

2024

Soccer Without Borders

ANNUAL REPORT





Our Mission

Our mission is to use soccer as a vehicle for positive change, providing underserved youth with a toolkit to overcome obstacles to growth, inclusion, and personal success. We envision a more inclusive and equitable world through soccer, where all youth reach their inherent potential.

[Learn more about our mission, values, and culture](#)



[This Annual Report is Best Experienced on Our Website. Click Here to View the Online Version](#)

Annual Report 2024

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Welcome Letter

Dear SWB Community,

I started 2024 by participating in the SWB Youth Festival in Kampala, Uganda where we served over 440 youth in one week and celebrated with the slogan of Look, Learn and Shine Together. Unbeknownst to the SWB Uganda team, that slogan epitomizes the amazing year Soccer Without Borders (SWB) had in 2024!

Look - One of the hardest skills to automate in your soccer game play is looking up and scanning the pitch while maintaining control of the ball before making the pass. SWB truly actualized this skill -- we looked up, scanned the community and their needs, enhanced what was in our control, and connected the pass, bringing what we do best with youth who need us.

SWB observed:

- Youth in need of support, guidance and a place where they find security and belonging to counter the increased self-reported incidents of suicidal ideations, depression, bullying, anxiety and overarching stress in trying to fit in.
- The benefits of our soccer and educational programming clearly influencing positive physical, mental and behavioral health outcomes – evidencing daily that SWB’s programming does increase the social determinants of health for our youth and the youth and families know we help because the youth we served jumped from 4,500 in 2023 to almost 7,800 in 2024.
- Schools also see increased positive benefits of academic and student engagement with SWB participants – our youth care about their futures and their educational attainment proving our work is interdisciplinary, going beyond teaching kids to play a sport but helping kids succeed in positive health and education outcomes.

Learn - Maintaining a growth mindset is not just something we teach our youth but an openness to always improving our programs, processes, and policies so SWB is effective and efficient. We squeeze every penny out of each donor dollar to improve youth outcomes.

SWB realized that:

- We need to work smarter, not just harder. One way we do this is by optimizing technology in 2024. We utilize Upshot (data/Monitoring Evaluation & Learning tracking), Leapsome (goals and performance management), Thinkific (learning management system), JustWorks (HR and compliance), and are onboarding Hubspot for communications and fundraising integration.

- SWB is wise. Our team of over 105 full and part time staff members have so much to learn from and share with each other. We are evolving our operations and culture to one where our teams are not only working in their areas of expertise and their geographies, but evolving into communities of practice – flywheels, as Jim Collins would call them in Good to Great – whereby our learnings can be shared and exchanged for improved practice with our youth and coaches, consistently.

Shine - We have proven to be a validated practice worth replicating, shown through hard data, consistent and robust methodologies, the lived experiences of our youth and alumni, and investments in our mission impacts.

SWB lit up 2024 by:

- Conducting an average of 108 activities with youth every week.
- Having the National Institute of Health invest in a 5-year research study on SWB’s Meet Me On the Pitch (MMOTP) methodology to validate whether SWB can be an evidenced-based DNA-V intervention for youth who are recovering from trauma.
- Onboarding ___ new institutional donors and raising _____ from individuals in 2024. And, we received a \$1M unrestricted investment from MacKenzie Scott through Yield Giving to grow our practices and promising outcomes.

"[SWB participants] have a group of people they can trust, those they can talk to. Because it's not just a team, it's a family that's formed when you're in this type of program." - Heradio, SWB Bay Area Participant

Thank you, for supporting SWB in 2024 and with your continued support, we intend to continue being a safe space for many in 2025!



With Gratitude & Appreciation,

Jennifer Tepper

SWB Executive Director

Who We Serve

Soccer is known as the "world's game" because of its ability to transcend language and culture and unite the global community around a shared passion. At SWB, each of our participants come to us with their own unique experiences and backgrounds. Regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, economic means, cultural background, or language spoken at home, our programs are designed to be a safe space where all participants feel welcomed and included.

FY2024 By the Numbers:



People & Culture

Both on the field and off, our passionate team brings a culture of welcoming and inclusion to life. Operating through a lens of creating belonging, we strive to be authentic in all we do while ensuring that our staff and volunteers understand, represent, and reflect the communities we serve.

FY2024 By the Numbers:



109 Full & Part-Time SWB Staff Members



286 Volunteers Serving SWB Programming, Fundraising, Boards, & More



54% Full-Time Staff Identifying as Women



34% Coaches Identifying as Refugees, Immigrants, Ugandan or Nicaraguan



17 Countries of Origin Represented by Staff



47 Average Coach Tenure in Months



4.8 Full-Time Staff Tenure in Years



30% Staff Members Are Program Alumni

What We Do

Our program hubs deliver holistic, youth-development programming throughout the year, and are designed to 'get them to the field'. We work to eliminate obstacles that too often keep under-served youth from participating in the game they love: all of our programs are free of charge, transportation is provided, and all of the necessary equipment is supplied.



