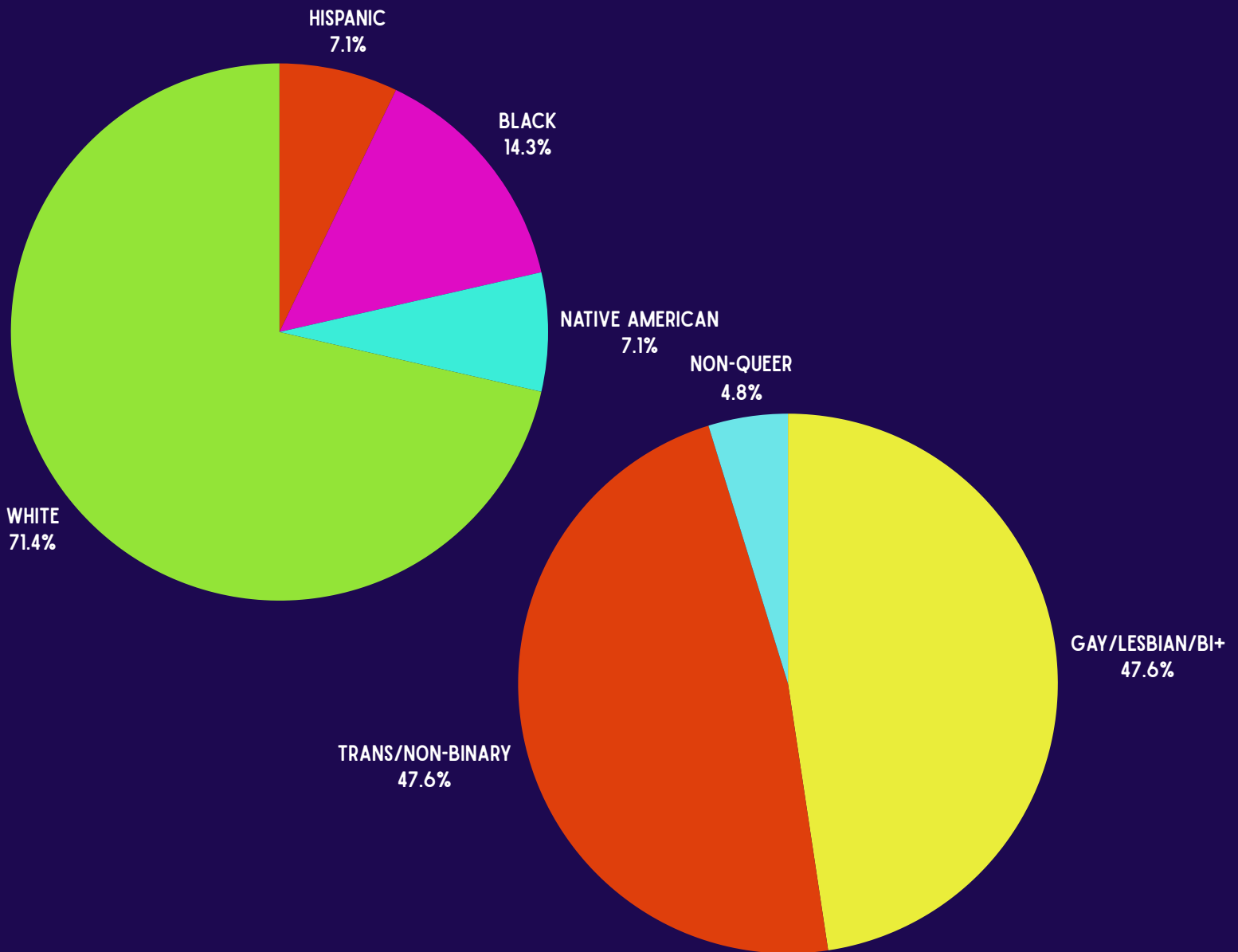
CHRISTINE SIERZPUTOWSKI
JIM SCHOLTZ
QUINCY TOLIVER
KJ JOHNSON
HOLLY WAELTZ

