

# ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT 2023



#### **MESSAGE FROM WOW LEADERSHIP**

#### **WOW IS LEAD BY AN PASSIONATE TEAM**

In the realm of non-profit organizations, strong leadership is paramount for driving impactful change, and at Women of the World, we are exceptionally fortunate to have active and hardworking leadership from both our founders and board members. Their strategic vision and unwavering dedication have propelled our mission forward, inspiring our team to strive for excellence. Their leadership not only shapes our present success but also lays the foundation for a brighter and more impactful future!



Friends of WoW,

As we reflect on our journey, it's incredible to think back to those early days when Women of the World operated from the confines of my car, driven by a passion to make a difference. Fast forward to 2020, and we found ourselves in a spacious office with 15 rooms and 2 classrooms. Little did we know then that this office, which once seemed vast, would soon become too small to contain the energy, dedication, and impact that Women of the World exude. Women of the World is not just an organization; it's a beacon of hope, a sanctuary for forcibly displaced women who have faced unimaginable hardships. Our belief is simple yet profound: to care about refugees is to recognize the divinity in the eyes of the most vulnerable, and to engage. Instead of looking away. We are a boutique women's refugee service provider committed to addressing issues persisting long after resettlement. Our mission is not just about assisting; it's about changing hearts and minds. We measure our success not just in numbers but in the hugs and smiles exchanged, in the transformation of lives that were once marked by pain and despair. I express my profound appreciation to all our supporters who have been instrumental in our journey. Your contributions have allowed us to serve forcibly displaced women, empowering them to become self-reliant, powerful agents of change. Together, we are reshaping the narrative for these resilient women, offering them a chance at a better life. In closing, let us remember that our ability to share our riches with those who have suffered the worst horrors of war defines us as a society. Women of the World stands as a testament to the ideals of fairness and compassion for all. As we continue our journey, let us remain steadfast in our commitment to creating a world where every woman, regardless of her background, can flourish and thrive.



**Samira Harnish**Executive Director
Co-Founder



- 8 New Staff Members in 2023
- 1,500+ Clients Impacted
- 404 New Clients
- 39 Scholarship Recipients

## ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

- 61 lobs Started
- 150 Job Applications
- 793 Case Hours of Economic Empowerment Provided

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- 257 Hours of Practical English
- 18 Active Community Mentorships
- 25 Workshops with 7 Themes
- 5 Sessions of Intensive English (8 weeks)

## CUSTOMIZED SERVICE & ADVOCACY

- 1.747 Hours of Customized Service Provided
- 3 New Case Managers Hired

An overview of outcome highlights in self-reliance:

1,012

**Volunteer Hours During 2023** 

\$333K

Savings Through Customized Service and Advocacy

\$1.8M

Annual Earnings Increase and Education Monetary Benefit for Women Through Economic Empowerment





#### **WOW INTRODUCTION**



Women of the World helps forcibly displaced women achieve self-reliance, economic success, and a voice in the community.

#### **ABOUT US**

Since 2009, our mission has been to empower women from all nations to achieve independence, regardless of their legal status —immigrant, refugee, asylum seeker, or undocumented. All international women are welcome to join our WoW community.

Our clients have all overcome trials, sorrows, and hardships to escape their war-torn countries. They come to a new place with the determination and desire to create a new life for themselves and their families. We aim to support them on every step of this journey and to encourage self-reliance. We want our clients to be confident in their abilities so they no longer have to live in a state of fear or vulnerability. We know this will bring security and peace for themselves and their loved ones and allow them to give back and strengthen their community. We are better together and want each woman to know their unique and important role here in Salt Lake City.

#### WHAT WE DO

Through our three-pronged model of Customized Service, Community Building, and Economic Empowerment, we offer post-resettlement services.

