

# Project FINE

*Focus on Integrating Newcomers through Education*

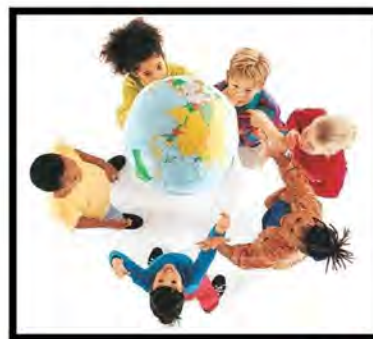


# Together We Thrive

Annual Report 2024

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

Since 1990, Project FINE has been serving Winona County and the surrounding areas, acting as a vital connection point for refugees and immigrants. We support individuals and families while fostering a stronger, more respectful community for everyone.



**Project FINE**

*Focus on Integrating Newcomers through Education*

Our work is two-fold: we offer educational programs and services to support refugees and immigrants in building new lives, and on a community level we create opportunities for cross-cultural connections while fostering a deeper appreciation for the diversity within our community.

At Project FINE, we are committed to operational excellence. Our programs and services are delivered in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways, ensuring efficiency by collaborating with partners to avoid duplication. Our success is driven by our passionate staff, dedicated board of directors, committed volunteers, and outstanding community partners.

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

To create an inclusive community by serving refugees and immigrants and building connections across cultures.

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

To foster a respectful and welcoming community.

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

- We cultivate cross-cultural relationships.
- We strive for excellence in our operations.
- 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

Together We Thrive: that is exactly what Fatima and her team did in 2024. They continue to accomplish more and more each year, astounding the community. When you look at pages 4 and 5 of the Annual Report, you will find our “2024 Year at a Glance”. There are some very impressive numbers, but what you may not realize is that almost every one of those numbers is larger than the year before, representing our growing impact in the community. It was an exceptional year, with more refugees and immigrants served than any other year in Project FINE’s history. We also provided more programming than ever, with 21 different programs or services designed to meet the needs of the community. These incredible numbers demonstrate the commitment this organization has in helping make our region welcoming and inclusive for all.



Project FINE’s work is possible because of the help and support of dedicated and passionate partners like all of you. Every day at Project FINE we hear stories of new families moving to the area and rebuilding their lives, high school seniors receiving scholarships to continue their education, or families buying a house or opening a business. These accomplishments are possible because of our board, staff, partners and supporters, and we would like to thank you for working together for another year of positive impact on our community. It is our hope and dream that we continue our collaboration and celebrate success stories together for many years to come.

Dan Matejka, 2024 Project FINE Board President

## Reflecting on 2024: A Year of Resilience and Unity

As we reflect on the past year, it is impossible to overlook the profound challenges faced by communities worldwide. Global crises, natural disasters and a surge in prejudice and intolerance underscored the need for connection and understanding in our communities.

Amid this uncertainty, we remain steadfast in our mission to build inclusive communities where everyone feels they belong. We place people at the heart of everything we do, working tirelessly to meet the needs of those we serve.

This year, we provided more educational programs than ever before and directly impacted the lives of over 3,700 individuals. These accomplishments are possible because of our deep cross-sector partnerships, the commitment of our Board of Directors, our amazing volunteers, and the dedication of our staff, who consistently go above and beyond to serve our community.

As we look to the future, I am filled with gratitude and optimism. Thank you for being an integral part of our journey. Together, we have demonstrated the value of working together to build a community where all feel welcome. We are indeed stronger together, and I am inspired to continue advancing our mission with a powerful and creative team by my side.



With deep appreciation,  
Fatima Said, Project FINE Executive Director

# 2024 Year



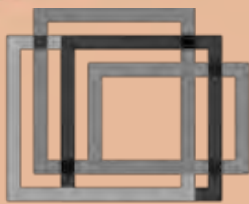
Over **3,759** refugees and immigrants served through educational programs and services

**5,153** hours of interpreting and translation services provided



**205** people participated in Cultural Arts and Ancestry sessions in Winona or St Charles

Project FINE staff completed **540** hours of continuing education



**WELCOMING  
WEEK**

Over **5,000** people attended Welcoming Week activities in Winona or St. Charles

# at a Glance

**1,100** individuals from partner agencies attended a training session provided by Project FINE



**158** youth from refugee and immigrant families participated in programming

**5,814** advocacy and information referrals provided to refugees and immigrants



**435** hours of in-home tutoring provided to refugee and immigrant families with children aged 0-5

**5** new programs developed to meet identified needs: Energy Efficiency, Crime Prevention Program, Follow Along Program Community Connectors, Safety and Prevention for Youth, and Supporting Growers

# Navigating Com

*Programs in this category provide educational resources to refugees and immigrants,*

## Language Services

Language Services are essential for facilitating communication between service providers and non-English speaking clients. In 2024, Project FINE delivered **5,153** hours of interpreting and translating services in **122** locations in our region. We offer high-quality, professional interpreting services for in-person, virtual, and phone appointments, as well as written translation. Our interpreter roster includes 40 skilled



interpreters proficient in 24 languages, and our interpreters receive ongoing training on relevant topics including best practices, ethics, and mandatory reporting.

