



2024-2025

ANNUAL REPORT

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Sil Ganzó

Founder & Executive
Director

As we look back on this year, I am filled with deep gratitude for our staff, their dedication, creativity, and energy, which continue to move our mission forward in powerful ways every day. To our Board and community partners—for allowing us to lean on you for support. To our BRIDGE families—for your trust and for showing us the way forward.

We are also deeply thankful for the love and encouragement we receive from the greater Charlotte community. Your support, in every way, reminds us that this work matters and allows us to stay responsive to what the times require of us, even when the path gets harder.

Knowing that we are not alone gives us the energy to keep building a community where all immigrant and refugee children feel cared for, and their families have the stability and opportunities they deserve to thrive. Together, we have supported hundreds of children and families, creating spaces where they feel safe, valued, and connected.

We hope you enjoy this recap of 2024–2025. It was a special one!

-Sil

OUR MISSION

ourBRIDGE fosters the education, acculturation, and well-being of refugee and immigrant families through out-of-school programs and comprehensive, culturally-responsive wraparound support.

OUR LOCATIONS:



ourBRIDGE - East

- **Community-based Afterschool & Summer Programs**
- Certified ESL Instructors
- Community Events (like International Fall Festival)
- The Bulb fresh food market 2x/month
- Health Fairs
- Adult ESL Classes
- Wraparound Services
- Atrium Community Health Worker
- **150 K-8 Kids**
- **20+ countries represented**
- **13 languages**

Charlotte Is Home Center

- ourBRIDGE HQ Offices
- Community Closet
- Diaper Bank
- Emergency Funds through United Way of Greater Charlotte
- Wraparound Services
- Atrium Community Health Worker



Also hosted on-site by two partners:

- Immigration legal resources
- Low-cost healthcare

ourBRIDGE - South

- **School-based Afterschool & Summer Program at CMS Pinewood Elementary School**
- Certified ESL Instructors

Hosted nearby:

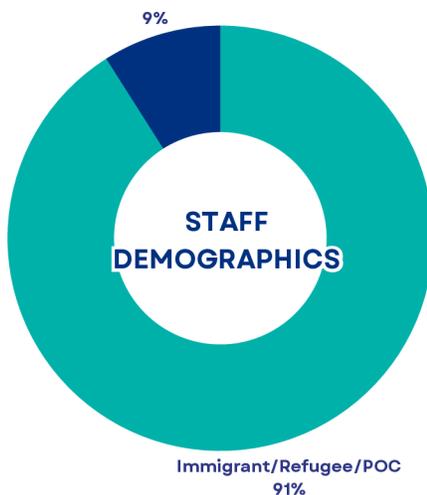
- Community Events
- Parent Support Groups
- Mental Health Workshops
- Wraparound Services

- **100 K-5 Kids**
- **78% English Language Learners**
- **90% Spanish-speaking students**

OUR TEAM

The BRIDGE Kids represent **20+ countries and cultures!** It only makes sense that our team would reflect that.

We make sure our staff are properly prepared to meet the academic and socio-emotional needs of students. One hundred percent of our staff is trained and coached in equity-centered, trauma-informed care; Child-Teacher Relationship Training (CTRT); abuse prevention; workplace soft skills; cultural relationships; bias; CPR; and mental health aid.



Our 50-member team* represents **24 countries and cultures from around the world:**

USA, Laos, Mexico, Russia, Ireland, UK, Dominican Republic, Peru, El Salvador, Congo, Rwanda, Argentina, Bosnia, Turkey, Pakistan, India, Saudi Arabia, Ghana, Venezuela, Canada, Syria, Afghanistan, Burma, Colombia.

Our team this year **speaks 23 languages**, allowing us to connect with our BRIDGE Kids and their families in meaningful ways:

English, Lao, Spanish, Russian, German, French, Swahili, Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, Urdu, Arabic, Punjabi, Ga, Ewe, Twi, Fante, Hindko, Burmese, Farsi, Dari, Hindi, Portuguese.

*Nearly half of our 15 full-time staff started at ourBRIDGE as part-time staff or volunteers!!

ourBRIDGE is the only non-faith-based organization in Charlotte, NC, that has an afterschool curriculum developed specifically for newly arrived immigrant and refugee kids and their families.

Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools 24-25 Data:



1 in 3 of the student body speaks another language other than English at home.

158

countries represented by the CMS student body

32,891

the highest enrollment of students learning English in CMS history

201

Languages spoken (#1 Spanish, #2 Russian)

OUR IMPACT

2024-2025



AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMMING

250 kids enrolled

20+ countries represented

At each site:

- Academic support—homework help, math, and literacy tutoring
- One-on-one and small group tutoring with Literacy Facilitators
- Counselors/play therapist on-site
- Full, healthy, culturally responsive meals (halal available)
- Transportation provided

81% showed moderate to significant academic progress

91% demonstrated increased level of engagement in learning

86% improved the way they go along with other students

41,370 meals provided—culturally responsive meals during out-of-school time (dinners, breakfasts, and lunches)

"OB has always had a huge impact on my students who participate. They feel more confident and are willing to participate in classroom activities".

-Pinewood ES Teacher

Summer Programming

9 weeks of full-day summer programming for 190+ rising K-8 students, with breakfast, lunch, snacks, and transportation provided

Summer Field Trips and Outings:

Great Wolf Lodge, iFLY, Ray Splash, Urban Air Adventure, Hike at Crowders Mountain, fitness sessions, bike rides with Charlotte Recyclery, kayaking, and more!



Family Support Team

Our Family Support Team offers personalized, multilingual support to help families navigate complex systems and access essential resources such as food, healthcare, school support, and mental health services. By meeting families where they are and communicating in their preferred language, they help strengthen family stability and children's well-being.

2,142 newcomers accessed services.

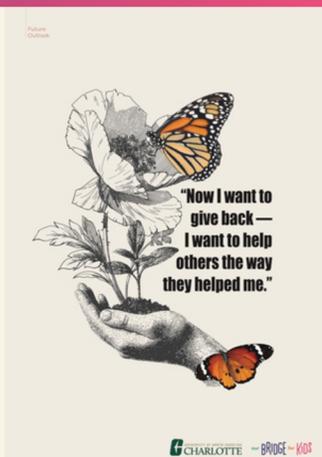
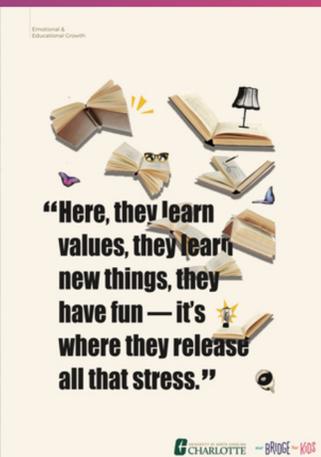
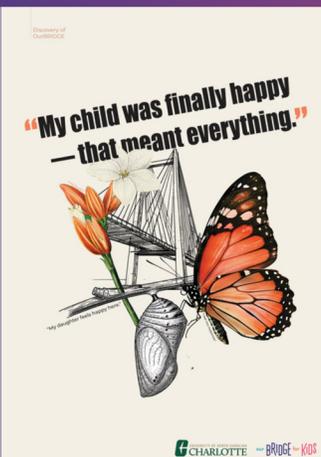
\$63,000+ provided for safe housing, vehicle repairs, food, and healthcare (thanks to Emergency Funds from United Way).

600+ crises addressed (time-sensitive issues involving housing, food, and healthcare)

95% of parents said that ourBRIDGE makes them feel hopeful about a better future for themselves and their families.

96% of parents said that ourBRIDGE makes them feel more in control of things in their life, like their child's education.

Quotes and artwork were developed by UNCC faculty, drawn from 2024–2025 focus groups with ourBRIDGE parents and staff.





Community Engagement & Celebration

We share our physical spaces with **6 non-profits** to facilitate access and maximize resources.

80+ community partnerships: connecting families to resources and strengthening our programs/events

42 community events hosted: Health Fairs, Legal Clinics, Academic Success Workshops, Asylum Clinics, Resource Fairs, Merry Market, Cultural Celebrations (Burmese New Year, Día del Niño, Fall Fest, Africa Day), and more!