TEAM Programs

TEAM is a "Spanglish" acronym that stands for "trabajando en equipo aprendemos más" or "working as a team we learn more." Our TEAM programs are our most comprehensive programs. Combining soccer, education, and community-building more than 36 weeks/year, each is uniquely tailored to meet the unique needs of the specific community and fill in gaps where there aren't other service providers. Whether school-based or community-based, TEAM program activities include soccer practices and games, tutoring, homework support, English language instruction, team-building trips, leadership groups, mentoring, and social-emotional learning to support each participant to reach their goals on and off the field.



Camps & Clinics

Our soccer camps and clinics are a condensed version of a typical SWB season or practice session, but often with extra surprises! Each camp has a specific purpose. Whether it be outreach to new communities, introducing soccer for the first time, supporting different age groups beyond our TEAM programs, or something else, all are designed to support the whole person. Our range of activities usually starts with soccer, but can also include art, dance, music, cultural celebrations, yoga, and more. Additionally, summer and school holidays can be an isolating and challenging time, especially for newcomer youth who may experience language loss when away from school. Our summer camps and clinics combine soccer with English language instruction and academic support to keep youth engaged in learning and connected to a community of teammates throughout their time off.



Leagues & Tournaments

Our leagues and tournaments are not about lifting trophies. Rather, they are designed to strengthen community cohesion, teach social-emotional skills, and raise awareness and knowledge about specific social issues. Creating our own leagues emerged as a priority as many of our participants and teams either couldn't access existing leagues due to transportation barriers and regulations for foreign-born players or, in the case of our girls' teams in Nicaragua and Uganda, because no leagues for girls existed.

Program Outcomes

Our evidence-based program design was born out of thousands of hours of programming, hundreds of conversations, and countless pages of research. We synthesized it all into a clear Theory of Change that puts young people at the center, surrounds them with supportive peers, coaches, and mentors, and draws a throughline from our inputs and activities to our vision of a more inclusive and equitable world, where all youth reach their inherent potential.

Our program model combines soccer practices and games with educational support and community-building activities focused on whole person youth development. Our programs are trauma-informed and designed to create a sense of belonging, build individual agency, and provide avenues for every youth to feel valued and contribute. Below, you will find program outcome statistics from FY24 that stand as examples of our Theory of Change in action.

Belonging

Safety and belonging are essential basic needs. This means that in order to optimize education outcomes and personal goals, we must first make sure that youth feel safe, welcomed, and experience belonging. The data presented provides evidence of positive development, as demonstrated by responses to socio-emotional learning (SEL) themed surveys.

Connected to relationships skills, social awareness and self awareness domains of social-emotional learning skills. Leads to gender, racial and ethnic equity.

Contribution

Team sports present endless opportunities to practice leadership skills. At SWB, we create opportunities for participants to develop their leadership through captainships, refereeing, coaching, public speaking, mentoring, service projects, and more.

Connected to self awareness domain of social-emotional learning skills. Leads to gender, racial and ethnic equity.

FY24 Youth Survey Results

- 93% "I feel safe at Soccer Without Borders."
- 91% "I feel comfortable being myself."
- 93% "I make friends with those from other cultures."
- 93% "I feel like I am part of the SWB community"*
- +22% "Practicing English at SWB helps me feel more confident using English in other places."
- +45% "I know how I can use my interests and skills to make my community better."
- +29% "I participate in activities that make my community better, such as volunteering or cleaning up litter."



Agency

Agency – the sense of control that one feels in their life – is an essential outcome of our Theory of Change. To address this, as part of our holistic, evidence-based approach, we provide participants with academic and language support, college preparation, leadership development, and life-skills workshops.

Connected to self management, self awareness and social awareness domains of social-emotional learning skills. Leads to equity and community cohesion.

+46% *"I know how to deal with my emotions when I'm disappointed."*

+35% *"I know how I can use my interests and skills to make my community better."*

+17% *"I speak up for equality."***

*Total percentage of positive responses.
** Relative increase of positive responses from baseline to endline surveys.



SWB Youth Survey Methodology

The results are from self-reported youth surveys anonymously conducted using a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) across six Hubs (CA, CO, MA, MD, NI, UG), gathering responses from a sample size of XX participants. The survey included ~ 40 quant and 4 open-ended qualitative questions, aligning with our Theory of Change to measure year-round programming impact.



"The thing that stood out the most regarding the girls engagement is how genuinely excited, happy, and grateful they were to simply be participating. Before every session, as soon as they got there, the kids immediately ran up and hugged us and their coaches and at the end of every session again, gave hugs and thanked us for being there." Melisa, Volunteer at SWB Nicaragua's TEAM Camp

Stories of Impact

2024 uplifted, inspired, and reminded us of soccer's transformative power. These stories highlight the voices of our participants, the strength of our coaches, and the collective spirit that fuels Soccer Without Borders. Together, they illustrate the impact of creating spaces where everyone can thrive.

From breaking down barriers to building lifelong connections, these stories reflect the incredible resilience of our youth and the power of community. They serve as a testament to what is possible when opportunity, mentorship, and joy come together to create change.



Soccer Without Borders Receives Gift From Yield Giving's Open Call

Soccer Without Borders has been named one of the awardees of MacKenzie Scott's Yield Giving Open Call, receiving a \$1 million grant to further our mission of using soccer to create belonging and opportunity for underserved youth. Chosen from over 6,300 applicants, this recognition highlights the growing acknowledgment of sport-based youth development as a force for systemic change. This investment will allow SWB to reach more youth, strengthen our programs, and continue breaking down barriers for the next generation. (Click the photo for more.)