## Advocacy & Information Referrals

This program connects refugees and immigrants with services that address basic needs, including employment, housing, and education. Staff meet with individuals to assess their needs and offer referrals to support families' safety and well-being. This approach helps streamline access and avoid duplication of services. In 2024, Project FINE provided **5,814** hours of advocacy and information referral services.

**"We needed help with housing, transportation and medical care, and Project FINE was there for my family. Thanks to Project FINE, I've been able to make a life here in Winona."**

**-Advocacy and Information Referrals Client**

## Women's Economic Security Act (WESA) Outreach

This project provided outreach to refugees and immigrants about changes to the Minnesota Women's Economic Security Act, which outlines requirements for workplace conditions and time off for pregnant women or new parents. In 2024, staff conducted **9** calls and **29** home visits to share information about WESA. We also shared information with over **4,000** people via our Hmong and Spanish Facebook pages and developed a brochure and business card which was shared at our annual picnic.

This project was funded by a grant from the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry.

## Employment Services

Project FINE's Employment Services help refugees and immigrants connect with jobs and training to reach their financial goals. Staff provide personalized assistance, working with people one-on-one with job searches, registering for educational opportunities, creating resumes and preparing for job interviews. We also make referrals to partner organizations to address barriers to such as childcare and transportation. In 2024, we provided **302** hours of Employment Services to **261** individuals.

# Community Systems

*easing their adjustment to the United States and increasing self-sufficiency.*

## Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST) Outreach

In 2024, legislation went into effect in Minnesota providing time off for employees based on the hours they work. Many refugees and immigrants were unaware of these changes, and we conducted outreach activities to share information about the new law. Throughout the year, staff made **100** calls and **62** home visits to share information about ESST. We also developed an informational social media campaign that reached over **4,000** people via our Hmong and Spanish Facebook pages. Staff also developed an informational brochure and business card in Hmong and Spanish, and shared information at softball games and other local events, reaching over **1,000** people.



This project was funded by a grant from the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry.

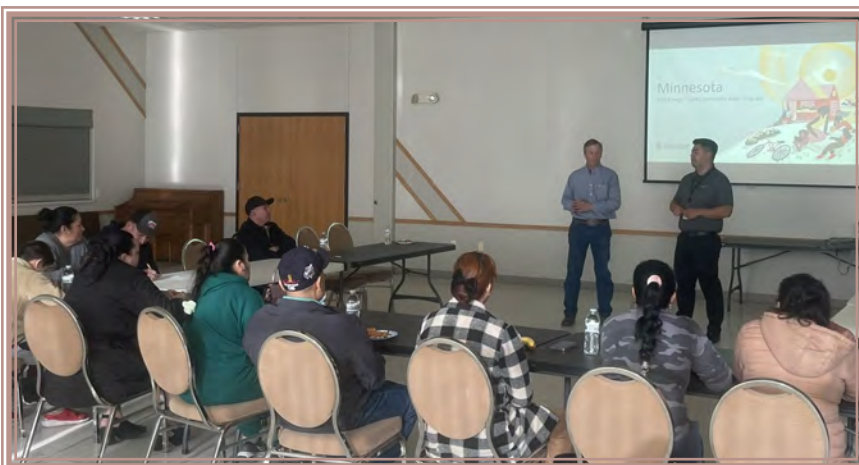
## Early Learning

The goal of the Early Learning program is to offer education, resources and support to refugee and immigrant families with children age 0-5. Using a weekly home visit model, program activities focus on cognitive and social learning, mental health and parent engagement. Staff work with families to identify goals and develop a curriculum to meet their needs. They also offer connections to other community resources related to early childhood, basic needs, technology and employment. In 2024, **435** hours of individualized tutoring were provided to **12** families in Winona County.

This program is funded by a grant from the Sheltering Arms Foundation.

## Energy Efficiency Outreach

The goal of this project is to provide education and connections to resources to help refugees and immigrants improve the energy efficiency of their homes and learn about clean energy. Activities included educational sessions, an informational social media campaign, and home visits to share ways to improve efficiency. **51** people participated in sessions and another **20** families received a visit.



Funding for this project is provided by a grant from University of Minnesota Clean Energy Resource Teams.

# Navigating Community Systems

*Programs in this category provide educational resources to refugees and immigrants, easing their adjustment to the United States and increasing self-sufficiency.*

## Crime Prevention Program (CPP)

This program provides information and education about laws and the criminal justice system to refugees and immigrants. The goal is to reduce participation in unlawful activities and support positive relationships between individuals and those in law enforcement, corrections and the court system. Program activities include monthly sessions held in Winona and St. Charles.

8 sessions were hosted in 2024, with **105** people attending. Topics included health risks of drug and alcohol use, laws related to driving under the influence, conversations with law enforcement, a tour of the Winona County Jail, and information about internet safety and social media scams. Several partners served as session presenters, including the Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention, Family and Children's Center, St. Charles Police, Winona County Sheriff and Winona Public Defenders Office.