16 weekly adult ESL hours: evening & weekend classes

98% of parents said that being involved with ourBRIDGE makes them feel proud to be from their home country.

"It's like a family - we help each other and everyone feels welcome." - **ourBRIDGE Parent**

Volunteering

42 active programmatic volunteers (volunteering directly in out-of-school programming)

590+ hours of programmatic volunteering – over \$20,000 in in-kind support

216 community volunteers (volunteering at community events)

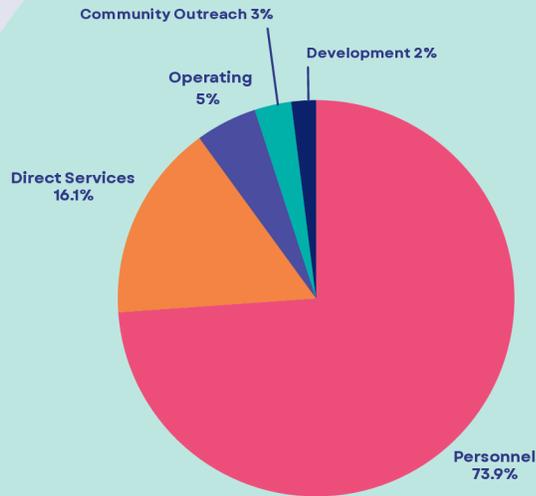
"I was born and raised in Senegal. I came to the US in 2021 to attend Davidson College for my undergraduate degree. One of my mentors there introduced me to ourBRIDGE, and we came for Africa Day. I remember how joyful everyone was and especially how comfortable the kids felt at ourBRIDGE. I sensed that I wanted to be a part of this beautiful community."

-ourBRIDGE Volunteer



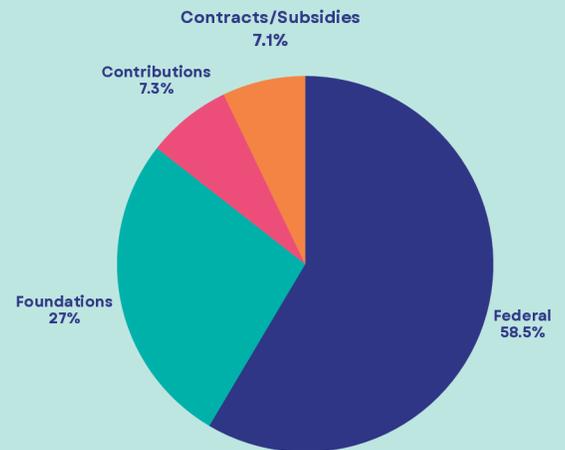
ANNUAL BUDGET

BUDGETED EXPENSES



2025-2026 BUDGET:
\$2,744,346

FUNDING SOURCES



DONATE HERE!



ourBRIDGE: Vision for the Future

As Charlotte continues to welcome more english and multilingual Learners, we hope to grow alongside them—adding school sites and centers that make our programs easy to access. Each new space will reflect our community-led, inclusive spirit and create a sense of belonging for immigrant, refugee, first-generation, multilingual, and multicultural families.

While this vision guides our future—like many organizations—we're also navigating uncertainty around funding sources that have long been dependable.

No matter what changes come, our commitment to working with and welcoming families remains the same. If you'd like to talk about how we can sustain this work together, please reach out.

✉ development@joinourbridge.org

THANK YOU

for your support and belief in our mission

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Charlotte, NC 28215

✉ info@joinourbridge.org

☎ (980) 272-6022

📱 @ourbridgeforkids



Thank you to the incredible individuals and organizations who have generously given their time, resources, and expertise to ourBRIDGE for KIDS. Your support makes our work possible!