Soccer Without Borders Joins the Sport for Refugees Coalition

Soccer Without Borders is proud to formally join the Sport for Refugee Coalition, a global movement of 140+ organizations committed to using sport to support displaced communities. With over 43 million refugee youth worldwide, access to safe and inclusive spaces is more critical than ever. By becoming a coalition member, SWB reaffirms our mission to create opportunities for newcomer youth to build belonging, resilience, and leadership through soccer. (Click the photo for more.)



Sarah Stangl Keras Represents SWB at Festival 24 in Paris, France

Festival 24, held during the Paris 2024 Olympics, brought together young people from 36 countries to celebrate the unifying power of sports. SWB's Sarah Stangl Keras joined as a team guide, helping participants navigate the event while fostering cultural exchange and leadership development. Her participation reflected SWB's dedication to creating inclusive spaces where young people can connect, learn, and grow through the game of soccer. (Click the photo for more.)



SWB Appoints Director of Behavioral Health and Wellness

Recognizing the vital role mental health plays in a young person's development, SWB has introduced its first-ever Director of Behavioral Health and Wellness, Swap Mushiana. This position will enhance SWB's ability to provide critical behavioral health support to refugee and immigrant youth, while equipping coaches with tools to navigate challenges both on and off the field. By integrating mental health into our programming, SWB continues to foster safe, supportive spaces where all youth can thrive. (Click the photo for more.)



Finding Home: The SWB Mural Project

At the heart of SWB's headquarters in Baltimore, a new mural now welcomes all who enter—a symbol of the strength and unity within our community. With contributions from SWB youth and local artists, this project reflects the power of sport and art to create belonging. It's a lasting testament to the stories, voices, and dreams of our participants. (Click the photo for more.)



James' Inspiring Journey: SWB Participant Plays at TST

James, a participant at SWB Bay Area, saw his soccer dreams take flight when he joined The Town FC at The Soccer Tournament (TST). Playing against elite teams like Bayern Munich, he navigated challenges with resilience and heart, proving that soccer is more than a game—it's a gateway to opportunity, growth, and belonging. (Click the photo for more.)



Connecting Communities: The Impact of Cultural Exchange

SWB's cultural exchange programs provide youth and coaches with opportunities to connect across borders, building understanding through soccer. In 2024, exchanges between Nicaragua and Massachusetts deepened relationships and broadened perspectives. Participants experienced firsthand how sports foster inclusion, teamwork, and cross-cultural learning. Whether on the field or traveling abroad, SWB continues to use soccer as a tool for peace, unity, and global connection. (Click the photo for more.)



Alumnus Warshan Hussin Joins SWB's Board of Directors

After joining SWB as a newcomer, Warshan discovered the power of soccer to create belonging. His journey from participant to coach to staff and now board member reflects the lasting impact of mentorship and community. As the first SWB alumnus on the Board of Directors, he is dedicated to ensuring every young person has the same opportunity to grow, lead, and thrive. (Click the photo for more.)



"Soccer Without Borders goes above and beyond for its participants. Their name has an emphasis on the word soccer, but that's truly just their vessel for connection, there is so much more to this program than a passion for the sport. SWB ensures that its participants know, from the very first day, that they are welcome with them and they belong." - Frida, SWB Colorado School Partner

US Hub Highlights



SWB Bay Area *Visit @swbbayarea on Instagram*

Through in-school, after-school, weekend, and summer programs, Soccer Without Borders Bay Area (formerly known as SWB Oakland) is a crucial resource to newcomer refugee and immigrant youth across Alameda and San Francisco Counties. As leaders in social inclusion and getting girls in the game, and as active participants in the Bay Area sports-based youth development community, SWB Bay Area also hosts free, intentional leagues where under resourced youth from other organizations can play. SWB Bay Area also leads trainings for coaches to build more equitable program spaces for youth.



Growth and Impact with Further Expansion into the Bay Area

Last summer, we were thrilled to announce that our Oakland hub will now officially be known as SWB Bay Area. This change reflects a recent expansion of our soccer, education, and community-building programs into the city of San Francisco, alongside our established programs in Oakland and Hayward. This expansion and subsequent name change are the result of a new and exciting partnership with the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD). This partnership, which officially began at the start of the 2024-2025 school year, was initiated by SFUSD as a way to meet the academic, social, and community support needs of English Language Learner (ELL) students in the district. (Click [here](#) for more.)



Bay FC and SWB Bay Area Create Meaningful Connections

The impact of seeing—and learning from—professional role models was on full display this September when SWB Bay Area welcomed Bay FC to the field. 50 girls from SWB's middle and high school teams trained alongside Bay FC players Carolina Conte, Joelle Anderson, and Caprice Dydasco, taking on agility drills and a juggling challenge while gaining valuable insight from women at the pinnacle of the sport. The partnership continued off the pitch, as SWB youth were invited to two home matches, and Lupe, a standout defender from Oakland, proudly represented SWB as Bay FC's honorary captain in their match against Orlando Pride.