This project is funded by a grant from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety.

## Follow Along Program Community Connectors

Follow Along is offered by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to support families with young children as they grow and learn. Families receive questionnaires via mail that track their child's development, and after returning the for they receive activities to help their child explore and learn through play. In 2024, Project FINE was among 8 organizations statewide who were selected to serve as community connectors, offering culturally and linguistically inclusive outreach and support to families as they enroll in the program. We also share insight and suggestions with the state, which will be used in a program redesign. In 2024, Project FINE engaged with **20** local refugee and immigrant families and **7** registered to participate.

This project is funded by a grant from the Minnesota Department of Health.

## Microbusiness Support

This project offers support for refugee and immigrant entrepreneurs, focusing on very small businesses, usually sole proprietors or home-based operations. In 2024, **6** entrepreneurs received support to strengthen their business, and activities will continue in 2025 with additional training sessions and learning opportunities.

**8** This project is funded by a grant from the Winona Community Foundation.



# Building Communities

*Programs in this category bring together diverse groups of refugees, immigrants and established residents to promote cultural sharing and build understanding.*

## Cultural Arts and Ancestry - Winona

The goal of this program is to share culture and highlight diversity in our region through the creation of cultural art forms from around the world. Local refugees and immigrants serve as program instructors, sharing information about their culture and leading participants in projects based on a traditional art form, which were held in Winona.

In 2024, activities included 6 workshops focused on Primitivista painting from Nicaragua, Piñata from Mexico, Tambor dance from Venezuela, and Vincha (feather crown) from Colombia. These activities engaged 7 local artists and 128 participants.



This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council thanks to a legislative appropriation from the Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund.



## My Hmong Roots

This project provides classes for middle and high school students focused on Hmong language and culture. The goal is to improve language fluency and enhance understanding of Hmong traditions. In 2024, My Hmong Roots sessions took place twice a month throughout the school year, engaging 38 participants from a diversity of backgrounds, including Hmong, Hispanic, Caucasian, and African-American communities.

# Building

*Programs in this category bring together diverse groups of refugees, immigrants*

## Supporting Growers

The purpose of Supporting Growers is to provide agricultural education for refugees and immigrants, and increase access to resources related to gardening/growing food. The program offers agricultural education, garden space, access to tools and seeds, and assistance with selling produce at the Farmers Market. In 2024, **9** adults and **11** youth participated in program activities.

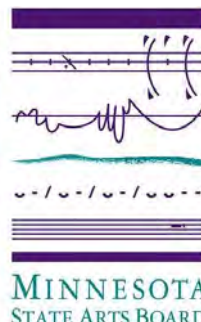
## Cultural Arts and Ancestry - St. Charles

The goal of the Cultural Arts and Ancestry project is to empower refugees and immigrants to share their artistic talents and cultural heritage with the community. The project featured **10** workshops on various art forms, including Corn Husk Dolls, Lele Dolls, Dance and Tile Painting from Mexico, Puerto Rican Dance and Hmong Story Cloth.

Local artists from each culture led the sessions, with **77** participants attending in St. Charles. The project culminated in a capstone event during the Welcoming Week Celebration in September, where art created in the workshops was displayed. The event attracted over **500** attendees.



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; and by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.



NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
for the  
**ARTS**  
arts.gov

# Communities

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

## Training and Consulting

Project FINE provides training and consulting services on a variety of topics related to culture, diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our goal is to increase awareness, develop an appreciation for differences, expand knowledge of diversity and culture, and share strategies to incorporate inclusive and equitable practices in the workplace and the community. In 2024, **1,100** individuals participated in a training session with Project FINE. Sessions included presentations to **17** different agencies and the completion of **2** sessions of the Intercultural Development Inventory.



## Welcoming Table

The Welcoming Table program offers an opportunity for the community to gather for a meal and build connections across cultures. The program's goal is to unite people from diverse backgrounds, encourage relationship-building, promote understanding, and celebrate the rich diversity within the community. In 2024, five Welcoming Table gatherings were held in Winona and St. Charles, with **430** people participating.

Thank you to Sunrise Bank and WNB Financial for sponsoring this program and to Central Lutheran Church and St. Charles Borromeo Church for hosting Welcoming Table gatherings.



# Empowering

*Programs in this category support youth from refugee and immigrant families as they*

## Safety and Prevention for Youth (SPY)

The goal of the SPY program is to prevent involvement in unlawful activities and develop positive leadership and collaboration skills among middle and high school youth from refugee and immigrant families. In 2024, **97** youth participated in program activities in Winona and St. Charles, which included educational sessions on bullying, the legal system, driving safety, and a tour of the Winona County Jail.



The program also included enrichment activities such as fishing, visiting Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center, boating, and volunteering at community events like the National Night Out in St. Charles. The program engaged several partners including the Winona County Sheriff, St. Charles Police, Winona Public Defenders Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Winona Park and Rec, Towards Zero Deaths MN and the Minnesota Marine Art Museum.

The SPY program is funded by a grant from the Department of Public Safety.