C2 APARTMENTS

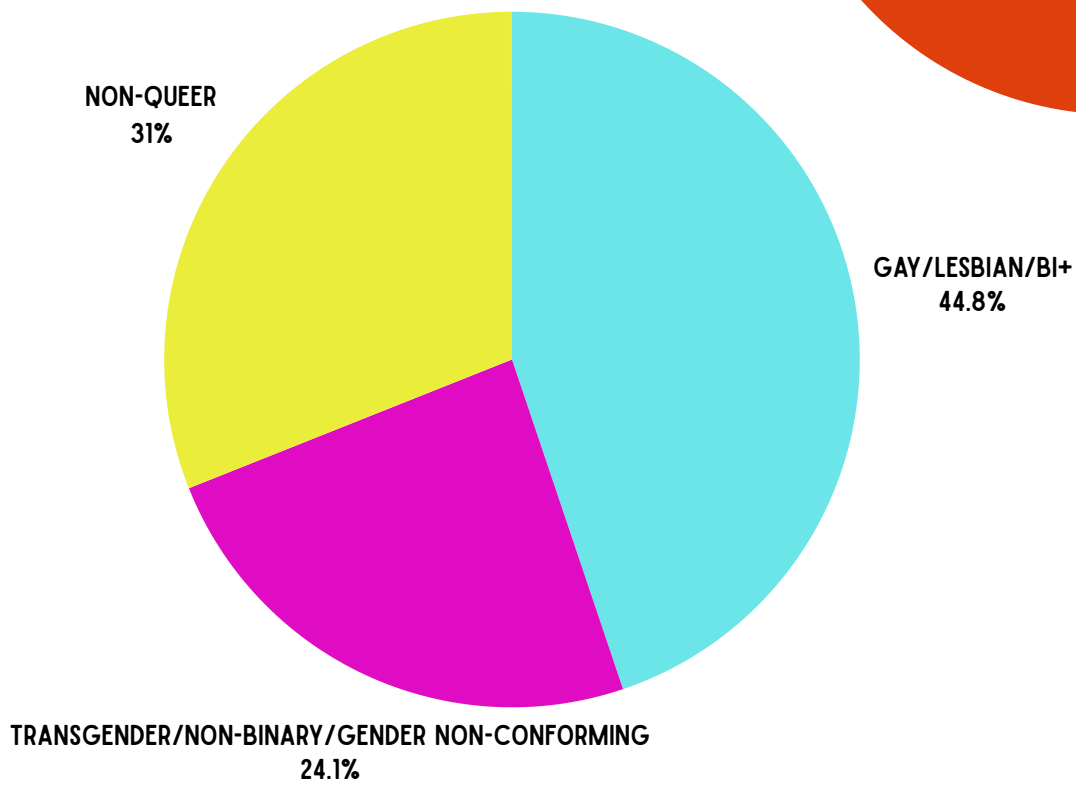
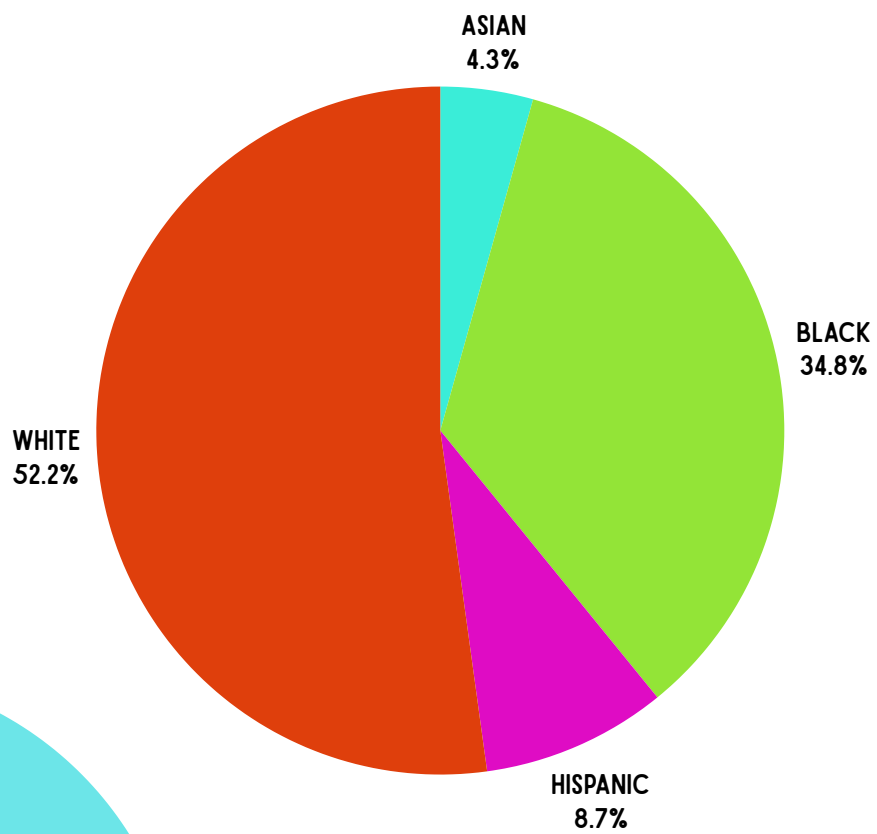
RESIDENT ADVOCATES