Bridging Generations at the Women's Alumni Tournament

December's Women's Alumni Tournament in SWB Bay Area set a new record, with 30 alumni from the past 13 years joining 35 current high school participants in an inspiring display of community and connection. This event is more than just a game; it's a tradition that celebrates the ongoing journey of SWB players beyond their years in the program. Alumni returned not just to compete, but to mentor, uplift, and encourage the next generation, reinforcing the values of teamwork, resilience, and leadership that define SWB. As they reconnected with former teammates and built new relationships, they strengthened a network that continues to empower young women long after they leave the field.

FY2024 By the Numbers:



1,181

Participants at SWB Bay Area



48,743

Total Contact Hours at SWB Bay Area



79%

High School Grad Rate (as compared to 59% for newcomers and 71% for all students where SWB Bay Area Operates)



998

Activities Held at SWB Bay Area



SWB Colorado [Visit @swb_colorado on Instagram](#)

Through in-school, after-school, weekend, and summer programs, Soccer Without Borders Colorado supports newcomer and immigrant youth to overcome barriers to participation in sport, to gain a sense of belonging, and to build social capital. SWB delivers year-round programs and intentionally-designed tournaments across the Denver Metro Area and Weld County, as well as summer programs to support specific newcomer populations. SWB actively participates in the Colorado sports-based youth development community, partnering to ensure that every youth has a safe environment to play, learn, and grow.



Increasing Impact Through TEAM Program Expansion

In Fall 2024, SWB Colorado expanded its impact by launching new middle and high school TEAM Program sites in North and East Denver, bringing soccer and mentorship to more newcomer youth than ever before. The TEAM Program operates for 28 weeks during the school-year. Programming at each site is designed to support social integration for new-to-country students, providing a safe, consistent space for participants to play, practice their English, and to build new friendships. After just one school semester, the SWB culture of teamwork and belonging is thriving. With this expansion, more newcomers have access to the support they need - on the field, in school, and in their communities.



One Team, 11 Countries: HS Girls at the Copa de los Muertos

At Copa de los Muertos, hosted by Colorado Soccer Foundation, SWB Colorado's High School Girls team took the field representing ten countries but playing as one. In their first gameplay of the season together, these young women showcased incredible teamwork, resilience, and cross-cultural connection. From cheering each other on to creating handshakes across language barriers, they embodied the spirit of SWB. Advancing to the semifinals, they proved that tournaments like these are more than competition—they are opportunities for newcomer athletes to build confidence, friendships, and a sense of belonging through the game they love.



Small Goals, Big Change

In August & September, SWB Colorado hosted tournament fundraisers, bringing together players, supporters, and partners in both Denver and Greeley. The event featured spirited 7v7 play, a Q&A panel where youth participants shared their experiences, and a community impact award recognizing the incredible contribution of photographer Al Milligan (whose photos have made a positive impact across the organization). Funds raised supported essential soccer equipment for newcomer youth, ensuring greater access to the game. This milestone event showcased the power of sport to unite communities while amplifying the voices of the young people at the heart of SWB's mission.

FY2024 By the Numbers:



772

Participants at SWB Colorado



37,790

Total Contact Hours at SWB Colorado



100%

High School Grad Rate at SWB Colorado



624

Activities Held at SWB Colorado

SWB Maryland *Visit @swbbaltimore on Instagram*



Based in Baltimore City, Soccer Without Borders Maryland directly serves newcomer refugee and immigrant youth in Baltimore City and County through out-of-school-time programs during the school year and summer. Participants include large numbers of Eritrean, Congolese, and Syrian youth, as well as Salvadoran, Ecuadorian and Guatemalan students. Some students have been in the country for weeks, others for years, and together they make up a dynamic community of youth, each with their own unique story. With a focus on English language development on and off the field, SWB Maryland supports newcomer youth grades K-12 to build a sense of agency, belonging, and contribution.



New Middle School Site Expands Reach in Baltimore City

In the fall, SWB Maryland's commitment to 'meeting youth where they are' led to the launch of a new TEAM program at a middle school in Southeast Baltimore. The program provides a holistic approach to development, offering newcomer students a space to receive academic support, mentorship, and soccer training in an inclusive and welcoming environment. Since launching, students have already played in their first SWB Middle School League games, bringing energy and teamwork to the pitch. This initiative represents another step toward ensuring that all youth—regardless of background—have access to the opportunities and support they need to thrive.



International Summer Academy Hosts 180 K-8th Grade Youth

This summer, 180 newcomer youth in Maryland participated in SWB's International Summer Academy (ISA), a program designed to prevent summer learning loss, build academic confidence, and keep students active during the school break. Through a mix of soccer, English language learning, and community-building activities, ISA created a space where students could develop both their skills and their sense of belonging. By ensuring that learning and connection don't stop when school does, SWB continues to make a lasting impact beyond the classroom, helping students return to school more prepared, confident, and supported by a strong community.



Equipping Future Leaders With YouthWorks Baltimore

This summer, 30 high school students had the opportunity to become youth leaders at SWB Maryland through Baltimore's YouthWorks program, supporting younger participants while building leadership and career skills. These youth leaders played a key role in fostering an inclusive and supportive environment, leading soccer drills, mentoring peers, and assisting with off-the-field activities. Beyond their summer employment, they gained valuable workforce training, teamwork experience, and mentorship opportunities that will serve them well in their future education and careers. We'd like to extend a huge shoutout to the high school participants who have grown into passionate leaders, positive role models, and outstanding coaches!