- Personalized Case Management
- English Classes
- Career and Educational
   Development
- Community Mentorships
- Citizenship Preparation
- Workshops
- Digital and Financial Literacy
   Classes



**OUR CLIENTELE** 

WoW supports forcibly displaced women residing in Utah, encompassing refugees, asylum seekers, humanitarian visa holders, sponsored families, and potentially undocumented individuals. These women have been compelled to leave their homes due to conflict, persecution, human rights abuses, violence, or threats to their safety.



Utah has accepted just over 8,500 refugees since 2012, according to data from the Refugee Processing Center.

Despite its 30th largest population size among states, Utah ranks impressively as 11th for refugees accepted per capita. This statistic shows the state's commitment to providing a welcoming environment for those fleeing persecution, conflict, or adversity in their home countries. As demand for

#### Utah refugee resettlement by year

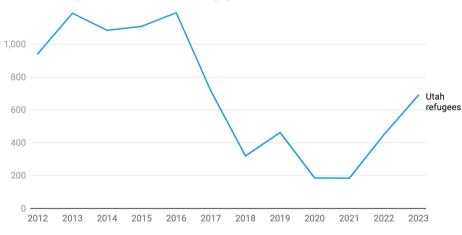


Chart: Sydnee Gonzalez, KSL.com • Source: Refugee Processing Center • Get the data • Created with Datawrapper

our services has grown across the state, Women of the World has transformed into a place of refuge for displaced women. It serves as a reliable source of help during their





We support women fleeing from some of the most brutal conflicts on earth, including Venezuela, Myanmar, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Syria. In Salt Lake, we are leaders in supporting women refugees and in helping families integrate into their new communities.

83 36+ countries languages



#### **Asia Region**

21.6% **Middle East Region** 

31.3% **Europe Region** 

**Central/South America** 

14.3%

**Africa** 

27.4%

6%



# WHAT OBSTACLES DO OUR FORCIBLY DISPLACED WOMEN FACE?

Women of the World exists to challenge multiple obstacles faced by our clients



English Skills

English is the key to access in America. Without English proficiency, displaced women are not able to navigate the complex world of employment, finances, education, benefits, and more.



Lack of Strong Social Networks

70% of Americans have their current employment due to a connection in their network. Displaced women come to the US without the social capital or connections to learn new skills, access resources, and seek advancement.



Economic Vulnerability

The majority of our ladies and their families are living day-to-day and month-to-month. An unexpected bill can be financially crippling and cause a stress-inducing crisis.



Long Term Poverty

Forcibly displaced women experience higher rates of poverty than men - often due to greater difficulty with workforce integration, larger domestic caretaking responsibilities, or cultural traditions.



Human Rights
Abuses

Many clients have experienced significant human rights abuses in their own countries. They often arrive in Utah without a full understanding of their rights to dignity, respect, and equity.

## **ANNUAL EVENTS**



## 13TH FASHION SHOW AND CULTURAL GALA

The Women of the World Fashion Show & Cultural Gala is our biggest fundraising event of the year. This event allows Utahns to learn about their new neighbors who add diversity to our state. We hold this event the same week as International Women's Day and give our clients a chance to showcase their rich culture and highlight their dreams. This year we raised more donations than ever for our programs--a tremendous success!

#### **MOTHER'S DAY**

We love celebrating our fabulous and hardworking mothers. Each year we highlight one deserving woman as our "Mother of the Year" to honor all the hard work she has accomplished over the year. This year, our client Samira was awarded for being a hardworking single mother and starting and excelling at a new job in her community.





#### **CELEBRATION OF SUCCESS**

At the end of each year, we recognize the women who have accomplished self-reliance goals. It is motivating for the community to see women celebrated for even the smallest step on the path toward independence. Local government and business members have also attended to help us support and recognize our ladies. This year we had more than 30 women recognized for accomplishments such as starting a new job, getting a promotion at work, starting a business, or graduating from college.

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Program at a Glance

32

**Workshop sessions** 

336

**English Classes** 

4

**Community Events** 

Community isn't just about being around others; it's about creating relationships and expressing oneself. At Women of the World, our goal to empower independence relies on fostering a community where women can freely voice their thoughts and receive support. We believe that by strengthening our community, we can make a greater impact together.