## College Education Connection

This program offers academic support and resources to youth from refugee and immigrant families in Winona County as they prepare for post-secondary education. Activities include a scholarship program, and in 2024, Project FINE awarded scholarships to **5** graduating seniors to assist with their continued education. Since 2009, a total of **74** diverse students from across Winona County have received scholarships through Project FINE.

Scholarships are made possible through the generous contributions of individuals in our region.



# Youth

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

## GRAB: Girls Reaching Above & Beyond

The GRAB program aims to support middle and high school girls from refugee and immigrant families in discovering their identity and developing a roadmap to achieve their dreams. Program activities include monthly sessions in Winona and St. Charles, as well as a combined summer camp experience. In 2024, **72** girls participated in the program, which offered leadership development, financial literacy, cultural exploration, and teambuilding activities. Participants also volunteered at local events and enjoyed a two-night camping trip to Whitewater State Park, where they hiked, engaged in sports, and participated in nature and craft activities.



Funding for the GRAB program is provided by the Women's Foundation of Minnesota.

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

The FORCE program engages middle and high school boys from refugee and immigrant families in activities that foster positive character traits, encourage healthy decision-making, and help participants prepare for future financial stability. In 2024, **31** boys participated in sessions in Winona and St. Charles.



## Cultures United

The Cultures United program offers middle and high school students the chance to explore countries and cultures from around the world. Students meet after school in Winona and St. Charles, gaining a deeper understanding of different cultures through activities centered on language, holidays, games, art, and food. The goal of Cultures United is to promote intercultural exchange, foster cross-cultural relationships among youth, and create an inclusive and welcoming environment. In 2024, **93** youth participated in program activities.



Cultures United is funded by a grant from the Laura Jane Musser Fund.

# Welcoming



Project FINE organized several events during Welcoming Week, which took place September 13-22. Welcoming Week is celebrated annually across the globe, connecting neighbors and building a deeper sense of belonging for all. This year, the cities of Goodview, St. Charles and Winona each issued Welcoming Week proclamations.

On September 12, staff hosted Welcoming Week Trivia at Two Fathoms Brewing Company. Questions focused on various cultures or countries and were gathered from community members, staff, interpreters and board members.



September 15, H30 Jazz Trio hosted their monthly Jazz Jam in support of Project FINE and Welcoming Week. **30** people attended the event, which featured live music on the outdoor patio.



A Welcoming Table gathering was held on September 16, with **80** people attending. The event included an All-American menu and participants shared how they have felt welcomed in the community.

On September 17, Project FINE and the Sandbar Storytelling Festival hosted a panel presentation featuring stories from local refugees and immigrants. **68** people attended the event, which highlighted stories from Thailand, Nicaragua, Colombia and Venezuela.

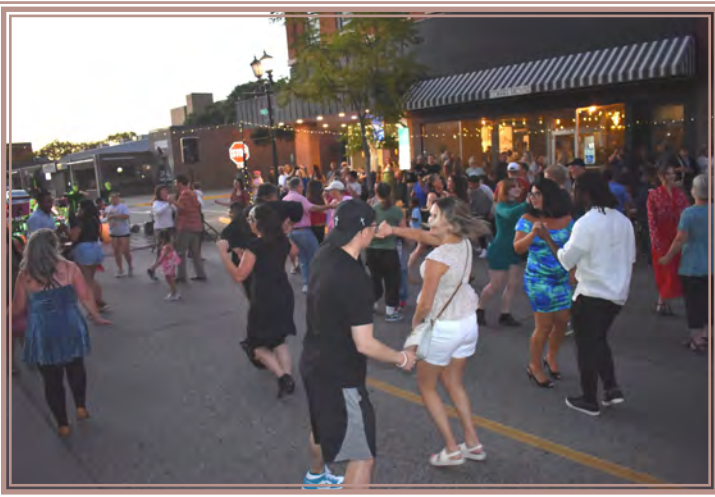
Events continued with a Welcoming Week Celebration in St. Charles on September 18. It was a wonderful evening of music, laughter and friendship. Activities included cultural displays, games, food, karaoke, and dancing. Over **60** community members participated.



# Week 2024

A Welcoming Week and Citizenship Day Celebration was held in Winona on September 20. The event included a “Walk Around the World” with cultural displays from **16** countries and a program to recognize naturalized citizens, with remarks from Winona Mayor Scott Sherman, Project FINE Board President Dan Matejka, and Executive Director Fatima Said.

A Salsa in the Streets event concluded the evening, with live music by Salsa del Sol and a dance hosted by River City Dancers and the Winona Main Street Program. It was a wonderful celebration of culture and community, with over **500** people attending.



Welcoming Week events concluded at Winona State University on September 21 with a booth at the Winona State University Game Day Experience. The booth had information about Project FINE and Welcoming Week activities and giveaways, attracting over **200** community members. An announcement about Project FINE and Welcoming Week was featured during halftime of the football game, reaching an estimated **3,000** people.