Board of Directors

Satoshi Watanabe - Board Chair
Retired

A.T. Castillo - Vice Chair
Retired

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Senior Manager, RSM US LLP

Hiba Salih
Program Officer, LISC

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Area Vice President, Community
Engagement NC/GA
Atrium Health

Gavin Dowell
Deputy General Counsel, Consumer Banking,
Ally Financial

KaLee Strawbridge
Senior Manager Information Security, Lowes

Community Partnerships

704 Horsemen
Accenture
Adventist Christian Academy
Alianza
Amani Kids
Amity Medical Group

Arts+
 Atrium Health
 Baran Dance
 Beds For Kids
 Brave Step
 BreathINK
 Briarwood Elementary School
 Carolina Migrant Network
 Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation
 Central Piedmont Community College
 Charlotte Bilingual Preschool
 Charlotte Community Health Clinic
 Charlotte Eagles
 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library
 Cine Casual
 Classroom Central
 Compassion Closet
 Communities in Schools
 Crisis Assistance Ministry
 Despierta CLT
 Diaper Bank
 Digi-Bridge
 Discovery Place
 Eastway Middle School
 Eastside Stream Academy
 Ethiopian and Eritrean Youth Group
 Dance
 Feliciano Luna
 Fiestas Patrias
 First Tee Greater Charlotte
 Garinger High School
 Halal Street Food
 Intellicor Islamic School
 JW Grier Academy
 Julius L. Chambers
 KIPP Academy
 Kona Ice of Central Mecklenburg
 Latinos Run Charlotte
 Levine Scholars Program
 Merry Oaks International Academy
 NC Brazilian Arts Project
 Nourish Up
 Obra Collective
 Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic
 School (OLA)
 Panda Express

P3 Soccer
 Pat's Place
 PorchLight Creative
 Queens University of Charlotte
 Refugee Support Services
 Rocky River High School
 Shamrock Gardens Elementary School
 SOSST (Formerly known as EEYG)
 South Meck High School
 Tacos el Nevado
 Tesfa
 The Bulb
 Charlotte United FC
 Vision To Learn
 Windsor Park Elementary School
 Winterfield Elementary School

Strategic Partnerships

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS)
 Givens Aldersgate Senior Living
 McGuireWoods, LLC
 Woodlawn UMC
 Share Charlotte
 Afterschool Alliance
 Hood Hargett
 DPR Construction
 Pinewood Elementary School
 PorchLight Creative
 Charlotte Community Health Clinic
 Latin American Coalition
 UNC-Charlotte
 JE Dunn
 Social Venture Partners
 Undercurrent Coffee
 Common Market
 That's Novel
 Gardner Communications
 Iglesia del Nazareno

Volunteer Groups

Garfinkel Immigration Law Firm
 South Meck oB Club
 Myers Park oB Club
 Union Church
 Latinas Promoviendo
 Comunidad/Lambda Pi Chi Sorority
 Kappa Alpha Theta

First In Families of Mecklenburg County
Bank of America
Kappa Alpha Theta
UNCCLatinx Student Union
ENG Student Athletes

Current Growth Partnerships

21st Century Learning Center
City of Charlotte
United Way of Greater Charlotte
The Merancas Foundation
United States Department of Housing
and Urban Development (HUD)
NC Department of Health & Human
Services
Refugee School Impact
Leon Levine Foundation
Z Smith Reynolds Foundation
Belk Foundation
Lowe's Hometowns Partners
Charlotte Mecklenburg Community
Foundation
Hispanic Federation
Ross Stores Foundation
Mecklenburg County ABC Board
Albemarle Foundation
Sisters of Mercy NC Foundation
Ally Financial
Myers Park United Methodist Church
Alpha & Omega Foundation
Wells Fargo
Arts and Science Council
Atrium Health
Ginter Foundation
Merchants Foundation
Provident Benevolent Foundation
Bank of America
BOOM Charlotte
Charlotte Merchants
Dollar General Literacy Foundation
Charlotte South Rotary
Pike Properties

First Nationals Bank
St. John's Baptist Church
Christ Episcopal Church
Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic
Church
Piedmont Club Foundation
Sea Bar LLC.

BRIDGEbuilders (Major Donors)

Sarah Belk
Linda Cladias
Brian Collier
Logan Cyrus
Charlie Elberson
Martha Eubank
Sasha Lara Fain
Mike Gaffney
Erika Gantt
Robert Horner
Jeremy Needham & Rick Hudson
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Emily Catherine Plauché
Kim Rudolph
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Allen Shifflet
Gillian Small & Avery McGaha
Claire Tate
Vandana Walawalkar
Nancy Yang





our COMMUNITY



our FUTURE