WoW's Community Development Program is about building a community that gives our clients a sense of belonging, regardless of their backgrounds, beliefs, or experiences. This program covers services ranging from the very first step of client intake, mail comprehension, and Case Manager check-ins, as well as mentorships, English classes, and workshops.

The workshops within this program offer vital education that is essential for our clients' successful integration into their new community. WoW hosted 32 workshops throughout 2023, with themes ranging from Girls in STEM, digital literacy, legal awareness, domestic violence awareness, nutrition, and art therapy. In our sessions, our clients gained knowledge, shared experiences, and establish new and important connections.

This year also saw significant progress for our English classes, as we were able to hire a full-time English teacher and begin our Intensive English courses again. In 2023, WoW taught five 8-week sessions of Intensive English and started an evening advanced class.





## **Beyond the Data**

#### Stories that Inspire

Samar moved here with her family from Venezuela. She speaks Spanish and Arabic fluently. She began the Intensive English course with limited English proficiency, but through consistent attendance and diligent practice, she has cultivated strong speaking and grammar skills in just a few months. Her language acquisition and increased confidence have significantly contributed to her ability to communicate more clearly with her clients as she manages her own business. She also helps our other clients by translating during workshops!



Randa, from Sudan, has shown remarkable improvement since she began taking courses. Initially, she struggled to formulate sentences, which left her disheartened. Her reading skills were limited, writing posed a challenge, and speaking was a source of frustration. By the conclusion of her first Intensive English course, Randa exhibited substantial growth, making huge strides in completing worksheets, actively participating in class, and displaying improved grammar.

She continues to attend class and has demonstrated improvements in every domain.



On behalf of Gov. Spencer J. Cox, the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity (GOEO), and the Utah Women & Leadership Project at Utah State University, Wow was selected as one of Utah's 100 Companies Championing Women. The state of Utah actively engages in changing gender disparities for women, including improving workplace inclusivity. WoW's leadership in innovative and supportive policies and cultures is an example for other Utah companies and businesspeople. We are proud of our efforts to advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and women in the workplace.



"I thoroughly enjoyed the time I spent at WoW for job searching; I learned a great deal. Please continue assisting women in this manner!" Mailet, Mexico

"It was a wonderful experience for me. They really helped me to find an office job. I am very happy" Naween, Afghanistan



During the summer, our Economic Empowerment team led an 8-week Digital Skills workshop for beginners, utilizing materials from Edstruct's e-learning platform. The class covered Google Suite essentials, aiming to provide our clients with solid jobseeking and daily computer skills, which included email writing, discovering Google Docs, budgeting in Sheets, and creating professional presentations using Google Slides. Alongside this workshop, we offered a Professional English class to our participants with a focus on workplace language, interview preparation, and comprehension of office culture and greetings.







## **ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT**

Program at a Glance

\$1.8M

**Annual Economic Impact** 

61

**Number of Jobs Started** 

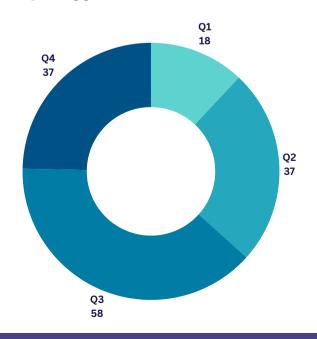
**\$17.12** 

**Client Average Starting Wage** 

In 2023, WoW's Economic Empowerment program achieved some significant milestones. We expanded our team by hiring two more full-time Employment Specialists Case Managers, contributing to the successful placement of 61 clients in new jobs. Additionally, our dedicated employment team assisted clients with over 150 job applications, supported college applications, and facilitated enrollment in English classes throughout the year.

