

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



AUGUST 1, 2024 - JULY 31, 2025

SERVINGPEOPLEWITHAMMISSION.ORG



Dear Members of the Community,

As Serving People with a Mission continues to grow, we remain grounded in our purpose—serving people with a mission to bring positivity, opportunity, and progress to all.



Judith M.
Dominguez-Ramirez,
Board Chair



Jacque T. Stefanic,
People Officer &
CEO

We are both an organization and an action. To serve people with a mission means leading with purpose, empathy, and the belief that everyone has the power to make a difference. It's about showing up for others and creating opportunity where there was once a limitation.

What makes Serving People with a Mission special is that it's more than a nonprofit—it's a network of servant leaders. From students and alumni to community partners and volunteers, our people are united by service and a shared commitment to building bridges and uplifting communities across Chicago.

With our renewed mission and vision, Serving People with a Mission is deepening its roots—empowering young people to lead with purpose and preparing them for the real world through leadership development, community engagement, environmental responsibility, and hands-on experiences.

To guide this work, we are structured into three core departments:

- Service Arm – Leading environmental and educational initiatives.
- People Arm – Managing operations and administration.
- Mission Arm – Overseeing growth and communications.

Together, these teams—and the community that supports them—move Serving People with a Mission forward, nurturing a movement of servant leaders creating a more connected and compassionate Chicago.

We invite you to explore this annual report to learn more about our impact and how you, too, can be Serving People with a Mission.

In Service,
Serving People with a Mission



A COMMITMENT TO SERVING PEOPLE WITH A MISSION

Our Mission

Serving People with a Mission (SPM) is a nonprofit organization of collective servant leaders who bring positivity and progress to communities through purposeful action. This is what we do best: we take action to help make our community and environment better for society.

Through education, leadership development, and community engagement, SPM prepares young people to become servant leaders—physically, mentally, and socially ready to make a difference. We connect them to resources of knowledge, networks of power, and platforms of visibility to ensure their growth and success.

What began as a youth-founded effort born in Chicago has grown into a movement that builds bridges, inspires change, and strengthens communities—guided by one simple truth: our mission to serve people.



Our Vision & Values

Our vision is to create a world where serving others is second nature—a world built on compassion, connection, and collective leadership. We envision communities where every person feels empowered to take action that uplifts those around them, creating a ripple effect of positivity and progress.

Guided by our servant leaders, we aim to inspire generations to lead with empathy, build bridges across difference, and strengthen society through one unshakable commitment—the mission to serve people.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME FROM LEADERSHIP 01

MISSION AND VISION 02

TABLE OF CONTENTS 03

MEET SPM 04

EDUCATION, SERVICE ARM 05-11

ENVIRONMENTAL, SERVICE ARM 12-15

PEOPLE ARM 16-17

MISSION ARM 18-19

2025 REFERENCES 20



4 MEET SPM

People



Andrea Espitia
Communications
Manager



Justin Keldani
Finance Manager



Osmar Cruz
Board of Director
Finance Chair



Alex Calderon
Board of Director
Service Committee



Jacque Stefanic
Chief People
Officer & CEO



Jameel Muhammad
Board of Director
Development Committee



Carlos Martinez
Chief Mission
Officer



Casandra Torres
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Karen Fleshman
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Kelvin Henry
Board Of Director
Development Chair



William Garcia
Service Specialist



Judith Doninguez
Board of Director
Executive Chair



Ervin Szot
Development
Officer



Sofia Aranda Chief
Service Officer,
Environment &
CCO



Melynna Hakim
Development
Officer

Service

Mission



SERVICE ARM

The Service Arm is Serving People with a Mission's department dedicated to direct community impact.

EDUCATION

The Education Initiative serves as the foundation of Serving People with a Mission's work with youth. It encompasses all student-centered programs, including the Hand-n-Hand Leadership Program, Youth Executive Coaching Program, and Customized Educational Experiences.

Through partnerships with schools, colleges, and community organizations, SPM provides meaningful learning experiences that build confidence, strengthen leadership skills, and connect education to real-world purpose. Each program is designed to inspire students to lead with empathy, serve their communities, and create lasting impact—preparing them not just for success in school, but for leadership in life.