FY2024 By the Numbers:



335

Participants at SWB Maryland



36,038

Total Contact Hours at SWB Maryland



100%

High School Grad Rate at SWB Maryland



422

Activities Held at SWB Maryland



SWB Massachusetts [Visit @swbboston on Instagram](#)

Through in-school, after-school, weekend, and summer programs, Soccer Without Borders Massachusetts supports newcomer and immigrant youth to overcome barriers to participation in sport, to gain a sense of belonging, and to build social capital. SWB delivers year-round TEAM programs and intentionally-designed leagues across Eastern Massachusetts, as well as summer programs in cities such as Springfield to support specific newcomer populations. SWB actively participates in the Massachusetts sports-based youth development community, partnering to ensure that every youth has a safe environment to play, learn, and grow.



Coach-Mentors Karla and Nati Honored as Heroes of the Match

Coaches play an essential role in the lives of our participants, providing mentorship, encouragement, and a sense of belonging. This year, two of our Massachusetts coaches, Karla and Natalia, were honored as “Heroes of the Match” by the New England Revolution for their work with newcomer girls in Chelsea. Together, they have supported over 100 young athletes, offering guidance both on and off the field. Whether leading practices, celebrating milestones, or simply being a trusted mentor, their impact extends far beyond the game. Their recognition reflects the dedication of all SWB coaches, who create spaces where youth feel valued, empowered, and inspired to reach their full potential.

FY2024 By the Numbers:



1,026
Participants at SWB Massachusetts



Introducing Liga de Paz, SWB MA's Newest League

Our Massachusetts hub kicked off Liga de Paz in October, an in-house league tailored to the specific needs of the local community. This league goes beyond just competitive play, providing a nurturing space for youth to develop essential life skills such as teamwork, respect, and positive sportsmanship. Liga de Paz creates a welcoming environment where all participants can thrive, fostering confidence and forming lasting friendships. Through this unique blend of competition and community, young newcomers build character both on and off the field, making it a truly uplifting experience for everyone involved. "All the coaches are very supportive," reflected SWB participant Sophia. "They care about every single person on the team. I know I can talk to them about anything, and they will always help me through it."



23,712
Total Contact Hours at SWB Massachusetts



Welcoming Boston's Guinean and Senegalese Neighbors

The latest Small Goals Big Change soccer tournament fundraiser, hosted by our Massachusetts hub, was a powerful expression of community solidarity. Partnering with Jewish Family Services and other local organizations, we welcomed newly arrived Guinean and Senegalese refugees through soccer, food, and shared moments of connection. In addition to fundraising, attendees contributed winter jackets and offered a warm embrace to newcomers, highlighting the true meaning of community and the spirit of giving. The event highlighted the strength of our community, creating a warm, inclusive environment that brought everyone closer together through sport and generosity.



100%
High School Grad Rate at SWB Massachusetts



516
Activities Held at SWB Massachusetts

International Hub Highlights



Fútbol Sin Fronteras [Visit @fsfgranada on Instagram](#)

Fútbol Sin Fronteras Nicaragua (FSF) uses soccer as a way to build leadership, improve educational outcomes, and strengthen social-emotional skills for girls, ages 5-20. At FSF, sport, education, and leadership development go hand-in-hand. There are many factors that cause a girl in Nicaragua to drop out of school, including domestic responsibilities in the home, a financial need to work in the market/informal economy, unplanned pregnancy, and a lack of visible pathways and encouragement for women to enter the workforce and pursue a career. FSF addresses these barriers through holistic, long-term programming and a future-focused culture that invites girls to "dream big" and imagine their future.



Celebrating 16 Years of Empowerment at FSF

In April, Fútbol Sin Fronteras marked its 16th anniversary with a celebration centered around what unites us most—soccer. Players came together for a Dutch-style tournament, mixing teams to build friendships and strengthen community bonds. The event reflected the hub's long-standing commitment to creating inclusive spaces where girls feel valued, supported, and empowered. Over the years, SWB Nicaragua has grown into a vibrant network of coaches, mentors, and participants who continue to challenge barriers and expand opportunities for girls in Granada and beyond. Here's to 16 years of impact—and many more to come!



FSF's TEAM Camp: A Summer of Impact

FSF's TEAM Camp returned in July, once again bringing together girls from across the Granada region for two unforgettable weeks of soccer, leadership workshops, and cultural exchange. Participants built confidence, deepened friendships, and strengthened their voices through team-building activities designed to foster inclusion and gender equity. "Speaking from experience, soccer has made me the person that I am today," shared Melisa, a volunteer at this year's camp. "The skills these girls learn will benefit them in every way possible beyond the soccer field." The impact was clear—on and off the field, these young athletes left with stronger skills, lasting connections, and a renewed sense of possibility.



A Year of Celebration: Copa de Paz & La Carrera por la Niña

At FSF, annual traditions like Copa de Paz and La Carrera por la Niña provide meaningful spaces for celebration and empowerment. In September, the 14th annual Copa de Paz commemorated the International Day of Peace, bringing together over 300 girls to connect through soccer. A month later, La Carrera por la Niña continued its decade-long tradition of promoting gender equity and female leadership in honor of the International Day of the Girl. These events remain powerful reminders of the impact of sport in creating inclusive and inspiring communities.