This year our client's average starting wage reached a record high of \$17.12, reflecting our commitment to finding positions with fair compensation. We are also proud to report a rise in the number of clients now enjoying enhanced benefits such as health insurance coverage and paid time off. Our dedication to fostering professional development is evident in the increased opportunities for upward mobility within our client's new workplaces. We aim to empower our clients and equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to achieve sustainable economic success! Our ongoing efforts show our dedication to our mission of empowering all forcibly displaced women to become self-reliant and independent.

#### **WoW Job Applications Per Quarter, 2023**



#### **WoW Client Average Starting Wage**



# EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM



Neighborhood House
Salt Lake Community College
University of Utah Health
Anagraphica
FlagShip Facility Services
Columbus Community Center
The Road Home
Intermountain Healthcare

Receives WoW clients first, highest placement on Job board, most prominent logo placement on all media outlets, and recognition at public events



FedEx
SLC School District
SleepNumber
BioMerieux
United States Postal Service
OC Tanner
Priority Dispatch

Receives WoW clients with priority, high placement on WoW job board, and prominent logo placement on media outlets.



Work Activity Center Mountain America Credit Union Edwards Lifesciences Starbucks

Receives WoW clients, placement on WoW job board, and logo placement on media outlets



Grand America Hotel ALSCO Uniforms Newrest

Receives WoW clients as available, placement on WoW job board, and logo placement on WoW website



"Women of the world has consistently connected us with outstanding women who have helped us bridge the gaps we needed to propel our company to the next level. They are smart, strong, collaborative, reliable, and hard working. We are grateful for their hard work, their consistency and their ability to look at things from a perspective that we hadn't considered. We can't wait to see where they go from here."

-WoW Employer Partner Anagraphica



We would like to extend a big thank you to all of our Employer Partners for supporting forcibly displaced women through employment this year.





## **Beyond the Data**

#### Stories that Inspire

Sarala moved to the US from Nepal for a better life, with impressive experience in the Education and Therapy sectors. Finding a job in her new home country should not have been as big of a challenge given her years of practice, but she had to go back to school here (and graduated from Grand Canyon University with a (online) Master's in Health Psychology) to pursue her career goals. Sarala came to us for help with finding an internship in Behavioral Health, thinking the language barrier and her skills were not enough to land her an actual paid position. At Women of the World, we were able to, fortunately, prove her wrong. After working with her for a little over a month on her job search, creating her resume and cover letter, applying to jobs in the BH field, and practicing her interviewing skills so she could better learn how to market and talk about her experience in English, she accepted a job as a Behavioral Health Technician at Copa Health and was even offered a managerial position!





"The greatest impact I have seen from our partnership is the safety net it provides for the women we work with. Knowing that they have the incredible resource of Women of the World allows for a greater sense and reality of support as many navigate new systems. From reading an electricity bill that came in the mail, to helping find a job where they can support themselves and their families."

-Emma Pister, Deseret Industries

Olha and her son fled to the US after Russia invaded Ukraine, and her husband was drafted into the war. She came to WoW in a desperate situation, after having been cut off by her immigration sponsor, being effectively left with no home, income, or transportation. We took care of her basic needs, and then we focused on connecting her with an entry-level role at Alta View Hospital through our partnership with Intermountain Healthcare. Within weeks, she was promoted to Supervisor and our team continues to work with her on her professional development. Her ultimate goal is to re-enter her professional field of Real Estate someday here in the US. We are so proud of her hard work!



### **Beyond the Data**

#### Stories that Inspire

I am Elizabeth Kashindi from Congo, raised in a Tanzanian refugee camp before coming to the United States with my family in 2018. In Utah, starting anew has its challenges, but I find excitement in going to school. Women of the World supported me with school costs, motivating me to persist in my education. Currently in my second year of college, I've faced health issues but remain determined not to give up. I aspire to share my experiences with students who've faced challenges, offering hope and financial assistance. The Women of the World scholarship is a lasting memory, and I aim to give back by helping others in need, providing advice, financial support, and guidance on their journey to overcome hardships and achieve their goals. Women of the World is my guiding light towards a successful career.