ENVIRONMENTAL

The Environmental Initiative encompasses all of Serving People with a Mission's conservation and sustainability efforts, including the Giving People Donations Drive, professional clothing workshops, and ongoing collaborations with in-kind partners. Through these partnerships, SPM collects essential resources—such as clothing, hygiene items, and school supplies—and redistributes them to individuals and families in need.

This initiative reflects SPM's commitment to environmental responsibility and community care, ensuring that every act of giving contributes to both people and planet.

6 EDUCATION INITIATIVES

HAND-N-HAND LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Launched in 2021 out of Little Village, Chicago, the Hand-n-Hand Leadership Program has since empowered young people across the city to build confidence, purpose, and leadership skills rooted in service.

Hand-n-Hand is a robust leadership development experience that engages youth around five core pillars: Connection & Relationships, Personal and Community Safety, Professional Brand, Financial Literacy, and Culture & Civic Engagement. Through a two-step learning model—education and exposure—participants attend interactive workshops facilitated by our education team and local professionals, then immediately apply their learning through real-world experiences across Chicago.

Midway through the program, participants receive a community grant from SPM, which they design and manage to address a local need. This hands-on philanthropic project challenges them to mobilize networks, spaces, and resources to bring their ideas to life.

Upon completion, students graduate as certified servant leaders of Serving People with a Mission. Their accomplishments are celebrated at the annual Hand-n-Hand Leadership Ceremony, hosted in a core community location—recognizing the growth, service, and leadership each participant has demonstrated.

The Hand-n-Hand Leadership Program prepares young leaders for the expectations of the real world by teaching the principles of servant leadership, modeling them in action, and equipping every participant with the tools to lead with purpose and integrity.





HAND-N-HAND PROGRAM

STUDENT HIGHLIGHT



Brandon,
Rauner College Prep Class of 27'

Brandon first joined Serving People with a Mission's Hand-n-Hand Leadership Program as a freshman with one clear goal—to build his confidence. Through his time in the program, Brandon participated in public speaking workshops, networking opportunities, and leadership development experiences that helped him grow both personally and professionally.

One of his proudest moments came when he served as a student speaker at the 2025 Hand-n-Hand Graduation Ceremony at CineCity Studios, addressing an audience of more than 100 guests—his first time speaking publicly on such a large stage. Brandon shares that Serving People with a Mission has helped him “find his voice” and strengthened his belief in the power of servant leadership.

In his graduation speech, Brandon reflected:

“What started as a reason for enrichment credits has turned into a safe community of mine. Each field trip opened new perspectives about our future. For me, meeting the mayor showed me the life of a political leader—it inspired me to pursue a path of service. But SPM wasn't only about learning; we put our knowledge into action through our philanthropy project, distributing food and hygiene supplies to those in need. We've grown into leaders, thinkers, and problem solvers.”

Today, Brandon continues to apply the values of courage, compassion, and leadership that he developed through the Hand-n-Hand Leadership Program—proof that confidence built through service has the power to last a lifetime.





THE HAND-N-HAND WALKTHROUGH



1: PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

Professional and personal development workshops led by mature youth in their 20s and working professionals, tailored to empower teenage participants through weekly educational presentations and interactive classroom activities.



2: EXPOSURE EXPERIENCES

Every other week, students visit SPM community partners to meet industry professionals and explore real-world environments—each trip directly tied to a workshop topic, reinforcing their learning through both classroom and hands-on experiences.



3: PHILANTHROPIC PROJECT

Each cohort receives a microgrant from SPM to lead a community project, guided by young adult leaders and professionals. Students practice teamwork, budgeting, and use the SPM network to create impact across Chicago.



4: GRADUATION CEREMONY

Upon completing the Hand-n-Hand Program, students are certified as Servant Leaders by Serving People with a Mission. A high-profile graduation ceremony is held at a prominent Chicago venue, inviting community members from all backgrounds to celebrate their achievement.

9 EDUCATION THE YOUNG EXECUTIVE INITIATIVES

STUDENT HIGHLIGHT KAM'RYN PENIX

YOUTH EXECUTIVE COACHING PROGRAM

The Youth Executive Coaching Program develops the next generation of college-aged leaders by pairing them with seasoned alumni and young professional coaches. More than a mentorship initiative, it serves as a leadership accelerator—equipping students with the confidence, skills, and networks to lead in their careers, communities, and beyond.

