

*Project*  *FINE*

*Growing  
Stronger  
Together*



2021 Annual Report

### ***About Project FINE:***

Project FINE (Focus on Integrating Newcomers through Education) has been serving Winona County and the surrounding area since 1990. We serve as a connection point for refugees and immigrants, helping build contributing individuals, healthy families and a stronger, more welcoming community for all. Our work is two-fold: for refugees and immigrants we provide educational programming and services as they build a new life in our region; and for the community we promote inclusion and offer opportunities for cross-cultural interaction and relationship building.



**Project FINE**  
*Focus on Integrating Newcomers through Education*

### ***Our Mission:***

To strengthen and enrich our community by facilitating the integration of people who are ethnically diverse.

### ***Our Vision:***

To create a respectful and welcoming community.

### ***Our Guiding Values:***

- We work to build bridges across cultures.
- We work to build respect and trust in the community.
- We carry out our work with passion.
- We honor partnership and collaboration.

### ***Geographic Area Served:***

We are proud to serve Winona County and the surrounding region.



# Welcome

This year was not without its challenges, yet Project FINE continues to press ahead with its important work. Please take time to read through this report, as the scope and breadth of the work and accomplishments are truly amazing.



Some notable accomplishments include the development of a Resource Guide for newcomers that includes information about services and is available in three languages. We also created an Equity Toolkit for businesses and organizations who are interested in learning more about how to embed equity into policies and practices. Three staff became Qualified Administrators of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), a tool that is used to evaluate cross-cultural competency. We now offer the IDI as part of our Diversity Training and we are excited to share this beneficial tool with our community.

We were also fortunate to be able to transition back to an in-person format for our programming and community events, and it was wonderful to be back with our friends and supporters. The organization is thriving through the work of our extremely dedicated staff and the extraordinary leadership of our executive director, Fatima.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for your collaboration and support, we continue to be proud and honored to be a part of Project FINE's positive impact.

David Kramer, Board President

Dear Friends,

I'm pleased to present this report and proud to share all that we have achieved together. For us, 2021 was a year full of growth, opportunities and challenges. We continue to fulfill our mission by offering programs and services that impact the lives of newcomers, our community and the entire region.



This past year has shown us just how essential connections are for our collective health, well-being and ability to grow and thrive. We nurture connections with the refugees and immigrants we serve, as well as partners and residents in Winona County and beyond. In 2021, we strengthened new and existing partnerships, expanded our programs and continued to face the ongoing challenges of pandemic. We also worked to strengthen our best asset, our team, through continuing education and the implementation of a new wellness plan.

All that we have accomplished is because of the amazing partners, board, staff and volunteers who share their time and talent with Project FINE. I truly appreciate each and every one of you and look forward to many more years of working together to make Winona a stronger and more vibrant community where all people feel they belong.

Thank you for your continued support and collaboration.

Fatima Said, Executive Director

# Community Impact 2021

Over **3,250** Newcomers served through Project FINE's Educational Programs

**5,941** Hours of Advocacy and Information Referrals provided

Over **\$30,000** Of direct assistance provided to families in the form of laptops and support for rent, internet and utilities

**550** Hours of tutoring provided to youth

**15** Community Supported Agriculture subscriptions provided, offering a weekly basket of produce grown by Hmong farmers

**966** Hours of continuing education completed by Project FINE staff

**1,816** Reached through Welcoming Table gatherings in Winona, Lewiston and St. Charles

**663** Individuals participated in Project FINE's Diversity Training

**4,339** Hours of interpreting and translation services provided

# Navigating Community Systems

*Programs in the Navigating Community Systems category provide educational resources to refugees and immigrants to ease their adjustment to the United States and begin the journey to self-sufficiency.*

## Language Services

Our Language Services allow businesses and service providers to communicate with their non-English speaking clients and customers. Our interpreter roster consists of 51 interpreters proficient in 23 languages. We are dedicated to offering high-quality, professional interpreting services in-person, virtually and via phone. In 2021, Project FINE provided over **4,339** hours of interpreting and translating services in **99** locations across our region. We offer training for interpreters on topics such as best practices, ethics and mandatory reporting, and **11** of our interpreters are currently registered with the Minnesota Department of Health's Spoken Language Healthcare Interpreter Roster.

## Advocacy & Information Referrals

This program connects refugees and immigrants to existing services and resources to meet basic needs, such as education, housing and health care. Referrals are provided in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner and are offered to all individuals who contact our office. Project FINE staff assess their needs and make referrals to connect to partner agencies to avoid duplication of services. During 2021, we provided **5,941** hours of referral services.