PAGIA FOXX
JOHN SCHLID
NEIL KEATS
JAXON SEEGER
RICHARD BRASFIELD
EZRA QUINT
NAT HAYES
RIVER BAUMEISTER

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



STAFF



"My impression of Courage culture is awesome. Learning about Courage's values and its mission I felt the services at C2 aligned and made me excited to work here. I am proud to give my time and skills to an organization that supports young underserved people. I appreciate the team atmosphere and how much staff relies on one another's feedback to make the program better."

-Pagia Foxx, Resident Advocate

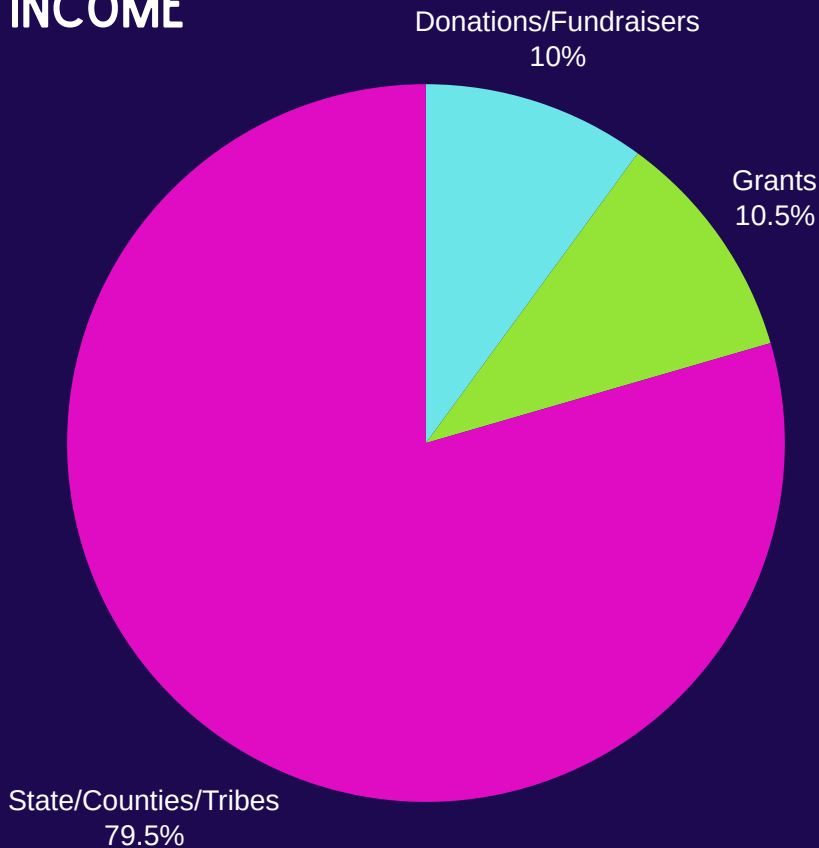


Arriving at work and feeling both seen and having the opportunity to empower others is truly remarkable. We believe there's room for every individual at our metaphorical table, and it's our role to bring the chairs, microphone, and snacks while ensuring a safe space where everyone feels invited to join this movement. I could not be more proud of the work we do and I look forward to the day we're no longer needed because we did our jobs so well that every Queer person feels cared for, valued, and loved.