Through personalized one-on-one coaching, students gain practical support in navigating real-world leadership challenges such as team morale, accountability, budgeting, and decision-making. Coaches draw on their own leadership experience to challenge, inspire, and guide students as they define their leadership style and goals.

Beyond individual coaching, students are introduced to high-profile leadership environments—from civic gatherings and industry events to professional conferences and alumni networks—broadening their exposure to how leadership operates across sectors. Group sessions, including leadership roundtables and career panels, further strengthen their skills and sense of community.

This program enhances student leaders' confidence and effectiveness in real time, fostering a pipeline of emerging professionals who are ready to lead with purpose, influence, and integrity.



Kam'Ryn participated in the Youth Executive Coaching Program, where she was paired with Jacque, her executive coach, who helped her strengthen her leadership skills and confidence.



Through their one-on-one sessions, she gained valuable insights into decision-making, communication, and executive leadership—all while receiving consistent encouragement and support.

Kam'Ryn shares that she especially appreciated the personal connection with her coach, who invited her to experiences such as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and guided her through challenges like the college transfer process. As she prepares to continue her education at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Kam'Ryn reflects with gratitude:

“I took away so many lessons about leadership and making thoughtful executive decisions. I’m deeply thankful for the support and guidance I received—and I hope to work with SPM again in the future.”

SPM ALUMNI PROGRAM

The Serving People with a Mission Alumni Network now exceeds 150 members, representing a growing community of trusted servant leaders who continue to embody SPM's mission long after completing the program. This expanding network reflects the lasting influence of SPM's leadership model—one that doesn't end at graduation but evolves through continued engagement, mentorship, and opportunity.

Alumni receive exclusive access to SPM-hosted events, leadership workshops, and exposure trips designed to foster ongoing personal and professional growth. Through tailored resources, alumni are supported as they navigate college, early career transitions, and leadership roles within their communities. These opportunities ensure that each graduate continues to thrive as both a professional and a changemaker.

Beyond programming, SPM alumni benefit from being connected to a network of working professionals across industries who actively mentor, collaborate, and personally recommend them for job placements and internships. This powerful network creates real pathways to advancement—turning connections into opportunities.

Many alumni stay deeply engaged with SPM by mentoring current students, facilitating workshops, and leading new initiatives, embodying the organization's belief that leadership is most meaningful when it multiplies. Their continued involvement reinforces SPM's culture of giving back and demonstrates how today's participants become tomorrow's leaders and mentors.

By maintaining long-term relationships and offering tangible, sustained support, Serving People with a Mission has built a living ecosystem of servant leaders—one that uplifts one another, strengthens communities, and continues to create lasting impact across Chicago and beyond.





EDUCATION DATA

OVERVIEW:

Hand-n-Hand supports students from diverse and resilient backgrounds—with 87% identifying as low-income and 97% representing underrepresented communities. The program provides equitable access to leadership development, professional exposure, and mentorship opportunities that help bridge opportunity gaps and empower every student to thrive.

KEY FINDINGS:

- Leadership Growth:
- 94% of students reported increased confidence in public speaking and leadership abilities.
- 91% demonstrated measurable improvement in team collaboration and communication skills.
- 89% said the program helped them clarify their college / career goals



PROGRAM RETENTION & COMPLETION:

- 96% of enrolled students completed the full program cycle.
- 80% expressed interest in returning as peer mentors or applying for future SPM opportunities.
- A pooled scholarship fund of \$15,000 was distributed to all participants.

CIVIC & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

- 100% of participants completed a community impact project, distributing resources or organizing service events that directly benefited local neighborhoods.
- Collectively, students logged over 1,200 hours of community service during the program cycle.





ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

GIVING PEOPLE DONATIONS DRIVE

The Giving People Donations Drive launched in 2020 as a year-round initiative dedicated to collecting essential in-kind resources for those who need them most. What began as a grassroots effort to meet immediate community needs has grown into a cornerstone program that supports individuals from all walks of life — including those experiencing homelessness, emerging professionals, students, and seasoned workers rebuilding their lives.