FY2024 By
the Numbers:



629

Participants at
FSF



21,298

Total Contact Hours
at FSF



119

School Scholarships
Provided for Local Girls



851

Activities Held at
FSF



SWB Uganda [Visit @swbuganda on Instagram](#)

Through daily programs for out-of-school youth participants, community activities during school holidays, and youth-led soccer leagues, Soccer Without Borders Uganda is a crucial resource to urban refugee youth in Kampala. As leaders in social inclusion and getting girls in the game, and as active participants in the East Africa Common Goal Community, SWB Uganda also works to build the capacity of partner organizations and coaches to build more equitable program spaces for youth.



SWB Alumnus, Mayele Jules Murhula, Appointed Hub Director

SWB Uganda is now led by one of its own. Mayele Jules Murhula, an alumnus of the program, has been named Director after more than a decade of leadership roles across the hub. Originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Jules understands firsthand the challenges refugee youth face. His journey—from participant to coach to program manager—has shaped his vision for the future: creating a space where refugee and local youth can find belonging, leadership opportunities, and hope. As he steps into this role, Jules remains committed to ensuring SWB Uganda continues to be a home for young people seeking connection, education, and growth.

FY2024 By the Numbers:



3,804
Participants at SWB Uganda



Forging Leadership Pathways for Refugee Youth

SWB Uganda is creating more pathways for youth to lead—on and off the field. This year, 13 refugee youth were awarded full scholarships to continue their formal education, opening doors to new opportunities and a brighter future. At the same time, the SWB Uganda Youth Council continued to thrive, equipping young leaders with the skills to shape their communities. Council members took on roles as assistant coaches, referees, and program ambassadors, ensuring that youth voices drive decisions at the hub. By investing in education and leadership pathways, SWB Uganda is empowering the next generation to lead with confidence and purpose.



234,938
Total Contact Hours at SWB Uganda



Introducing: The Uganda Girls Leagues

What started as the Kampala Girls League has now grown into the Uganda Girls Leagues (UGL)! Launched in the fall, the new, country-wide initiative has already provided free, safe soccer opportunities for 838 girls across Uganda! Designed as a space for both beginner and grassroots-level players, the league runs every school holiday across five regions. This expansion ensures more girls have access to consistent, high-quality play in an environment that fosters confidence, friendship, and growth. With new regional hubs and local partners, UGLs are setting a new standard for girls' participation in sport across the country.



52%
Participation by Youth Identifying as Girls



2,225
Activities Held at SWB Uganda

SWB Assist Highlights

Soccer serves as the perfect platform to engage youth from all backgrounds and identities. If designed with purpose, the sport has the power to create belonging, strengthen individual agency, and equip young people with the skills they need to reach their greatest potential and contribute to their local communities.

At scale, this approach has the power to transform society to become more inclusive and equitable, combating social isolation, intergroup conflict, discrimination, and systemic exclusion of marginalized identities.

SWB Assist is devoted to advancing inclusion and equity through sport worldwide. With over 17 years of on-the-ground experience serving newcomer youth and marginalized girls globally, we are uniquely equipped to leverage the skills of our most experienced program development experts – and the tools and best practices from our SWB hubs – to support likeminded partners to advance their own strategic goals.



Watch the Switch the Pitch Inclusive Coach Training in Action

What does it mean to be an inclusive coach? This video captures real moments from a Switch the Pitch training session with the Chicago Fire Academy. The footage demonstrates how coaches explored how to lead with empathy, authenticity, and awareness. Led by Soccer Without Borders and Common Goal, this session challenged participants to think beyond the game—focusing on safety, leadership, and belonging. Watch the video to see inclusive coaching in action and how we're driving change on and off the field.



Equal Play Effect Africa: A Collective Movement for Gender Equality

Equal Play Effect Africa is transforming communities by using soccer as a tool for gender equity. Launched across four regional hubs and supported by SWB Uganda in East Africa, this movement provides girls with safe spaces to play, lead, and thrive. With over 100 stakeholders from 45 organizations in 24 countries, the initiative is creating lasting change on and off the pitch. Led by Common Goal, GIZ, and partner organizations, Equal Play Effect Africa is proving that when girls have access to sports, they gain the confidence and opportunities to shape their own futures.



Kat Sipes Facilitates at the adidas Breaking Barriers Project Gathering

As part of the adidas Breaking Barriers Project, SWB Assist's Gender Equity Manager, Kat Sipes, traveled to Germany to engage in global conversations on advancing equity in sport. Facilitating alongside partners from Women Win and Common Goal, Kat participated in sessions addressing gender justice, menstrual awareness, breast health, and creating safer, more inclusive spaces for girls and non-binary athletes and more. This collaboration underscores our commitment to driving systemic change and ensuring that all players feel they belong. (Photo by 17 Sport)



Inclusive Coach Training with Oakland Roots and Soul

A glimpse at an Oakland Switch the Pitch (StP) Inclusive Coaching Training from November. Hosted by the 24/7 UK Soccer Academy, the training was held in partnership with StP hubs Oakland Roots and Oakland Soul. StP is an innovative coach training program specifically designed to strengthen community, build individual and collective empathy, examine and challenge inequitable structures, and apply a racial justice lens to the practice of coaching youth. (Photo: Molgaard Photography)



Detroit City FC Joins the Switch the Pitch Movement

In November, Detroit City FC became the latest professional club to partner with Soccer Without Borders and Common Goal to bring Switch the Pitch (StP) to their community. Designed to advance racial justice in soccer, StP challenges traditional coaching methodologies and fosters inclusive spaces where all players feel valued. Following online sessions with participants, the program will kick-off with in-person training at the Detroit City Fieldhouse in February 2025. By engaging the Detroit City FC community, the initiative reinforces the commitment to ensure that soccer is a space free from discrimination.