-Marissa Bray, Director of Operations

FINANCIALS

INCOME



INCOME TOTAL: \$903,791.66

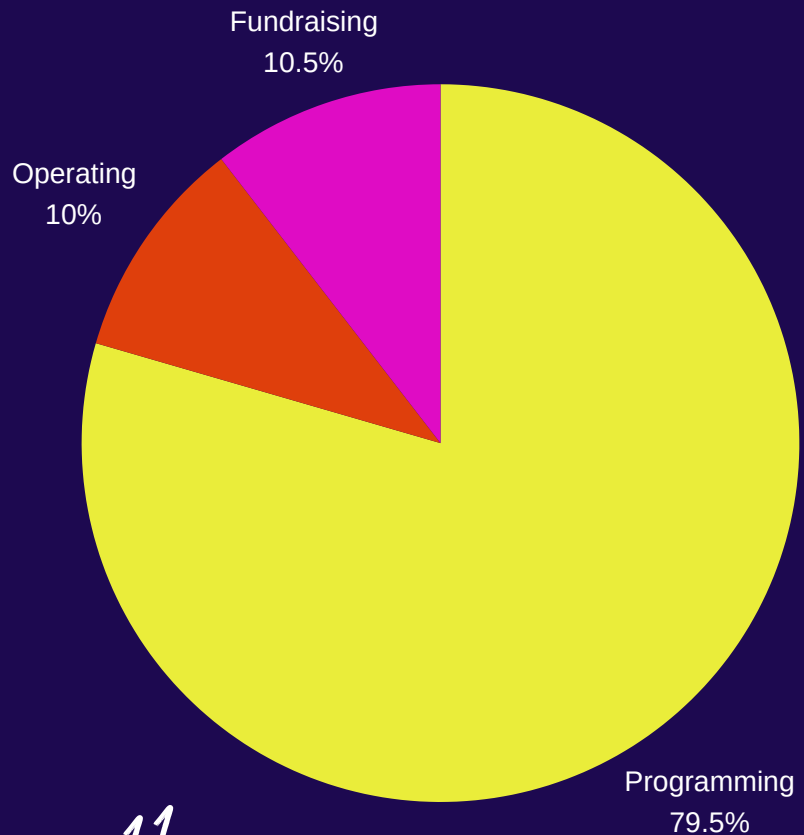
11% INCREASE FROM 2022

EXPENSES TOTAL: \$951,936.21

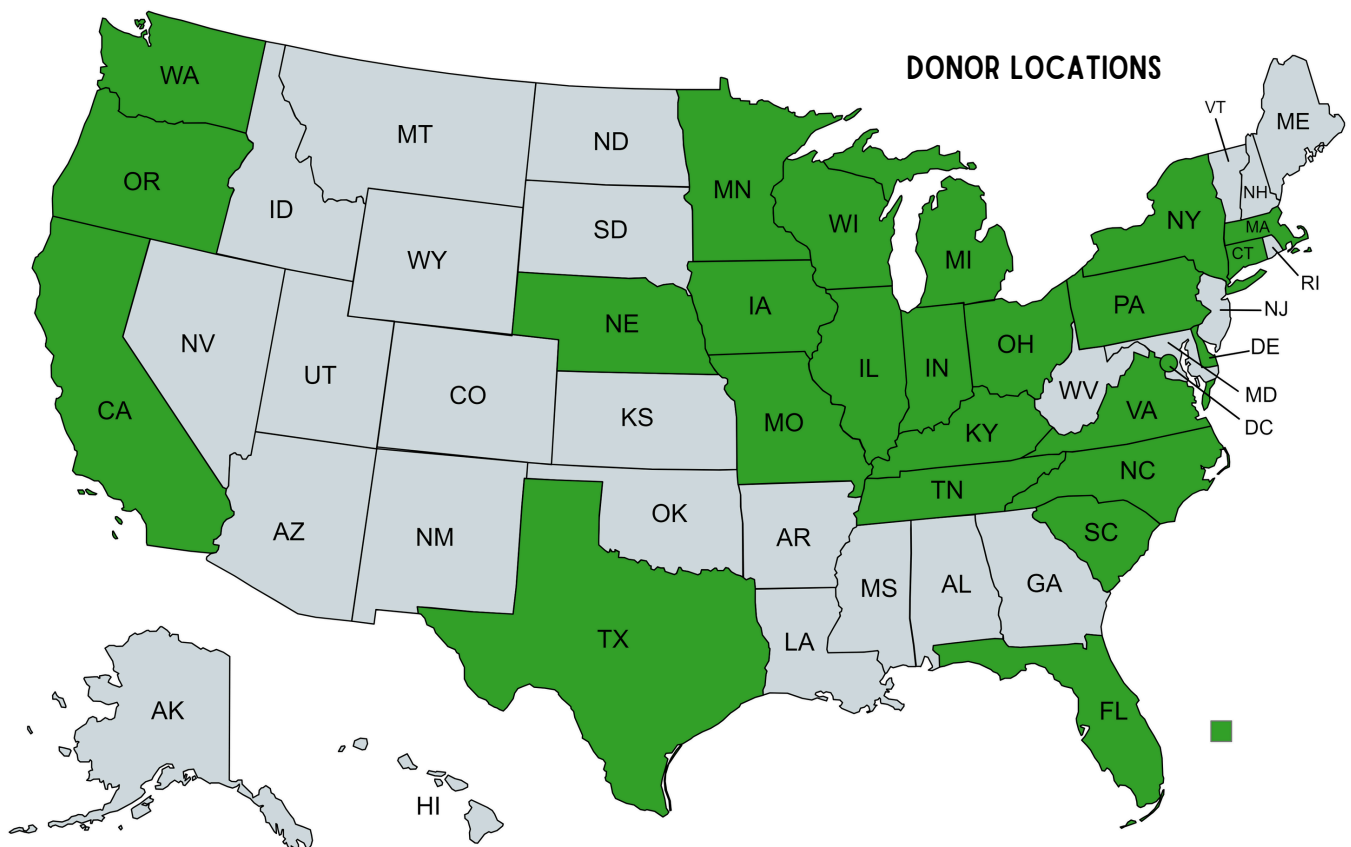
*THIS INCLUDES THE PURCHASE AND RENOVATIONS OF THE C2 APARTMENTS

MORE THAN 88.7% OF EVERY DOLLAR IS ALLOCATED FOR QUEER YOUTH PROGRAMMING

EXPENSES



More than **10,000** people are currently following Courage MKE on social media, and lastly, courage is proudly connected to **150+ community partners and Queer or allied businesses**, many of which held fundraisers for us, made in kind donations, and used their platforms to amplify our movement's impact.



LOOKING AHEAD...