We’d like to thank our Welcoming Week event partners Central Lutheran Church, City of Goodview, H30 Jazz Trio, Minnesota State College Southeast, Peter’s Biergarten, River City Dancers, Sandbar Storytelling Festival, Two Fathoms Brewing Company, Winona Area Chamber of Commerce’s Main Street Project, Winona Family YMCA, and Winona State University for their collaboration.



Special thanks to WNB Financial for their support of our Welcoming Week activities and to the Cities of Winona and St. Charles for sponsoring Welcoming Week events.

# Community



**Welcoming America Meeting**  
In February, Project FINE hosted a meeting with representatives from Welcoming America and community partners to discuss welcoming efforts in our region and highlight our collaboration. **13** partner agencies attended the meeting.

## Annual Report to the Community

On February 21, we hosted our Annual Report to the Community Event at Saint Mary's University. The event focused on our impact in 2023 and recognized Welcoming America as our Partner of the Year.



## Diverse Entrepreneur Meetup

In March, we collaborated with Red Wing Ignite and Engage Winona to host a meetup for local entrepreneurs. The event included networking, information and presentations by diverse business owners. We provided interpreters and recruitment for the event, which had **40** attendees.

## Taste of International Cuisine Fundraiser

Project FINE held its annual fundraiser on June 2, 2024 at Winona State University. The event theme was "Journey to Asia" and included a five-course meal, dance performances by the Great River Filipino-American Association and Uake Dance Academy, as well as a chopstick lesson, fashion show and live auction. Recipients of the 2024 College Education Connection and Gabriel Manrique Memorial Scholarships were also recognized. Funds raised support Project FINE's educational programs and services.





# Involvement

## Center for Equity and Excellence Focus Group

In June, Project FINE and the Center for Equity and Excellence conducted focus groups of refugee and immigrant parents for the Minnesota Department of Health. **20** parents from Winona, St. Charles, Lewiston and Altura participated and shared their experiences with early intervention services.



## Walk Around the World

In June, Project FINE participated in IMAA's Walk Around the World event in Rochester. This event featured cultural performances and booths from local nonprofits and service providers.

## Winona County Fair

In July, Project FINE provided Spanish interpreters for the Winona County Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention booth at the Winona County Fair in St. Charles.

## First Alliance Focus Group

In August, Project FINE hosted a focus group in St. Charles in collaboration with First Alliance Credit Union. **17** refugees and immigrants attended the event and shared their needs and challenges related to banking and interacting with financial institutions.

## Project FINE Satisfaction Survey

In summer 2024, Project FINE conducted a survey of local refugees and immigrants to learn about their experience working with the organization and to identify emerging needs. The survey was completed by **251** people and the feedback collected will be used to inform future programming.

## Gladiolus Days Parade & Picnic

On August 25, Project FINE staff, board members and friends walked in the Gladiolus Days Parade in St. Charles. Following the parade, we hosted a picnic at the City Park. The event included food, games and music and was attended by over **75** people.



# Community

## Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota Partnership

Project FINE continued its collaboration with the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota (ILCM) in 2024. Activities are based on a grant project funded by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety's Office of Justice, which provides support and referrals to services for refugees and immigrants who are victims of domestic violence or other violent crimes. Throughout the year, Project FINE provided over **42** hours of assistance, offering referrals and information about the criminal justice system and victim rights to refugees and immigrants in Winona County.



## La Crosse County Library

In 2024, Project FINE collaborated with the La Crosse County Library on two events. In September, Project FINE arranged a panel presentation at their Onalaska branch, with **5** refugees and immigrants sharing their experiences. In October, Project FINE staff held a Hmong Story Time for children and families in their Holmen branch.

## Minnesota Marine Art Museum Collaboration

During 2024, Project FINE partnered with the Minnesota Marine Art Museum on several projects designed to engage and learn from diverse community members. We provided translation for their Seasonal Saturday events, hosted a listening session to learn how to engage diverse community members and arranged a panel presentation of local refugees and immigrants.



## Welcoming America Cohort Participation

In 2024, Project FINE participated in the Rural Local to Local Community Partnership program, which connects communities in the Welcoming Network in an effort to learn about the welcoming work within each other's communities.

## Minnesota State College Southeast

In August, Project FINE began a new collaborative role at the Winona Campus of Minnesota State College Southeast, supporting staff, faculty and diverse students through interpreting, outreach and engagement. Project FINE staff are on campus two days a week and participate in other events and activities.



# Collaborations

## Whole Family Systems Project Collaboration

2024 marked the final year of Project FINE's collaboration with the Whole Family Systems project led by IMAA and Families First of Minnesota. The goal of the project was to increase engagement of families in early childhood learning opportunities. Through this partnership, Project FINE staff provided over **400** hours of technology tutoring. During the five years of the Whole Family Systems project, 25 laptops were distributed to refugee and immigrant families, 45 families received internet stipends, and Project FINE provided over 1,250 hours of technology tutoring. In June, Project FINE was recognized by IMAA for our partnership and collaboration throughout the project period.