Sport as a Platform for Equality: SWB Assist at MenEngage Africa

At the MenEngage Africa SRHR Symposium in Nairobi, SWB Assist, alongside Moving the Goalposts and Futbol Mas Kenya, led a groundbreaking session on the role of sport in advancing gender equality and sexual health education. As the first sport-based organizations to be represented at this event, the consortium shared best practices for using soccer as a platform for engaging youth in discussions on health and rights. With leaders from 25+ African countries in attendance, this was a pivotal moment in positioning sport within the global movement for social change.



Training Coaches and Leaders in Tanzania to Promote Gender Equity

SWB Assist partnered with Futures Without Violence and Pact to deliver a Coaching Boys Into Men (CBIM) Facilitator training in Western Tanzania. Through the USAID ACHIEVE project, 40 NGO staff, local government officials, and leaders from the Tanzania Institute for Education engaged in evidence-based training designed to adolescent boys and young men with tools to understand gender-based violence and promote healthy relationships. These newly trained facilitators supported the training of over 500 teachers and coaches, reaching 30,000+ school boys across 11 municipalities in Tanzania. The trip also included site visits to government schools to observe existing CBIM session implementation and meet with teachers, officials and boys that are participating in the programs to collect critical feedback.



Local Impact with the CJ Brown Foundation

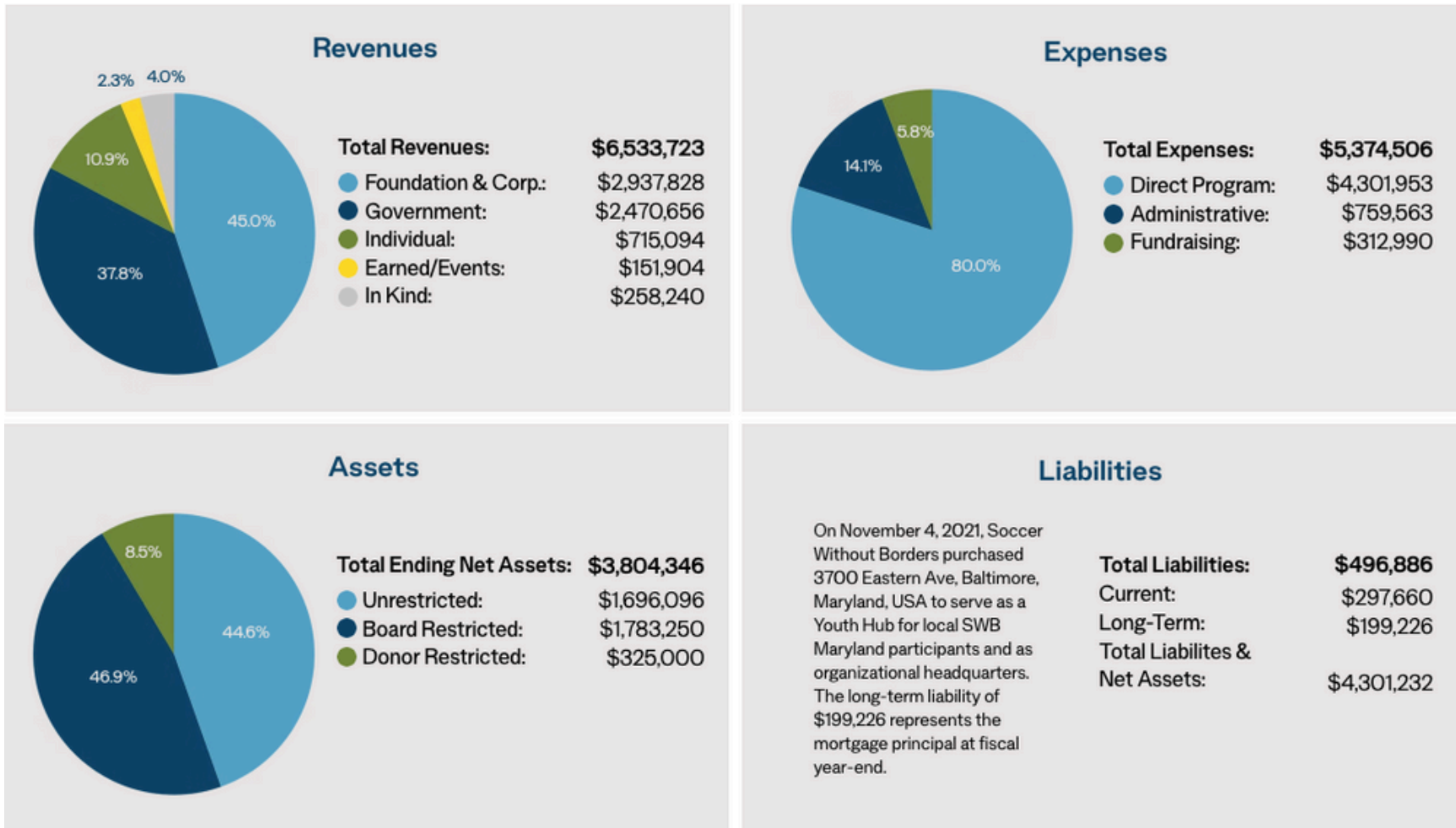
SWB Assist is proud to be in partnership with The CJ Brown Foundation (CJBF), an organization working to bring safe, inclusive soccer programming to Chicago's youth. Over the past year SWB has been supporting CJBF with organizational development resources and capacity building, as well as training and inclusive coaching tools for CJBF leaders. With the support of Laureus Chicago, SWB and CJBF are designing a toolkit for violence prevention through sport and in 2025 will be piloting this resource with CJBF coaches as well as at least 75 coaches and community leaders across the city. Assist's investment in grassroots initiatives like this is helping build a stronger network of community-led programs across the sports-based youth development sector. (Photo from cjbrownfoudnation.org)