More than just a drive, Giving People is a wraparound initiative that engages people of all ages and backgrounds in both giving and receiving. The name itself reflects its mission — it's about giving people what they need to be successful, while also reminding every donor that generosity starts with them. The program centers around three key stages: collecting, cleaning, and giving. We partner with community resource allies such as corporate offices, social clubs, schools, and community centers to host collection drives that make giving accessible and impactful. Each donation undergoes a careful cleaning process using organic, eco-friendly materials, ensuring that every item is fresh, safe, and dignified for the person who receives it. Once processed, the resources are distributed directly to those in need through community events, customized orders, and workshops—meeting people where they are.

Our most requested and impactful items are professional clothing and everyday essentials, which help individuals prepare for interviews, attend important life events, and step into new opportunities with confidence. These tangible resources go beyond meeting physical needs; they restore dignity, self-worth, and hope.

At its core, Giving People is more than a donation drive — it's a movement powered by empathy, sustainability, and community connection. It starts with people and ends with people, uniting neighbors, organizations, and volunteers across Chicago to ensure everyone has the resources, confidence, and opportunity to thrive.





GIVING PEOPLE DONATIONS

PARTICIPANT TESTIMONIAL (NAME WITHHELD)

At a recent Giving People Donations Drive, one attendee shared a touching story about how the initiative came into their life at exactly the right moment. They had been searching for a new job for several months and were preparing for upcoming interviews but didn't have access to professional clothing that made them feel confident and ready to make a strong first impression. Despite their determination and hard work, the lack of proper attire had become a real barrier to opportunity.

When they learned about Giving People, they decided to attend one of the events — unsure of what to expect but hopeful that it might help. What they found was far more than clothing; it was a community that genuinely cared. Volunteers greeted them with kindness, helped them find items that fit their style and needs, and made them feel seen and valued. They were thrilled to receive several pieces of high-quality professional attire, all free of charge, and shared how meaningful it was to feel supported in such a practical, personal way.

Their story captures the very heart of Giving People — collecting, cleaning, and giving in-kind resources that not only meet immediate needs but also restore dignity, self-worth, and hope. Each donation is more than an item; it's a bridge to new opportunities and a reminder that generosity has the power to change lives.

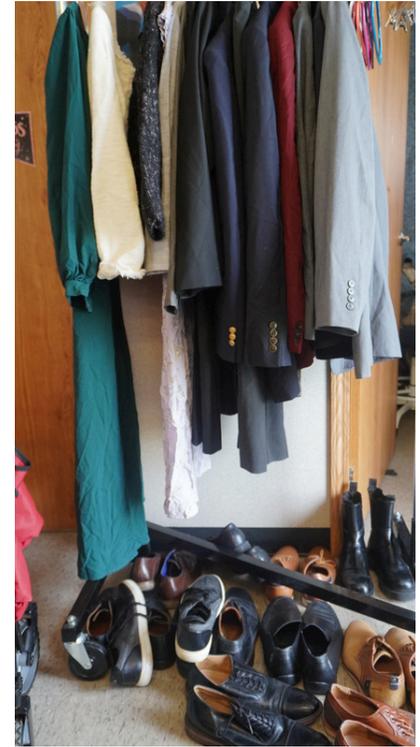


“I couldn't believe the quality of the clothes. Everything looked brand new — it made me feel confident walking into my interview. Giving People made me realize that people really do care. I tell everyone I know about it now — it's something worth supporting.”

THE GIVING PEOPLE WALKTHROUGH

1: COLLECTION OF RESOURCES

The Environmental Team partners with organizations and individuals who donate clothing and essential items that benefit others. Via host donation drives at offices, schools, and community sites, and offer direct pick-ups to make giving easy and accessible for people to give.



2: CLEANING OF RESOURCES

Donated resources undergo a thorough cleaning process using organic, eco-friendly materials to ensure every item is fresh, safe, and ready to use—reflecting our commitment to both sustainability and dignity for those receiving them.



3: RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION

Resources are directly distributed to people in need through community events, customized orders, and workshops, ensuring support reaches individuals where they are.

ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

Overview

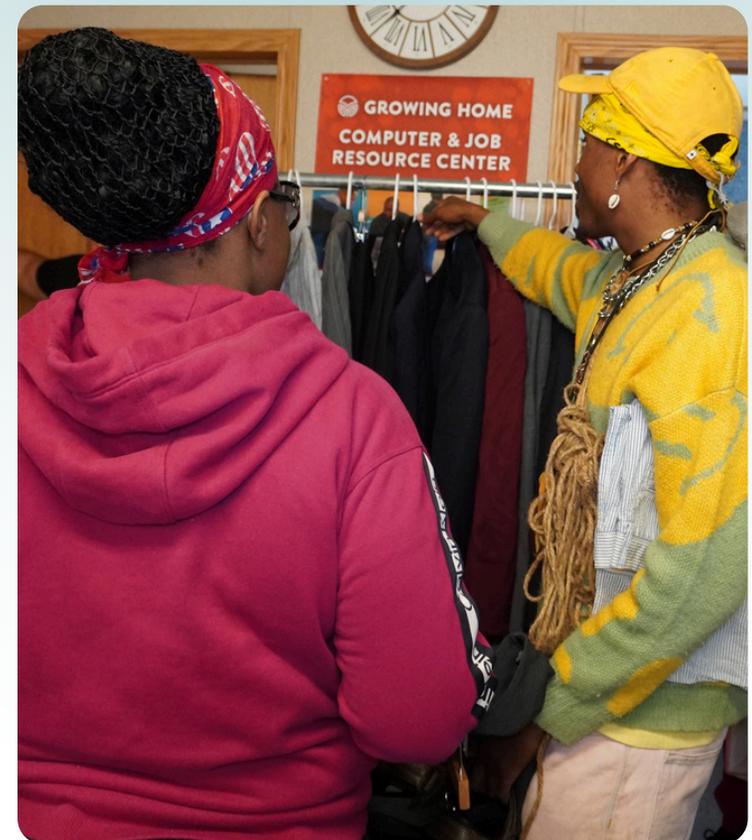
The Giving People Donations Drive collects, cleans, and distributes in-kind resources—like professional clothing, hygiene kits, and school supplies—to communities across Chicago. In 2024–2025, it collected over 4,400 items and supported more than 1,400 people, helping ensure access to everyday essentials and new opportunities.

Key Findings

- Collected 4,400+ in-kind items across Chicago’s South, West, and North Sides
- Supported 1,400+ individuals through free resource distribution events
- Engaged 9 community and corporate partners in donation drives
- Most-requested items included professional clothing, hygiene kits, and winter gear
- Increased participant confidence and readiness for employment opportunities
- Strengthened community collaboration through volunteer and partner engagement
- Reduced textile waste by reusing and repurposing donated items
- Saved over 2,000,000 gallons of water through sustainable clothing reuse
- Offset the environmental equivalent of 2,500 trees planted
- Prevented more than 500,000 pounds of carbon dioxide emissions from entering the atmosphere

Community Impact

- 89% of recipients reported feeling more confident after receiving professional attire
- Prevented an estimated 2,000 pounds of textile waste through clothing reuse and redistribution



People Arm

The People Arm leads the operations and administrative functions of Serving People with a Mission, ensuring organizational efficiency, accountability, and alignment with our mission to serve people.