## Employment Services

The goal of Employment Services is to connect refugees and immigrants with employment and training opportunities to reach their economic goals. This program was developed in 2019 in response to workforce needs in the region and has become an increasingly valuable resource for employers and job seekers. Staff assist those who are seeking employment, offering support for resume creation and completing applications and provide referrals to partner agencies for job-related needs such as transportation or child care. Changes to employment due to the COVID-19 pandemic and workforce shortages have highlighted the need for this program, and in 2021 we provided **333** hours of Employment Services to **146** people.



# Building

*Programs in the Building Communities category bring together diverse groups of refugees,*

## Connecting Cultures

Connecting Cultures offers monthly educational presentations by refugees and immigrants about their culture and traditions. During 2021, **85** individuals participated in the program, learning about countries and cultures such as Malaysia, Panama, Bosnia and the Philippines. Sessions are open to the public and advertised in the Winona Community Education booklet, which is mailed to households across the district. Comments from participants have been very positive, with over 90% sharing that they learned something new as a result of the program.



Connecting Cultures is funded by the Laura Jane Musser Fund.

## Community Health Plan

The project is designed to increase connections to resources and address common barriers to health for refugees and immigrants, and engage partners to advance equity in community systems. Project activities included the creation of an Advisory Group in St. Charles. They met regularly and organized a series of workshops to gain information about key issues in the community—mental health, law enforcement, energy conservation and education. Project FINE staff also worked with the Advisory Group to develop a Resource Guide of information about community resources and how to access various systems. The Resource Guide is available in English, Hmong and Spanish and is available online for easy access from mobile devices. In 2021, the Resource Guide was shared with over **125** families. In the area of community partnerships, Project FINE staff created an Equity Toolkit that contains information that is designed to be a starting point for those who would like to pursue equity in the areas of staff development, retention and service delivery.



This project is funded through a contract with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota.

# Communities

*immigrants and established residents to promote cultural sharing and build understanding.*

## Welcoming Table

The goal of this program is to build understanding and cross-cultural relationships through monthly meals and cultural sharing. In 2021, we continued to offer the Welcoming Table program in a virtual format due to limitations on in-person gatherings. Each month, we prepared a kit focused on a different country or culture.



The kits contain cultural information, traditional recipes, ingredients needed to cook the recipe and fun activities. Each kit serves 4-6 people, and in 2021 the Welcoming Table kits reached over **1,816** individuals. Feedback for the program has been very positive, with many sharing their comments and photos of their meals.



## Storytelling

This project engages refugees, immigrants and native—born residents to share their cultures, traditions and experiences through storytelling. Activities began in May with a series of workshops focused on the cultural significance of storytelling, story components, oral storytelling traditions and sharing personal narratives.

**17** individuals attended workshops and practiced developing and sharing their stories. Since that time, Project FINE staff have collected stories from **11** individuals in either video or written format. Stories will be shared at our Annual Report to the Community event and shared with the community in 2022.

This project is funded by a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board.



This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

# Building

*Programs in the Building Communities category bring together diverse groups of refugees,*

## Healthy Connections

The goal of the Healthy Connections program is to create a community that is more safe, inclusive and welcoming for all residents. Activities focus on key areas of need in the community and are intended to foster changes to the systems we interact with on a daily basis. In 2021, program activities included ongoing engagement with our Winona Advisory Group, a needs assessment and collaboration with community leaders. The Advisory Group met on a regular basis and hosted a series of community dialogues related to areas of need, engaging local experts in the areas of mental health and COVID-19 vaccine information. During 2021, the program also supported gatherings in rural areas, including picnics and Thanksgiving celebrations in Altura and St. Charles, with over **300** individuals attending.



In early 2021, Project FINE staff conducted a needs assessment of refugees and immigrants in Winona County. They interviewed **171** individuals, gathering information about their challenges, needs and experiences. Responses were synthesized into five main categories: basic needs; educational and employment opportunities; racism; community connections and legal concerns. This information will be shared with community partners and used to inform future programming.

Healthy Connections is funded by the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota Foundation.

## Kuv Caaj Ceg Hmoob (My Hmong Roots)

This program provides Hmong language classes for youth and adults. It was developed in response to feedback from Hmong Elders in the community, who were concerned that the younger generations were not fluent in Hmong language. Classes focus on verbal skills for youth and reading and writing for adults and advanced learners. In 2021, **17** individuals participated in the program, developing their language skills and expanding their cultural knowledge.

# Communities

*immigrants and established residents to promote cultural sharing and build understanding.*

## Diversity Training

Diversity Training offers education and information related to culture and strategies to engage with refugees and immigrants. Sessions are provided upon request and are tailored to meet the unique needs of businesses, organizations and service providers. In 2021, the Mayo Clinic “EverybodyIn” project sponsored a series of training sessions for the public, which were very well-received. Through a partnership with La Crescent–Hokah PTO, Project FINE provided monthly sessions on topics related to diversity for all elementary students. Three Project FINE staff completed training to become qualified administrators of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), offering a valuable new training option for the community. During 2021, an estimated **663** individuals participated in Project FINE’s Diversity Training.