## Professional Development

In 2024, Project FINE staff completed **540** hours of training focused on cultural competency, interpreting, community engagement, and mandatory reporting, all of which are beneficial to the organization's mission. This investment in professional growth enhances the team's ability to serve the community effectively. We'd like to thank the Otto Bremer Trust for supporting the continued growth and professional development of the Project FINE team.



## Staff Wellness Plan

In 2024, Project FINE provided a wellness plan for staff focused on social, emotional and physical well-being. Activities were held throughout the year, including a staff retreat, lunch-and-learn workshops, fun activities, holiday celebration, and a Gold Star Award Celebration. Activities promote collaboration and contribute to a positive working environment.

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

- Blue Cross Community Advisory Board
- Minnesota State College Southeast President's Advisory Council
- Ready Set School Board of Directors
- Southeast Minnesota Together Core Group
- SHIP Community Leadership Team
- 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 Board

# 2024 Financial Summary

## Income Statement

<b>Total Revenue 2024</b>	\$788,881
<b>Total Expenses 2024</b>	\$705,424
<b>Board Designated for 2025 Programs</b>	
Navigating Community Systems	\$20,000
Building Communities	\$35,000
Empowering Youth	\$20,000

## Balance Sheet

### Assets

Current Assets	\$665,710
Fixed Assets	\$40,281
Other Assets	\$1,296,580
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$2,002,571</b>

### Liabilities

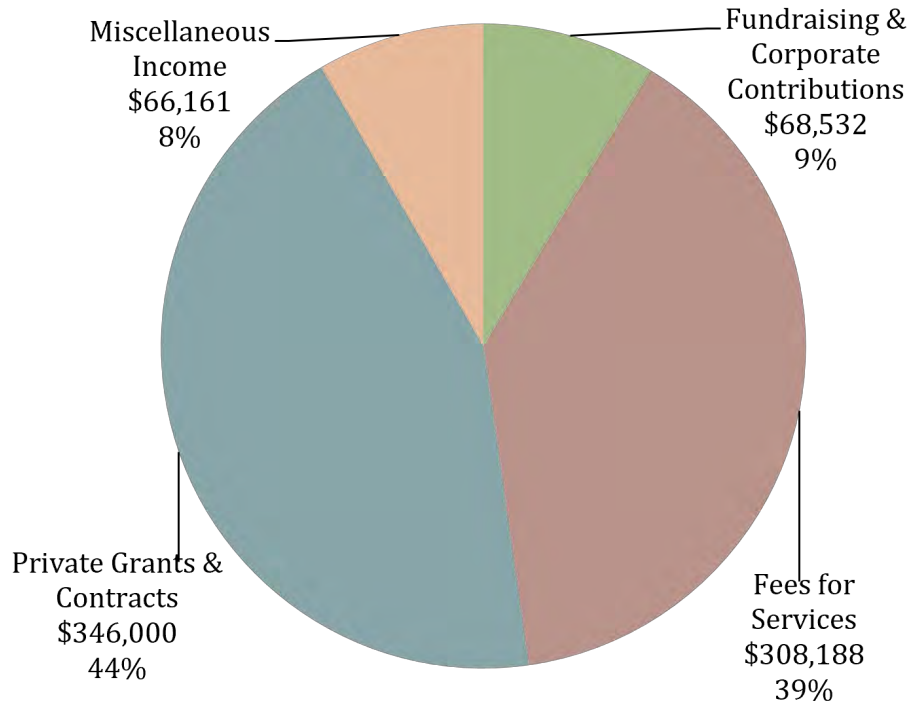
Current Liabilities	\$75,273
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$75,273</b>

### Net Assets

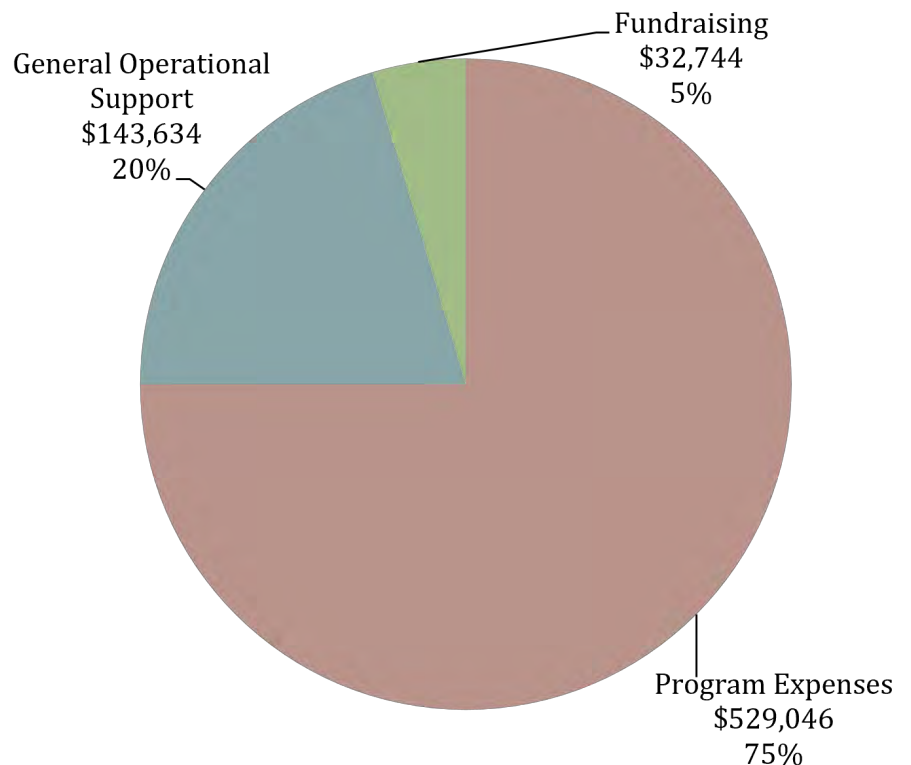
Board Designated Net Assets	\$50,000
Undesignated Net Assets	\$1,877,298
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$1,927,298</b>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b>\$2,002,571</b>