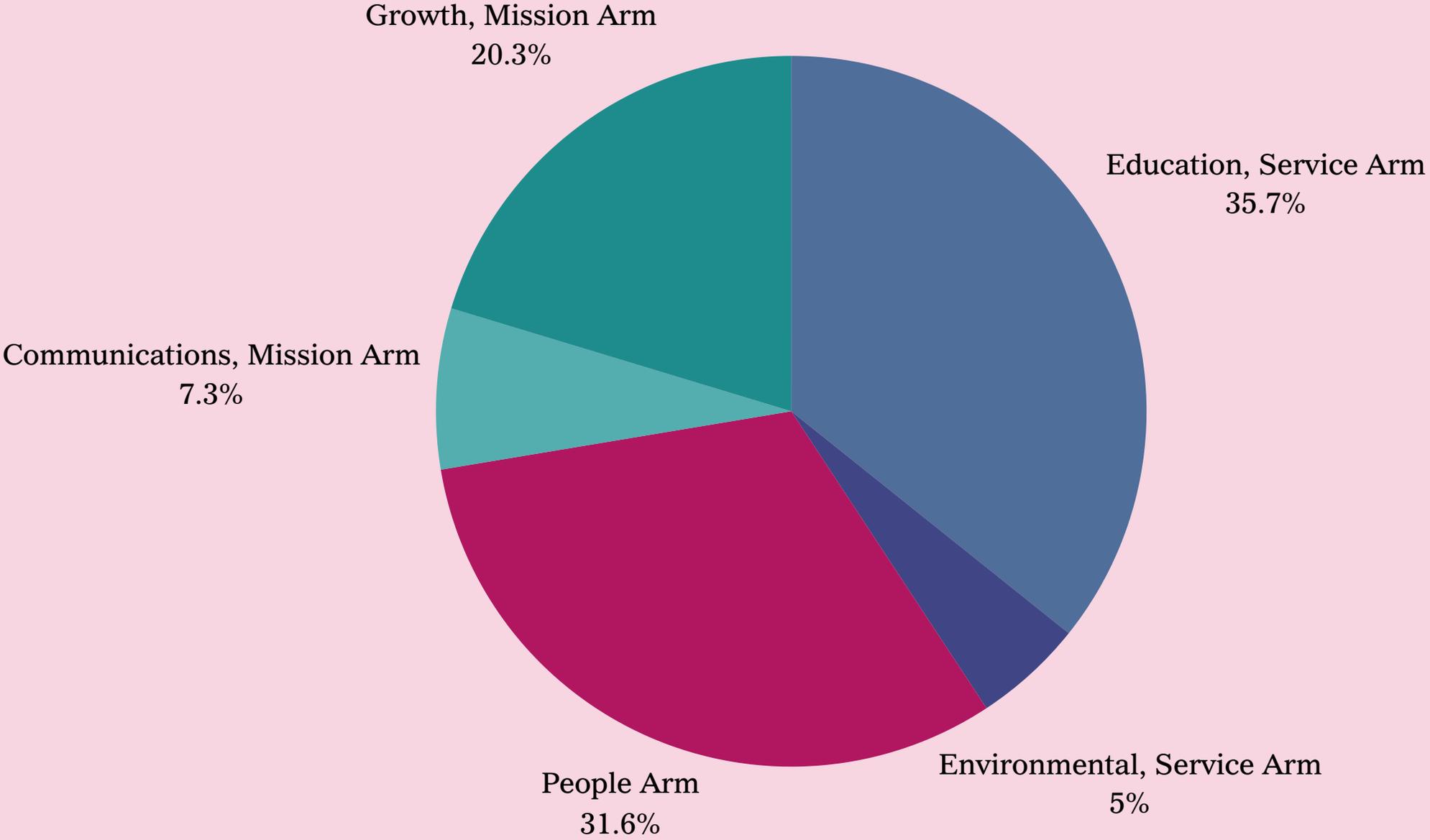
ADMINISTRATION

The People Department supports Serving People with a Mission from the inside out, ensuring our servant leaders have the tools and resources they need to carry out impactful, people-centered work across Chicago. This department oversees the internal management and leadership operations of the organization, fostering efficiency, collaboration, and accountability. By strengthening our internal systems, the People Department ensures that every program and initiative is executed with excellence and aligned with our mission to serve.



Total Expenses

\$78,893.04



Mission Arm

The Mission Arm leads the growth, development, and communications of Serving People with a Mission, ensuring strong community engagement, sustainable funding, and a lasting impact.

GROWTH

The Mission Arm leads the growth and visibility of Serving People with a Mission, ensuring the organization continues to thrive and expand its impact. This department oversees development, fundraising, marketing, and communications, connecting our work to the broader community and building lasting relationships with supporters. By driving awareness and securing essential resources, the Mission Arm ensures that Serving People with a Mission has a strong and sustainable future.