FY2024 By the Numbers:



FY2024 Financials

As a Platinum Level participant on Candid: Guidestar, Soccer Without Borders upholds the highest level of transparency and integrity in our financial systems. In FY24, we continued our trend of reinvesting prior year surplus funds into expanded services and greater depth of programming on the ground, while maintaining a healthy reserve to ensure stability through uncertainty. In the last 7 years, SWB has invested nearly \$20 million into free, holistic youth development programming for underserved youth.



August 1, 2023 - July 31, 2024: These financials were independently audited by Han Group LLC.

Our Boards

Our Board of Directors serves as the governing body of the organization and our advisory boards bring their individual and collective expertise to support our leadership teams.

Board of Directors

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Our Partners

In the face of complex challenges, no person, program, or organization can drive change alone. Local, national, and global partnerships with aligned organizations makes our work more impactful and sustaining. We are grateful for all of our outstanding partners whose resources, expertise, and contributions enable us to better accomplish our mission every day.



Official Uniform Provider



Official Game Ball



Regional Partners

Bay Area

Alameda County Office of Education, Albany-Berkeley Soccer Club, Bay Area Community Resources, Bay Area Wilderness Training, Bay FC, Cal State East Bay, Castlemont High School, City of Oakland, East Bay Asian Youth Center, East Bay Refugee and Immigrant Forum, Fremont High School, Frick United Academy of Language, Gateway Mountain Center, Girls Inc., Goodwin Family Memorial Trust, Greenway Golf/Corica Park, Hayward Promise Neighborhoods, Hayward Unified School District, Hellman Foundation, Immigrant Legal Defense, International Rescue Committee, La Familia Counseling Services, Oakland Fund for Children and Youth, Oakland High School, Oakland International High School, Oakland Kids First, Oakland Public Education Fund, Oakland Roots and Soul Foundation, Oakland Technical High School, Oakland Unified School District, Olympic Club Foundation, Refugee and Immigrant Transitions, Rudsdale Continuation High School, T-Mobile Foundation, Tennyson High School, The Town FC, The Westly Foundation, University of California San Francisco, Urban Promise Academy, Women's Sports Foundation

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Colorado

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Uganda

Beyond Sport, British Council, Common Goal, Community Psychosocial Support, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Dorothea Haus Ross Foundation, Federation of Uganda Football Associations, FIFA Foundation, Futures Without Violence, Global Girl Project, Kids Play International, MAD Sisters, Premier League Premier Skills, Raise Chess Academy, Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa - SIHA, The Swedish Post Code Lottery Foundation

Our Supporters

Every donation (no matter how big or small) is more than a gift—it's an investment in a more inclusive future. The MVPs on this list contributed \$500 or more in FY2024, helping us break down barriers and expand opportunities for newcomer youth. Their belief in our mission makes a lasting impact on and off the field.

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In the Media



(Feb 5) 2026 World Cup games at Gillette Stadium will have financial, community impact



(Feb 21) In an East Boston gym, soccer gives African refugees a taste of home



(May 6) "It's a space for us to bring our minds together for a similar goal"



(May 14) CULTURE & COMMUNITY: A LOOK INSIDE SOCCER WITHOUT BORDERS



(Jul 5) Ready Sport Global Innovation Series, ft. Jennifer Tepper



(Jul 15) Greeley Summer Camp Video Feature



(Sep 17) Are We Losing the Race Against Gender-Based Violence?



(Sep 18) The Three-Legged Stool of Readiness-Centered Founder Transitions



(Nov 5) Guest Blog - Soccer Without Borders



(Nov 18) Soccer lets students experience cultural exchange



(Dec 4) How to Strengthen Your Grant Proposals and Avoid Common Mistakes



"It's a community that brings everyone together. It's a community where they only bring up the good stuff. No one talks bad about each other. You make a lot of new friends and meet other people from different countries." -Basit, SWB Participant



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