My name is Sarah, a Business student at SLCC and a mother of two. I hold a Bachelor's degree in Petrochemical Engineering from Iraq, where I worked as a teacher assistant. Due to threats linked to my husband's work with the US army, we moved to the US five years ago, facing language, cultural, and financial challenges. With Samira's encouragement, I completed English classes, joined SLCC, and overcame financial hurdles with a WOW scholarship. Now, working in Real Estate part-time, I'm proud of my achievements and grateful to WoW for empowering me and my family. The scholarship represents hope, powering not just an individual but an entire family. My journey reflects that even small achievements contribute to building something significant. I appreciate WoW for being a supportive family, believing in my dream to become a successful businesswoman, and showcasing that women can overcome any obstacle.

I am Gissebe from Mexico. Since childhood, I've harbored a passion for the fashion industry, but discouragement from others delayed my pursuit. Recently discovering the role of a retail buyer reignited my excitement. A business degree is my key to the fashion world, and I plan to gain experience through summer internships, ultimately dedicating myself to becoming a fashion merchandiser. Realizing my dream of studying in the United States became a reality through hard work and sacrifice. Managing my family's restaurant taught me patience, organization, and leadership, enabling me to save for my studies. The Women of the World scholarship not only eases my workload but also allows me to save for university and engage with my college community. Grateful for my parents' teachings, I aim to share my story, offer support to fellow international students, and encourage others to pursue their dreams, emphasizing that starting from scratch is possible.



**SCHOLARSHIP FUND** 

Our Scholarship is central to the goals and values of Independence and Economic Success

Women of the World understands that overcoming the financial barrier to higher education is crucial for success. Our scholarship provides financial support to those who may not qualify for traditional aid. In 2023, WoW awarded 39 scholarships to refugee, asylumseeking, and undocumented women seeking to improve their lives through education.

When I finish the dental hygiene program here at SLCC, I plan to continue and develop deeper into this area. I will keep doing my best with my grades at school, and this scholarship from Women of the World has helped me to study and graduate because this is my goal.

Cristal, Brazil

I will always keep it close to my heart, how this scholarship has helped me with my academic journey. Once again I would like to express my gratitude towards all the people from Women of the World for bringing this opportunity to me and supporting me with my education.

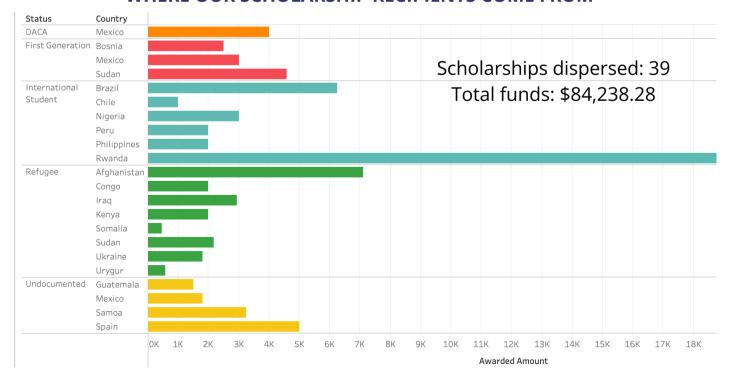
Su Yamin, Myanmar

I don't know how to express my gratitude. This scholarship has been a life-changing opportunity for me. I've always been passionate about helping people and having a positive effect on my community as a psychology major, but this scholarship has allowed me to intensify those feelings.