Financial information was prepared using the accrual method. Audited financial statements will be posted on our website, [www.projectfine.org](http://www.projectfine.org), in Spring 2025.

## Revenue 2024



## Expenses 2024



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

The Platinum Seal of Transparency is the highest level of recognition offered by Candid, the world's largest source of nonprofit information. To earn the seal, nonprofits share organizational and financial information; goals and strategies; and progress made towards their mission. Learn more at [www.candid.org](http://www.candid.org)

# Community Partnerships

Thank you to the many businesses and organizations who partner with us to support our mission.

- Advocacy Center of Winona
- Behrens Manufacturing
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of MN
- Bridges Health Program
- Catholic Charities
- Central Lutheran Church
- CERTs
- Charities Review Council
- Children's Dental of Winona
- City of Goodview
- City of St. Charles
- City of Winona
- COPAL
- Cotter Schools
- Engage Winona
- Fillmore County Public Health
- Goodview Farmers Market
- Gundersen Health System
- H30 Jazz Trio
- Hiawatha Valley Mental Health
- Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota
- Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association
- La Crosse County Library
- Laura Jane Musser Fund
- Lewiston-Altura School District
- Live Well Winona
- Mardag Foundation
- Mayo Clinic
- Merchants Bank
- Minnesota Department of Corrections
- Minnesota Department of Health
- Minnesota Department of Labor
- Minnesota Department of Public Safety
- Minnesota Marine Art Museum
- Minnesota State Arts Board
- Minnesota State College Southeast
- Otto Bremer Trust
- Pleasant Valley Church
- Ready Set School
- Rollingstone Cenex
- Rushford-Peterson Schools
- St. Charles Borromeo Church
- St. Charles Public Schools
- Saint Croix
- Saint Mary's University of MN
- Sandbar Storytelling Festival
- Semcac
- Sheltering Arms Foundation
- SMRLS
- South Country Health Alliance
- Southern MN Initiative Foundation
- Spring Grove Public Schools
- Southeast Minnesota Together
- The Joy Labs
- UCare of Minnesota
- Wabasha County Public Health
- Welcoming America
- Winona Afghan Support Network
- Winona Area Ambulance Service
- Winona Area Chamber of Commerce
- Winona Area Public Schools
- Winona Family 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 Public Defender's Office
- Winona Sheltering Network
- Winona State University
- Winona Volunteer Services
- WNB Financial
- Women's Foundation of Minnesota

## 2024 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:

### Women's Foundation of Minnesota

The collaboration between Project FINE and Women's Foundation of Minnesota began in 2013 when we received a GirlsBEST planning grant for the Girls Reaching Above and Beyond program.

Since that time, the program has had almost 200 participants and a tremendous positive impact in the lives of girls from refugee and immigrant families in Winona County.