## Hmong Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)



This project was developed to provide an avenue for local Hmong growers to increase their customer base and become familiar with the concept of a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) subscription program. The project engaged **3** local growers to provide produce for an 8-week subscription, which was offered to local community members. During 2021, **15** individuals purchased a produce subscription. Growers gained experience with the CSA format, which offers guaranteed sales, and community members gained access to fresh, local produce.

This project is funded by the Compeer Financial Fund for Rural America. A special thank you to Behrens Manufacturing for donating steel buckets for the subscription members.

# Empowering

*Programs in the Empowering Youth category support youth from refugee and immigrant families*

## **GRAB: Girls Reaching Above & Beyond**

The GRAB program is designed for middle and high school girls from refugee and immigrant families. Activities help them discover their identity and strengths and create a roadmap to pursue their dreams. Program sessions are held monthly in Winona and St. Charles and focus on leadership, financial literacy, cultural norms and empowerment. In 2021, **61** youth participated in GRAB program activities. In addition to the monthly sessions, there was also a summer day camp for participants that included presentations about health and culture, career presentations and fun activities including swimming and crafts.



The GRAB program is funded by the Women's Foundation of Minnesota.

## **Colorful Growers**

This program offers a unique agricultural and entrepreneurial experience for youth age 10-18. Youth plan and plant their own garden plot, then tend the garden throughout the summer and gain business and marketing experience selling their produce at the Goodview Farmer's Market. In 2021, **10** individuals participated in program activities, learning valuable skills and providing a source of fresh, locally grown produce for community members.

## **College Education Connection**

College Education Connection assists youth from refugee and immigrant families as they pursue post-secondary education by providing academic support and resources. The program serves youth from Winona, St. Charles and Lewiston-Altura school districts. In 2021, Project FINE awarded scholarships to **3** graduating seniors to support their continuing education. Since 2009, scholarships have been given to **58** diverse students from across Winona County.



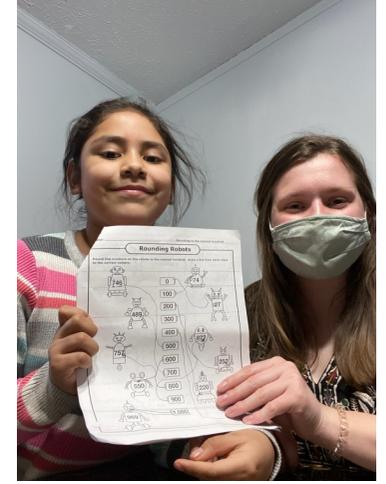
# Youth

*as they pursue education and seek a balance between their traditional and American cultures.*

## ConnectedMN

The ConnectedMN program supports refugee and immigrant families as they learn how to access distance learning and educational resources online. Activities engage both parents and students, offering personalized assistance in their home or virtually. For parents, support is focused on accessing online school portals to view grades and assignments and communicate with teachers. For students, support is focused on accessing online classrooms and providing academic support and tutoring. Program activities were provided to families in the Winona, St. Charles and Lewiston -Altura school districts during the 2020-2021 school year. In 2021, **422** hours of support were provided to **152** students and their families.

Funding for this program is provided by the Partnership for a ConnectedMN, a public-private partnership to bring tech devices and internet access to students across the state.



## FORCE: Focus, Overcome, Respect, Connect, Excel



The FORCE program is designed for middle and high school boys from refugee and immigrant families. Activities build positive character traits and values, promote healthy lifestyle choices and help youth prepare for future financial stability. Sessions are held monthly in Winona and St. Charles and include presentations on leadership, career planning, decision making and mental health.

During 2021, **36** youth participated in FORCE program activities.



# Welcoming

In 2021, Project FINE hosted several events during Welcoming Week September 10-19. During this annual celebration, organized by Welcoming America, organizations and communities bring together neighbors of all backgrounds to build strong connections and affirm the importance of welcoming and inclusive places in achieving collective prosperity.

To kick off Welcoming Week, the City of Winona and the City of St. Charles issued proclamations designating Welcoming Week in their community and expressing their support of welcoming all residents. They are also part of the Welcoming America network and partnered on additional Welcoming Week events in their cities.

Events continued with an All-American virtual Welcoming Table gathering. **30** families participated in the event, which included an All-American meal of chili, cornbread and brownies, a stained glass map activity and a quiz of United States history.



On September 14, Project FINE and the St. Charles Public Library hosted a community celebration with outdoor games, music and activities. During September, the library also featured a display of art created by local refugees and immigrants and cultural artifacts.