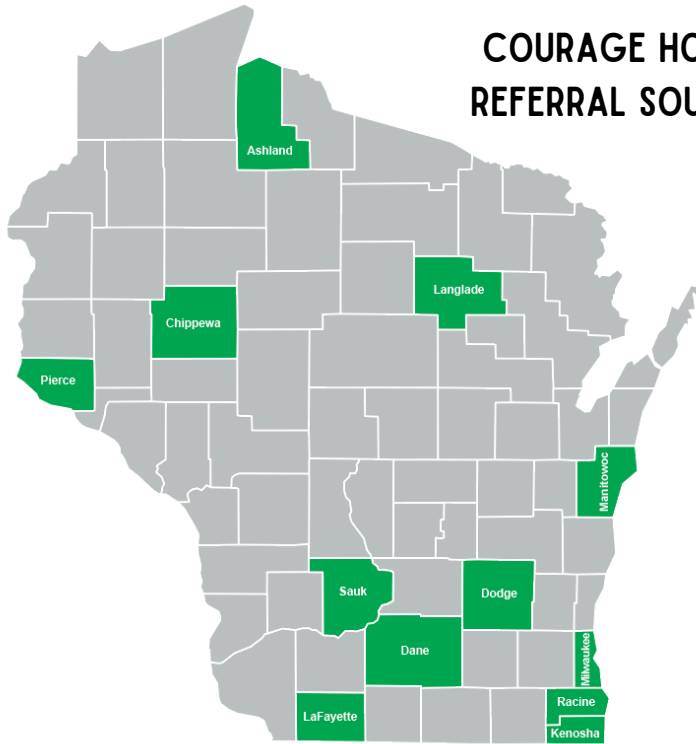
In 2024 the Courage House celebrates 5 years of providing safe, affirming, trauma informed care to Wisconsin's LGBTQ+ youth in out of home care. To date we've cared for 41 youth who have called Courage House their home, staying on average 3-4 times longer than the average placement.

In 2024 we've proudly opened our second location, the C2 Apartments, which are dedicated to LGBTQ+ homeless, at risk of becoming homeless, and aged out foster youth ages 18-24. Housing is important, but for young adults who've experience a great deal of trauma, it must be paired with support and resources to make the biggest impact. The C2 program is unlike any other; Each resident is required to obtain and maintain employment, save 20% of their paycheck for eventual move out, obtain health insurance, food assistance, and attend weekly case management sessions. Our highly trained and dedicated 24/7 staff members are available to help provide emotional and physical support, mentorship, and consistency along their journey to successful independence.

Given the many grim statistics about displaced Queer young adults, we anticipate that the longer term data about the youth who participate in this program will show a reduction in public services, eviction rates, substance abuse, chronic mental & physical health issues, and poverty over their lifetime.