Mortis College

Umwiza, Rwanda

#### WHERE OUR SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS COME FROM





#### **Services & Areas of** Advocacy

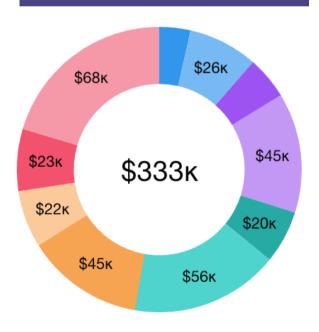
- Child Care
- Civics/Legal Aid
- Food **Insecurity**
- Housing **Instability** and Access
- Health Care
- Insurance
- Mental Health
- **Immigration** Referrals
- Welfare **Benefits**

#### **CUSTOMIZED SERVICE & ADVOCACY**

#### Program at a Glance

Customized Service and Advocacy covers a broad spectrum of support, including childcare, civics, legal aid, healthcare, food security, and housing, among others. Rather than attempting to directly offer these services, we opt to link our clients with existing organizations that specialize in providing such resources. This approach allows WoW not only to assist each woman in a personalized manner but also to create a broader economic impact by facilitating connections to resources rather than solely relying on WoW's emergency funding. Our team consists of five Case Managers who each meet with three clients every day to work on these areas of advocacy. We aim to create a personalized experience for each client and hope to offer support in a space that feels like a second home.

#### **Total Amount WoW saved Clients in 2023**



- Client Intake DWS Case Review--Chil... Financial Advocacy & Ed... Food Assistance Advoca... General Direct Assistance
  - Housing Advocacy Housing Fee Assistance
- Insurance/Financial Assi...
  - Medical Advocacy
    - Other



## **Beyond the Data**

Stories that Inspire

Vanessa moved from Mexico to Utah in 2022 excited to get married to a US citizen. However, the relationship became abusive and he one day dropped her off at the courthouse telling her he was divorcing her. The court clerk immediately called us and referred Vanessa in for a new client intake. Our Case Managers were able to help her connect to a free divorce lawyer through the Legal Aid Society and set her up with a free therapist at the Multicultural Counseling Center. Then she was able to meet with our employment specialists for a job-coaching appointment that helped her find an entry-level housekeeping job. Now that her divorce is nearing finalizing the WoW team is also supporting Vanessa in looking for better housing and job training so she can eventually find a higher-paying job.

Vanessa's experience vividly illustrates the effectiveness of WoW's customized service and advocacy program. In recognizing that each woman's journey is distinct, our team stands out by tailoring services to address individual needs, setting us apart from other refugee service providers in Salt Lake City. Vanessa's unique story is a testament to the beauty of our approach, demonstrating the impactful results of our customized support.

#### In Her Own Words

"Women of the World has profoundly influenced my life, offering invaluable mentorship, guidance, and a sense of community."

-Magali, Colombia

"Women of the World has given me something to look forward to"

-Shamila, Malaysia

"Women of the world has helped me transition into a new life here. They referred me to help with my Asylum case, taught me skills that help me in the workforce to earn money, and they provided me with support and resources when I had no one."

-Bienveida , Equitorial Guinea



## **VOLUNTEERING AT WOW**

Women of the World's volunteer program creates opportunities for local Utahns to connect with their new neighbors, and for WoW's clients to create long-term relationships with helpful and friendly members of their new community. We have always had dedicated and compassionate volunteers, and this year, our amazing volunteers gave hundreds of hours of service to ensure that forcibly displaced women in Utah have the resources they need to become self-reliant.

Volunteers help WoW's clients by teaching English, helping put on events, providing childcare during community education workshops, and transporting clients to healthcare appointments. They also meet in one-on-one mentorships to help women study for citizenship, practice their English, and learn a variety of skills they need to navigate American life. Most importantly, our mentors create a powerful support system and a much-needed, welcoming community for forcibly displaced women here in Utah. Thank you to all our volunteers from the bottom of our hearts!







#### Volunteer **Stats**

1,012

**Volunteer Hours** 

10 Practical English **Volunteers** 

> **Professional IT Volunteers**

18 **Mentorships** 

**Staff Wellness Volunteers** 

**52 Current Active Volunteers** 

> Volunteer **Orientations**

\$25,821 Saved through **Volunteer Hours** 

## FINANCIAL REPORT

Women of the World knows that every dollar donated represents faith and trust in our mission to support forcibly displaced women. We don't take that statement lightly, and we will continue to honor that trust through financial transparency in our reporting.