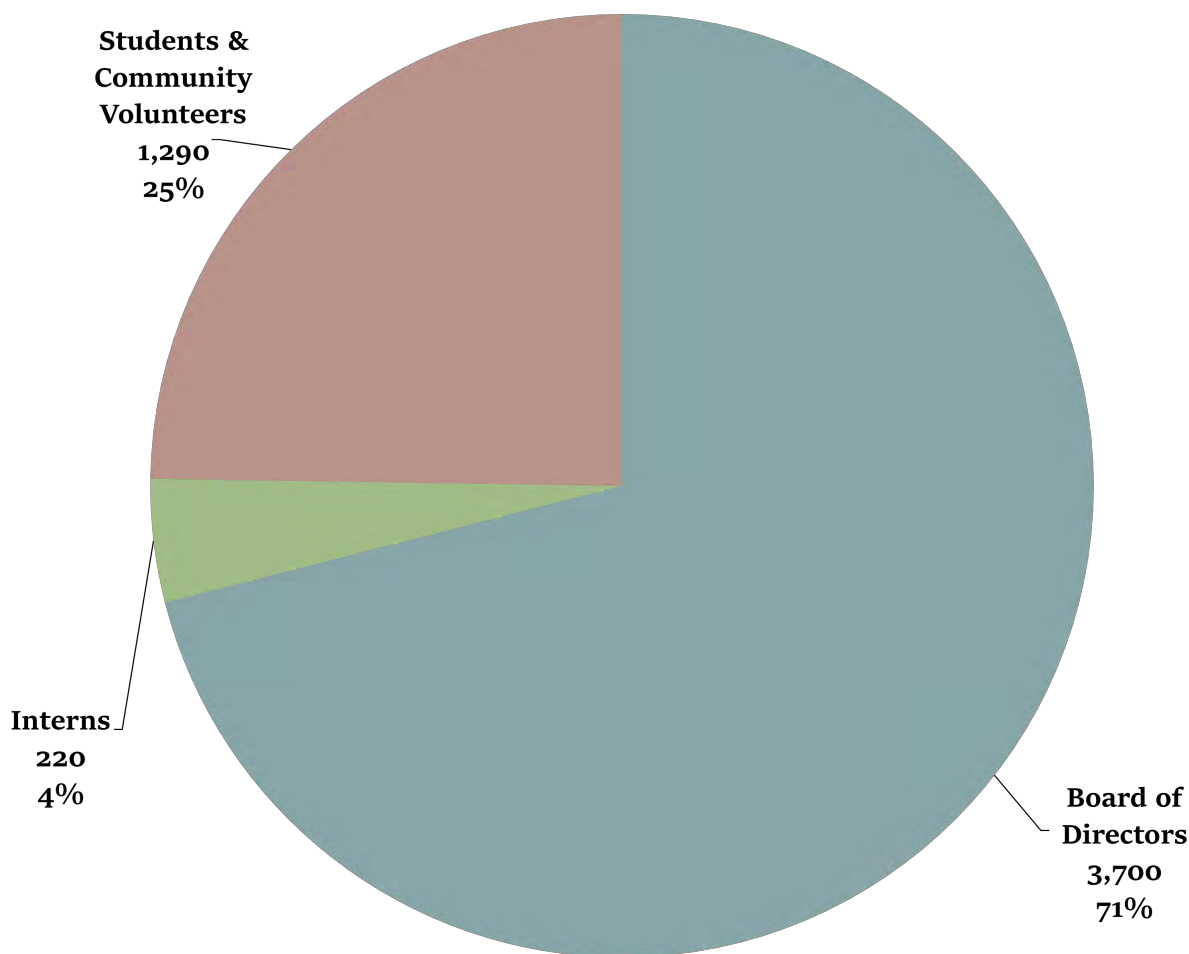


Project FINE would like to thank Women's Foundation of Minnesota for their commitment to investing in innovative community-based, community-led solutions to ensure equal opportunity and pathways to economic security for girls, women, and families across Minnesota.

# Volunteer Information

Volunteers are essential to the success of Project FINE, offering their time and talents to help advance our vision of fostering a respectful and welcoming community. We are deeply grateful to the individuals who dedicated thousands of hours of service in 2024.

## Project FINE Volunteer Hours 2024 5,210 Total Hours



### A special thank you to:

#### Interns:

Malena Siskow  
Karem Gonzalez Gomez

#### Community Volunteers:

Mary Fawcett  
Luke Larson  
Johanna Isabel Ortega  
Kathy Peterson  
Christian Schmidt  
Valentina Torres-Quiroga  
Wincraft-Fanatics



# Board Members and Staff

Our board members play a crucial role in advancing our mission, contributing their expertise, time, and experience. Their commitment and dedication are integral to the success of Project FINE and the communities we serve, and we are truly grateful for their support.

## Project FINE Board Members 2024



**Dan Matejka**  
Board President



**Dale Hinckley**  
Board Vice President



**David Kramer**  
Board Treasurer



**Nicole Messenger**  
Board Secretary



**Heather Bach**



**Dana Busch**



**Annette Freiheit**



**Josh Harrison**



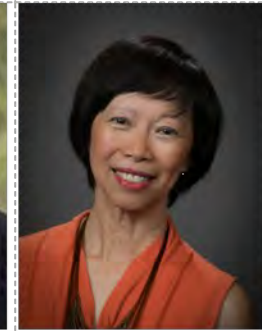
**Tom Krause**



**Rebecca Lamberty**



**Cecilia Manrique**



**Pat Mutter**



**Sally Olson**



**Scott Olson**



**Jose Pelaez**



**Jack Richter**



**Jami Severson**



**Andy Teska**



Pictured L-R: Miguel Benjamin, Maria Rodriguez-Ramirez, Fatima Said, Pang Vang, German Victoria, Katie van Eijl and Christian Cruz Cartagena

## Project FINE Staff

Fatima Said, Executive Director  
 Katie van Eijl, Program Manager  
 German Victoria, Program Manager  
 Miguel Benjamin, Community Engagement Manager  
 Maria Rodriguez-Ramirez, Program Coordinator  
 Pang Vang, Program Coordinator  
 Christian Cruz Cartagena, Program Coordinator

*Project*



*FINE*

*Focus on Integrating Newcomers through Education*

[www.projectfine.org](http://www.projectfine.org)

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