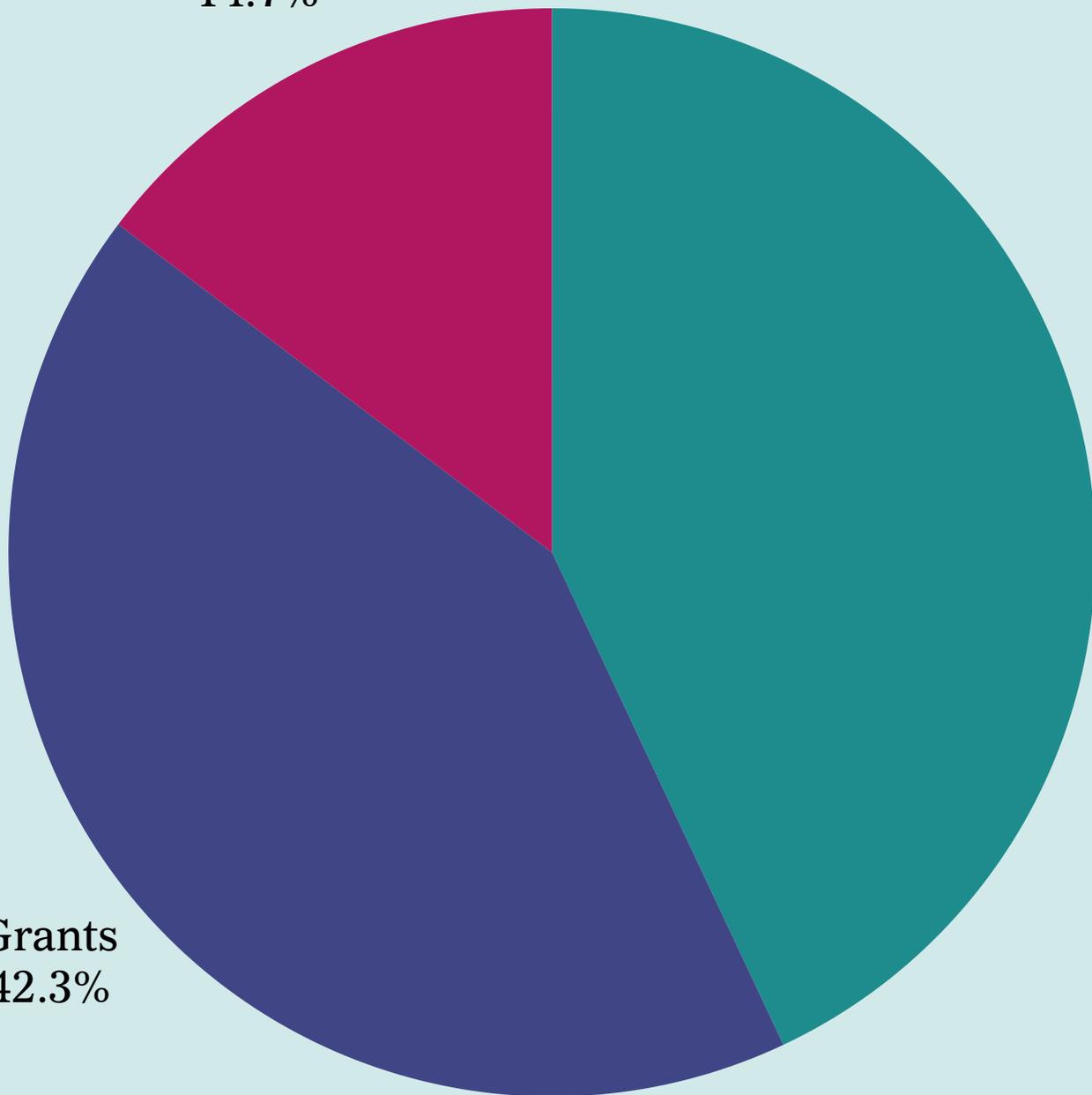
Total Support

\$97,255.81

Service Fees
14.7%

Individual Donations
43%

Grants
42.3%



20

SERVING PEOPLE WITH A MISSION

SPM

2025 References

Stay In Touch

- Official Website: <https://www.servingpeoplewithamission.org>
- Online Donations:
<https://servingpeoplewithamission.org/donate>
- Social Media:
 - Facebook/LinkedIn: Serving People with a Mission
 - Instagram: @spm_leads
- Questions? Email: admin@servingpeoplewithamission.org

SPM Foundational Supporters

- Grace Lutheran Benevolence
- SpringBoard Foundation
- Rivers Casino Charitable Foundation
- Wintrust Community Impact
- Southland RISE, UChicago
- The Chicago Fund
- Individual Donors

SPM Core Partners

- Noble Schools
- Loyola University Chicago
- Chicago Public Schools
- Food Farm Familias
- AMPT Chicago
- Chicago Symphony Orchestra
- The Metropolitan Chicago
- CineCity Studios