Project FINE hosted a diversity training session on September 15 with **12** participants. The session focused on cultural awareness and practical ways to create a welcoming environment for newcomers and was sponsored by the Mayo Clinic “EverybodyIN:” fund.

On September 15, Winona Mayor Scott Sherman hosted a Rollin’ with the Mayor Welcoming Week Bike Ride at Lake Park. The bike ride was very well-received, with over **80** people joining the Mayor to ride along a designated route, which included portions of the city’s trail system, designated bike-ways and city streets.



# Week 2021

Following the Rollin' with the Mayor Bike Ride, we hosted our annual Citizenship Day and Welcoming Week Celebration at Lake Park Bandshell. **30** naturalized citizens joined us for the event, which included remarks by Winona Mayor Scott Sherman, a story from a newly naturalized American citizen, live music and activities.

On September 16, we hosted a Connecting Cultures session on the Philippines. The session included a presentation on history and culture and a game with door prizes.



On September 17, Project FINE, the Winona County Historical Society and City of Winona Creative Laureate Sarah Johnson hosted a session as part of the Winona Chamber's Dine Out Downtown event. Sarah unveiled her design for a series of murals representing culture, heritage and the journey of those who have come to call Winona home. The panels were designed in collaboration with members of Project FINE's Advisory Group, who met with Sarah to share their stories and explore the themes of home and heritage. During the session, the panels and paints were available for people to add their own story. It was a wonderful event, with over **150** people participating. The murals will be installed on the facade of the Winona History Center in 2022.



Project FINE and the Winona Family YMCA partnered to host a Free Friday at the Y event on September 17. All area residents were invited to explore the Y and attend classes or use the pool and exercise equipment.

Thank you to the City of Winona, City of St. Charles and WNB Financial for their support of Welcoming Week and to Sarah Johnson, the Winona County Historical Society, the Winona Family YMCA and the Winona Area Chamber of Commerce's Dine Out Downtown for their partnership on events.

# Community

## Annual Report to the Community

On February 16, 2021 Project FINE hosted our first virtual Annual Report to the Community. The event included recognition of Winona Community Foundation as our 2020 Partner of the Year and a video highlighting the achievements of the previous year.

## Bluff Country Co-Op Beans for Bags Program

Through this program, Co-Op patrons who shop with a reusable bag or box receive a bean which represents a 5 cent donation for the organization of their choice. Project FINE was selected as one of the program beneficiaries for the first quarter of 2021, with over 1,760 beans donated.



## Winona Area Public Schools Listening Sessions

During March and April, Project FINE hosted a series of listening sessions for parents in collaboration with the Winona Area Public Schools. Six sessions were held for Hmong and Spanish speaking parents of early childhood, elementary and middle/high school students. **40** parents participated in the sessions, providing insight into their experiences. They also discussed preferred methods to communicate with teachers and administration and differences between the educational system in the United States and their home countries. The sessions were very well-received, with many families expressing their appreciation and willingness to continue to work with the school to deepen relationships.

## Citizenship Story—Rochester Post Bulletin

In April, the Rochester Post Bulletin began a series of stories on citizenship featuring Yong Lor, a Project FINE client who is going through the naturalization process. Reporter Brian Todd published four pieces in the series in 2021 and plans to continue documenting Mr. Lor's journey as he moves through the process of becoming a United States citizen.

# Involvement

**Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) Focus Groups**  
In May, Project FINE hosted a series of three listening sessions for the MnDOT related to their statewide transportation plan. Sessions were hosted in Winona and St. Charles to gather information about challenges related to transportation such as road access, public transportation options and signage. The results were compiled and shared with New Publica, a public relations firm that organized outreach for the sessions.



## H3O Jazz Jam

In May, the H3O Jazz Trio selected Project FINE as the beneficiary of their Jazz Jam proceeds. This monthly event features live jazz at Island City Brewery, with all tips donated to a local nonprofit. The H3O Jazz Trio and Island City Brewery also matched the donation, tripling the impact on the community.

## Staff Wellness Plan

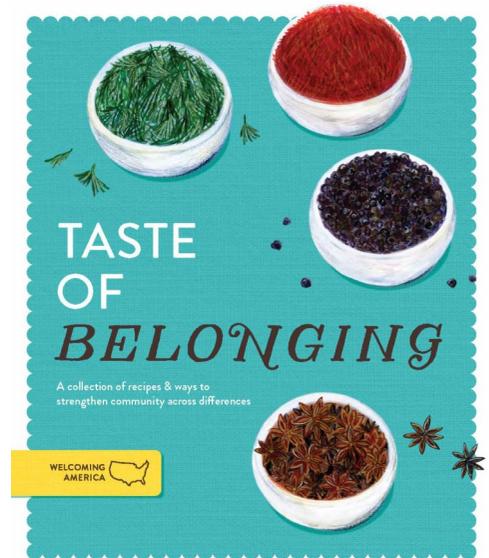
In 2021, Project FINE implemented a wellness plan of activities for staff related to various aspects of health such as physical, emotional or social wellness. Activities were held on a regular basis and included a session on stress management, a month-long study of the positive effects of gratitude and time for staff to reflect on their sense of purpose. In June, staff participated in a retreat with educational, cooperative and fun activities. Feedback from staff has been very positive and we plan to continue to offer the Wellness Plan on an ongoing basis.