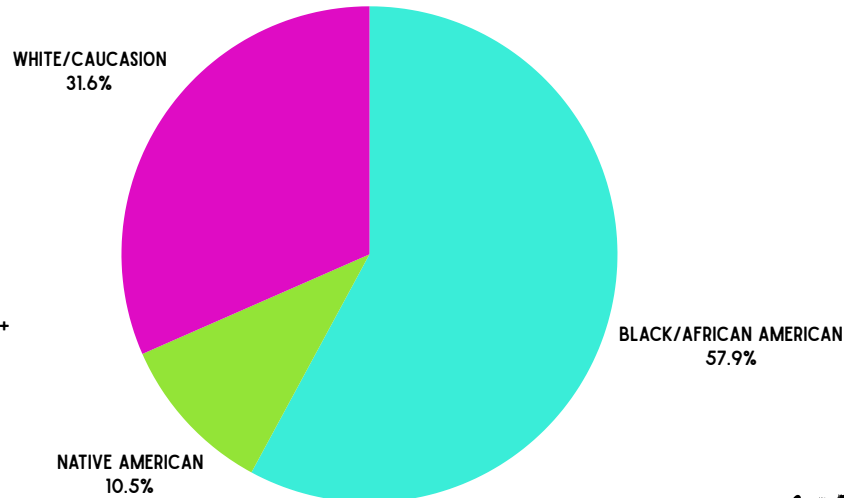
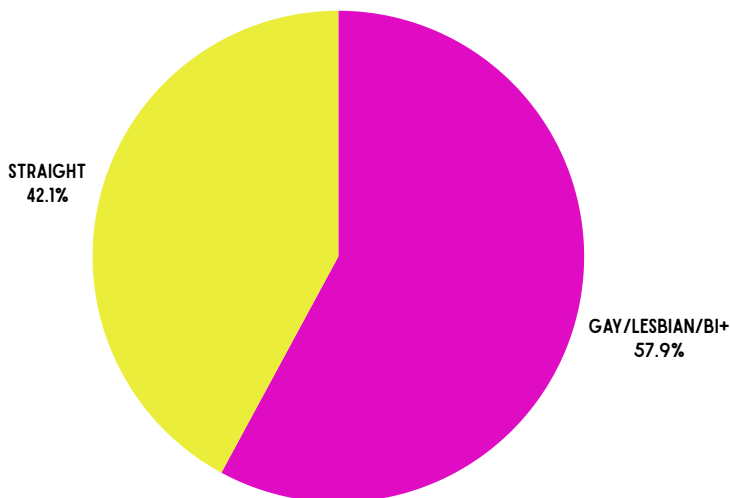
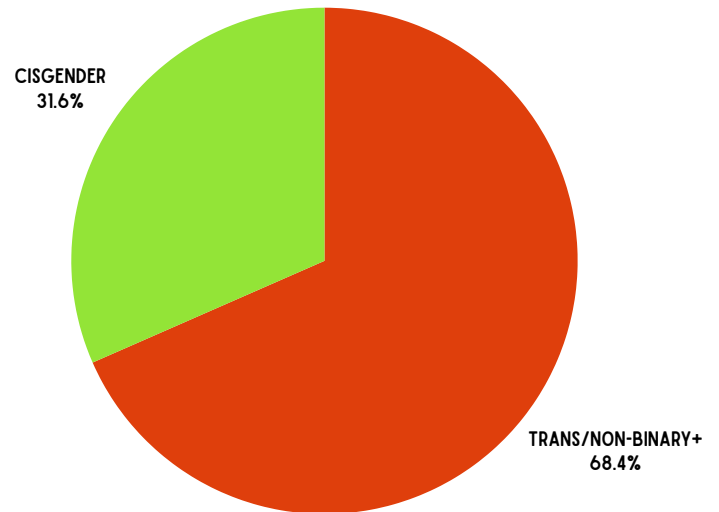


COURAGE HOUSE



AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY: 141 DAYS
AVERAGE LENGTH IN OTHER OUT OF HOME CARE SETTINGS: 38 DAYS

**41 COURAGE HOUSE
RESIDENTS SINCE OPENING IN 2019**



"The work at Courage and being a part of its journey is special to me. To see it grow, evolve, and expand its reach is truly amazing. Courage operates the only LGBTQ+ group home in the entire state of Wisconsin. Additionally, C2 apartments is the only LGBTQ+ transitional living facility in the state. Trailblazing work is taking place at Courage and the sooner other organizations and systems follow, support, and model this work, we can really change the trajectory of LGBTQ+ lives for the better."

– Ron Rivera, Crisis Stabilizer Manager



"Day 2 into the all inclusive training week for our new C2 Resident Advocates, one of them told me that we "snapped" with the representation within our new team. It really put into perspective for me the importance of not only providing a safe and inclusive home for our young adults, but also how important it is for me to provide that work environment for my team as well. I am beyond proud to work for an organization that is intentional with providing a positive work environment to our Queer community; where they don't have to worry or question how safe it is to be authentic and live out loud in their work space. As a matter of fact, we encourage it!"

Brenna Creamer – C2 Housing Case Manager

LOOKING BACK...





From the bottom of our hearts, thank you to all of our employees, Board of Directors, donors, volunteers, followers, advocates, sponsors, supporters of any kind... our Courage Family, **thank you for everything.**