## **Community R.O.I.**

1.70

ROI or Return on Investment represents the impact of every dollar donated to Women of the World. Thanks to the hard work of our amazing ladies and our efficient staff, our impact continues to grow!

## **Overall Impact**

\$2,133,000

WoW documents all of its support--every appointment through the year--and when it results in either economic empowerment or expense reduction, we record that impact. It is just one of the many outcomes we provide our ladies!

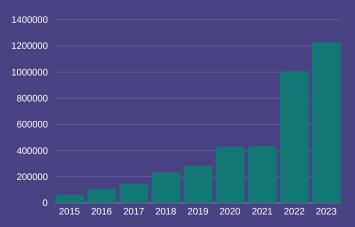
## **REVENUES**

Gifts \$287.553 Grants \$765,583 Fundraisers & Sponsorships \$175,275

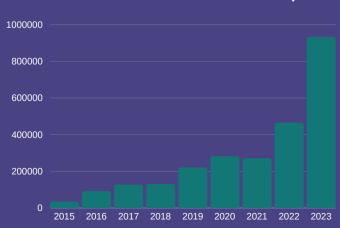
## **EXPENSES**

Payroll \$624,402 Other Expenses \$308,582

#### 



#### 2023 TOTAL EXPENSES \$932,984



#### **WOMEN OF THE WORLD ORGANIZATION**

#### EXECUTIVE BOARD

DEBBIE MINTOWT-CZYZ JOELLE KANSHEPOLSKY TRACEY THOMPSON PAIGE WITT ALEXX GOELLER

# **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

JUSTIN HARNISH
JULIE MCADAMS
MY NASSON
DANA ROGERS
EVAN STRASSBERG
ELYSE WINTER
MADISON LIMANSKI
AMY TIEU

#### **2023 STAFF MEMBERS**

#### **SAMIRA HARNISH**

**FXFCUTIVE DIRECTOR & FOUNDER** 

#### **Programs**

Ryan Cook Operations Manager-- Programs

Roxie Harshbarger Economic Empowerment Program Manager

Ghinwa Hneide Community Development Program Manager

Ruby Wahinehookae Case Manager

Yaël David-Fiedel Case Manager-- Employment Specialist

Laura Andersen Case Manager

Setayesh Habibi Case Manager

Alan Dalul Case Manager-- Employment Specialist

#### **Administrative**

Candice Stratford
Operations Manager-- Administrative

Melanie Vlam- Findeis Office Administrator

Dan Raleigh Intensive English Coordinator

Andria Gilmore Finance Manager

Emily Cuccarese Grant Writer

Naween Saeed Office Assistance



## **TO OUR DONORS:**

#### Diamond (\$60,000+)

Larry H. Miller Charities
Salt Lake County Health Department
KeyBank Foundation
Boeing Foundation
Bruce and Cecilia Petersen Foundation Trust

## Platinum (\$25,000-\$59,999)

Salt Lake County Health Department First Utah Bank LDS Charities Eat Drink Salt Lake The achievements attained by our clients are possible because of generous supporters like you. On behalf of our clients, staff, and Board of Directors, *thank you*.

#### Gold (\$10,000-\$24,999)

Richard K. and Shirley S. Hemingway Foundation Jeff and Helen Cardon Foundation Measom Family Foundation Jacquelyn and Gregory Zehner Foundation Grandeur Peak Global TJ Maxx

#### <u>Silver (\$5,000-\$9,999)</u>

Minky Couture
Francis W. Burton Foundation
Semnani Family Foundation
Thornton Family Foundation
Blacksmith Foundation
Ken Menlove
John and Katie Graham Family
Maxfield Family Foundation
Lawrence T. and Janet T. Dee Foundation
Jeremy and Kristin Andrus
King Family Foundation
Ally Bank
Cyprus Credit Union





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Women of the World is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit whose mission is empowering women from all nations to achieve independence, economic success, and a voice in the community.