# Community

## Taste of Belonging Cookbook

Project FINE's Welcoming Table program was featured as a Community Building Model in the Taste of Belonging Cookbook developed by Welcoming America. The cookbook was created as a tool to build meaningful connection across differences. It pairs recipes from diverse cultures with activities that bring people together around a common goal.



## Journey Through Time Fundraiser

Project FINE held its annual fundraiser on June 20, 2021 at Signatures Visions Event Center. The event featured dinner and entertainment representing several of the cultures who have come to Winona over the past 30 years, including dance performances from Hmong and Bosnian culture and musical performances by Project FINE friends and board members.

## What's On Wednesdays (WOW)

In August, Project FINE provided activities for an International-themed WOW event in St. Charles. WOW events are held on Wednesday evenings throughout the summer, offering live music, activities, food and vendors in a unique outdoor community setting. Activities highlighted Hmong and Mexican culture, including crafts, language activities, games and door prizes.



# Involvement



## **St. Charles Public Library Water Fight**

In August, Project FINE staff participated as “celebrity” guests in a water fight for participants of their youth summer reading program. For every 1,000 books read, an additional guest was added to the event. Youth, library staff and guests from the Police and Fire Departments, schools and other local groups participated.

## **Local University Welcome Week Events**

In August and September, Project FINE staff hosted informational tables at Minnesota State College Southeast and Saint Mary’s University as part of their welcoming activities for incoming students. They shared information and opportunities for volunteering and internships.

## **Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs)**

During 2021, Project FINE collaborated with the Clean Energy Resource Teams from the University of Minnesota Extension to provide information and resources related to energy conservation for refugees and immigrants in Winona and St. Charles. In collaboration with the Home Energy Squad program, they offered free energy visits to residents of mobile home parks. During these visits, they conducted a variety of repairs to reduce energy consumption and costs, including replacing lightbulbs, shower heads and weather stripping.



## **Engage Winona –City of Winona Comprehensive Plan Focus Group**

In December, Project FINE and Engage Winona hosted a focus group of refugees and immigrants who live and/or work in Winona. 17 individuals participated, sharing their experiences and suggestions. Information will be compiled with feedback from other groups and shared with the City of Winona as part of their Comprehensive Plan process.

## **Hy-Vee Reusable Bag Program**

During December, Project FINE was selected as the beneficiary of the Hy-Vee Reusable Bag Program for the Winona Hy-Vee location. For each customer who purchases a reusable bag during the month, \$1 was donated to the organization.

# Community

## Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota

In 2021, Project FINE and the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota collaborated on two projects in the Winona area. One offers legal information and connections to resources for victims of domestic violence or other crimes. The other increases access to legal services related to immigration for individuals across southeastern Minnesota.



IMMIGRANT  
LAW CENTER  
— of MINNESOTA —

*Supporting families and strengthening  
communities for more than 20 years*



## Minnesota Marine Art Museum

During 2021, Project FINE continued our collaboration with the Minnesota Marine Art Museum for their “Spring Into Art” Seasonal Saturday box. The box included information and activities focused on art and music in Hmong or Spanish, and Project FINE staff distributed boxes to **40** families.

## Southeast Minnesota Together

Project FINE continued our involvement with Southeast Minnesota Together in 2021. This collaborative group began in 2016 to address the workforce shortage in the region and seeks to strengthen regional connections and build local capacity.



## Whole Family Systems Project

In 2021, Project FINE continued to participate in the Whole Family Systems project led by the Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association and Families First of Minnesota. This multi-year project is designed to improve kindergarten readiness for children from refugee and immigrant families by offering support and resources to help families thrive. Through this collaboration, Project FINE distributed laptops to **25** refugee and immigrant families in Winona County and provided \$500 stipends to be used toward internet costs to **42** families.

# Collaborations

## **Winona Wellbeing Collaborative**

The Winona Wellbeing Collaborative (WWC) brings together organizations to help families with food insecurity and other basic needs. Project FINE has served as a member since the project began and is a referral partner member for their main project, the Winona Community HUB, which connects individuals to community health workers.



## **Continuing Education**

Project FINE recognizes the value of offering education and training for staff and is committed to providing learning opportunities on a regular basis. In 2021, staff completed **966** hours of continuing education on topics related to culture, language services, mandated reporting and best practices.

In March, three staff completed training to become Qualified Administrators of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI). The IDI is a tool used to measure the intercultural competence of individuals and groups, allowing Project FINE to offer a new resource for those seeking Diversity Training. Staff also completed an additional training, Facilitating Cultural Change, which provides additional insight into the concepts of the IDI. In June, five staff completed the Beegle Poverty Immersion Institute two-day training, learning about the effects of poverty on individuals and systems.

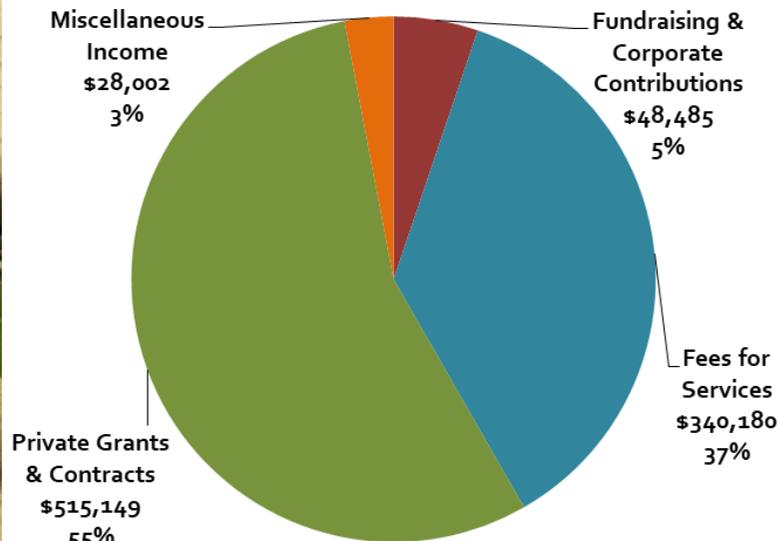
We would like to thank the Otto Bremer Trust and the Bush Foundation for supporting the continued growth and professional development of the Project FINE team.

## **Project FINE staff serve on several boards and committees, including:**

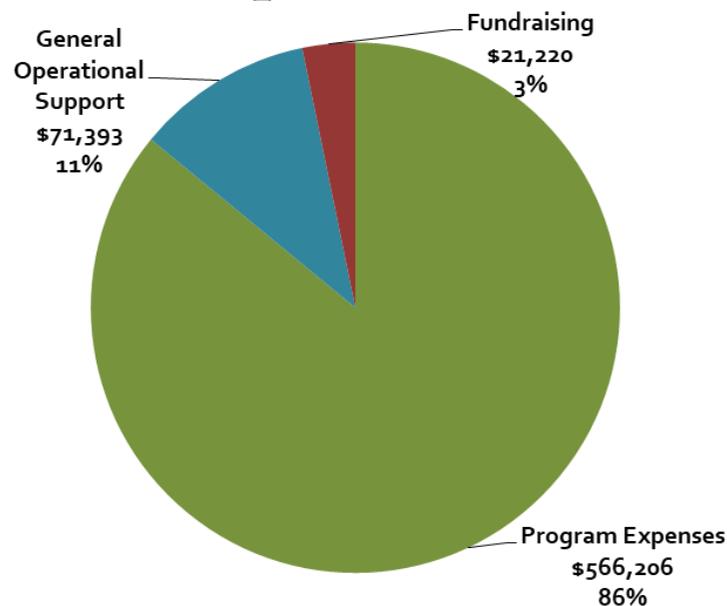
- ◆ Cotter School Board of Directors
- ◆ Goodview Farmers Market Board of Directors
- ◆ Ready Set School Board of Directors
- ◆ SE MN Together Core Group
- ◆ SHIP Community Leadership Team
- ◆ U of MN Extension Community Advisory Committee
- ◆ Winona County Community Services Advisory Committee
- ◆ Winona Area Public Schools DEI Committee
- ◆ Winona County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council
- ◆ Winona Health Board of Directors
- ◆ Winona Human Rights Commission
- ◆ Winona Wellbeing Collaborative
- ◆ Winona Workforce Development Board
- ◆ Women's Foundation of Minnesota

# 2021 Financial Summary

## Revenue 2021



## Expenses 2021



Income Statement		Balance Sheet	
<b>Total Revenue 2021</b>	\$931,816	<b>Assets</b>	
<b>Total Expenses 2021</b>	\$658,819	Current & Fixed Assets	\$542,040
<b>Board Designated for 2022 Programs</b>		Other Assets	\$1,393,460
Navigating Community Systems	\$50,000	<b>Total Assets</b>	\$1,935,500
Building Communities	\$50,000	<b>Liabilities</b>	
Empowering Youth	\$50,000	Current Liabilities	\$181,251
Financial information was prepared using accrual accounting method. Audited financial statements will be available on our website, <a href="http://www.projectfine.org">www.projectfine.org</a> , in spring 2022.		<b>Total Liabilities</b>	\$181,251
		<b>Net Assets</b>	
		Board Designated Net Assets	\$150,000
		Undesignated Net Assets	\$1,604,249
		<b>Total Net Assets</b>	\$1,754,249
		<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	\$1,935,500



The Meets Standards Seal is given by the Charities Review Council to nonprofits who meet their Accountability Standards. The Accountability Standards create a common ground for the nonprofit sector, building a foundation of strength in our community. For more information, visit [www.smartgivers.org](http://www.smartgivers.org)

The Platinum Seal of Transparency is the highest level of recognition offered by GuideStar, the world's largest source of nonprofit information. To earn the seal nonprofits share organizational and financial information; goals, strategies, and capabilities; and results and progress made toward our mission. For more information, visit [www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org)

# Community Partnerships

Thank you to the many businesses and organizations who partner with Project FINE in support of our mission.

- Advocacy Center of Winona
- Behrens Manufacturing
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of MN
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of MN Foundation
- Bridges Health Program
- Bush Foundation
- Central Lutheran Church
- Charities Review Council
- Children's Dental of Winona
- City of Goodview
- City of St. Charles
- City of Winona
- Compeer Financial
- ConnectedMN
- Cotter Schools
- Engage Winona
- Goodview Farmers Market
- Gundersen Health System
- Hiawatha Valley Mental Health
- Hometown Resource Center
- Immigrant Law Center of MN
- Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association
- Knitcraft-St. Croix Foundation
- Laura Jane Musser Fund
- Lewiston-Altura School District
- Live Well Winona
- Mardag Foundation
- Mayo Clinic
- Merchants Bank
- Minnesota Council of Nonprofits
- Minnesota Dept. of Corrections
- Minnesota Marine Art Museum
- Minnesota State Arts Board
- Minnesota State College Southeast
- Otto Bremer Trust
- Pleasant Valley Church
- Ready Set School
- Rollingstone Cenex
- St. Charles Borromeo Church
- St. Charles Farmers Market
- St. Charles Public Schools
- Saint Mary's University of MN
- Salvation Army
- Semcac
- Southern MN Initiative Foundation
- Southern MN Regional Legal Services
- Southeast Minnesota Together
- UCare of Minnesota
- University of Minnesota Extension
- Welcome Center, Austin MN
- Welcoming America
- Winona Area Ambulance Service
- Winona Area Chamber of Commerce
- Winona Area Public Schools
- Winona Area YMCA
- Winona Community Foundation
- Winona County
- Winona County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC)
- Winona County Historical Society
- Winona County PartnerSHIP
- Winona Health
- Winona Housing & Redevelopment Authority
- Winona Human Rights Commission
- Winona ORC
- Winona Rotary Club
- Winona State University
- Winona Volunteer Services
- WNB Financial
- Women's Foundation of Minnesota

## 2021 Partner of the Year

Each year, Project FINE designates one or more partners for special recognition through the Partners Award.

This year, we are proud to recognize the following exceptional partner:

### **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota**

Over the past 15 years, Project FINE has partnered with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota to advance health and build equity in our region. We have worked together on several projects funded by the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota Foundation and the Center for Prevention and are a contracted interpreting agency for their insurance division. Their ongoing investment in our organization and community is greatly appreciated.

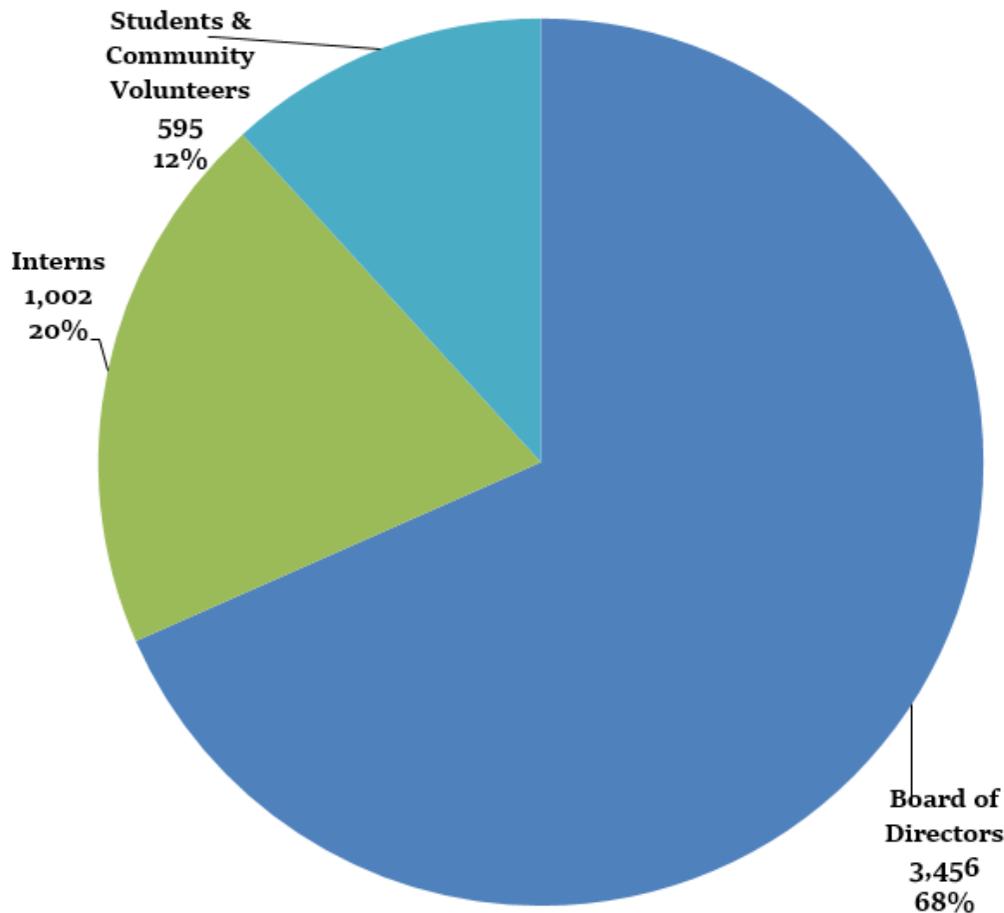


Blue Cross® and Blue Shield® of Minnesota and Blue Plus® are nonprofit independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

# Volunteer Information

We would like to thank the many talented, generous and dedicated individuals who contributed thousands of hours in 2021 in support of Project FINE's programs, events and activities. Volunteers are vital to our operation and help fulfill our vision of creating a more welcoming and sensitive community.

## Project FINE Volunteer Hours 2021 5,053 Total Hours



**A special thank you to these 2021 volunteers:**

**Committee Members:**

Deb Ward, Development Committee  
Andrea Northam, Development Committee

**Interns:**

Kayla Chavez, Grace Cushman, Dasia Maifea-Phomsamouth, Juliet Onyango, Kao Lee Thao

**Community Volunteers:**

Victoria Anderson, Summer Hang, Lucia Rodriguez, Pa Cha Vang

# Board Members & Staff

Project FINE's board members are a tremendous asset, sharing their time and talents to promote and further our mission. Their hard work and dedication is a great benefit to our organization and the entire community.



## Project FINE 2021 Board Members

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| David Kramer, President<br>City of St. Charles  | Robin Hoeg<br>Winona Health                       |
| Jack Richter, Vice President<br>WNB Financial   | Tom Krause<br>Southern MN Regional Legal Services |
| Heather Bach, Treasurer<br>Community Member     | Pedro Lopez<br>Courtesy Corporation               |
| Nicole Messenger, Secretary<br>Merchants Bank   | Cecilia Manrique<br>Community Member              |
| Jeff Apse<br>St. Charles Public Schools         | Dan Matejka<br>City of Goodview                   |
| Father Tim Biren<br>St. Charles Borromeo Church | Pat Mutter<br>Visit Winona                        |
| Annette Freiheit<br>Winona Area Public Schools  | Eric Schoh<br>Winona State University             |
| Sammy Gondola<br>Pleasant Valley Church         | Andy Teska<br>Winona Area Ambulance Service       |

Front Row: Fatima Said, Pedro Lopez, Pat Mutter, Sammy Gondola, Heather Bach, Tim Biren  
Back Row: Andy Teska, David Kramer, Jack Richter, Eric Schoh, Dan Matejka  
Not pictured: Jeff Apse, Annette Freiheit, Robin Hoeg, Tom Krause, Cecilia Manrique, and Nicole Messenger



## Project FINE Staff

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Fatima Said, Executive Director                | Pang Vang, Program Coordinator                |
| Chong Sher Vang, Community Engagement Director | Christian Cruz Cartagena, Program Coordinator |
| Katie van Eijl, Program Manager                | Alex Ulloa, Program Coordinator               |
| German Victoria, Program Manager               | Paige Yangwakue, Program Assistant            |
| Maria Rodriguez-Ramirez, Program Coordinator   | Gabriela Whetstone, Community Liaison         |

Front Row: Fatima Said, Paige Yangwakue, Chong Sher Vang, Maria Rodriguez-Ramirez, Pang Vang  
Back Row: Alex Ulloa, Gabriela Whetstone, German Victoria, Katie van Eijl, Christian Cruz Cartagena

# *Project FINE*



*Focus on Integrating Newcomers through Education*

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**507-932-3020 Fax: 507-932-5301**