

**H O P E  
T O  
A C T I O N**

**THE OBAMA FOUNDATION**

2021 ANNUAL REPORT











A MESSAGE FROM

# President Obama

It's hard to believe that it's only been five years since Michelle and I launched the Obama Foundation—especially because so much has changed since then.

Today, we're still dealing with the far-reaching impact of a pandemic. People in every corner of the world are experiencing the consequences of a warming planet. In America, your gender, race, class, and country of origin too often determine your ability to thrive. And both at home and around the world, democracy itself is under siege—with the future of our collective experiment in self-government hanging in the balance.

It's a lot to wrap your head around, and enough to make anyone feel cynical. But we started this Foundation five years ago as an antidote to cynicism—to prove that we have it in us to address the trends we're seeing in the world, to make our institutions responsive to today's challenges, and to give more people a better life.



**TODAY, THAT WORK IS MORE  
IMPORTANT THAN EVER.**

Our goal has always been to identify young people who aren't waiting for someone else to tackle big problems. They are the source of my hope. And through the Foundation, we want to give them whatever training, support, resources, and platforms they need to fully realize their potential and bring their dreams to scale.

In 2021, we worked with young leaders who are demanding climate action in Germany, supporting artists and musicians in South Korea, funding women-led businesses in Cameroon, addressing poverty and violence in El Salvador, and strengthening communities on the South Side of Chicago—to name just a few.

We also worked to help keep girls and young women learning and thriving in school, even during the pandemic. We saw real progress in communities across the country doing their part to reimagine policing. And of course, we broke ground on the Obama Presidential Center in Jackson Park, marking the beginning of an exciting new chapter in the life of the Foundation.

So while this was a difficult year for many, it was also a hopeful one. And we're doing even more in 2022.

That's important because it's clear that the challenges we're facing right now—from raging wildfires and rising sea levels, to attempts to make it harder to vote, to Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine—are too big to ignore. They also don't lend themselves to easy answers.

But it's also clear that progress can—and must—start with us. We have to advocate and organize; to advance our values; and fight for truth over lies—not just because we're afraid of what will happen if we don't, but because we're hopeful about what can happen if we do.

That's what the Obama Foundation is all about, and I look forward to continuing this important work with all of you in 2022 and beyond.





A MESSAGE FROM  
OBAMA FOUNDATION CEO

# Valerie Jarrett

For over 30 years, I've watched Barack and Michelle Obama wholeheartedly commit themselves to public service, inspired by an unwavering sense of infinite hope and possibilities. During even the most challenging times, they have never lost faith in their belief that ordinary people can do extraordinary things and that if we work together, impossible things can become inevitable. We have a track record of turning hope into action.





**AS CEO OF THE OBAMA FOUNDATION,  
HOPE DRIVES ME TO ACTION EACH DAY.**

When I took on this role, I knew there would be challenges—from an ongoing pandemic, to racial and gender disparities across our society, to a volatile global economy. These crises we face here in America and around the world don't just show up in the headlines. They also affect, in deeply personal ways, our neighbors in the communities where we live, the partners who make our work possible, the people we serve, and the members of our own team.

But we've thrived over the course of this last year because of a core set of values that reflect the principles we were founded upon, and a mission to invest in the next generation of leaders and support their growth.

After five years of work, that culture is plainly visible in the progress we've made. We're seeing it not just in our hometown of Chicago, but across the country and around the world. Through our network of emerging leaders, we are helping them turn "hope into action"—the theme of this year's report. Turning hope into action is about pushing beyond dreaming and planning into actually making an impact. And ultimately, it means we're beginning to see our vision for a better world become reality through the work of the next generation of leaders. That too becomes the legacy of the Obamas.

In these pages, you will read about how we broke ground on the Obama Presidential Center—a remarkable 19.3 acre campus on the South Side of Chicago that will pay tribute not only to the Obamas' legacy, but to the people and inclusive community who made their extraordinary story possible. You'll learn about how we launched the Futures Series here in Chicago—a program designed to help young high school students on the South Side connect with leaders around the country whose stories we know will resonate with them. And we'll introduce you to inspiring changemakers—people like Javnyuy Joybert, whose social enterprise supports startups taking on Africa's most-pressing issues like equitable and sustainable employment, education, and job training; and Rachel from Namibia, who continues to pursue her education and aspires to be a doctor or geologist, despite the roadblocks for women and girls in her community.

We're so proud of their stories—even as we recognize that there's so much more work to be done. Despite the enormous challenges in the world around us, we still believe everyone has the power to make a difference. And together, we're doing the often difficult, always necessary, work of turning hope into the kind of action that creates positive and sustainable change.

We can't wait to see what the next year has in store. We couldn't do any of this without your support, and we're so grateful to have you join us in this journey.



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We launched the Obama Foundation in 2017 with high hopes.



Dreams of helping the next generation of leaders take on the biggest challenges of our time. Ambitions to inspire everyday people to act on the issues that matter most to them. And a vision of building a world-class institution on the South Side of Chicago.







We knew it wouldn't happen overnight, and that it would take patience and persistence. Five years into our journey, we've accomplished so much together.



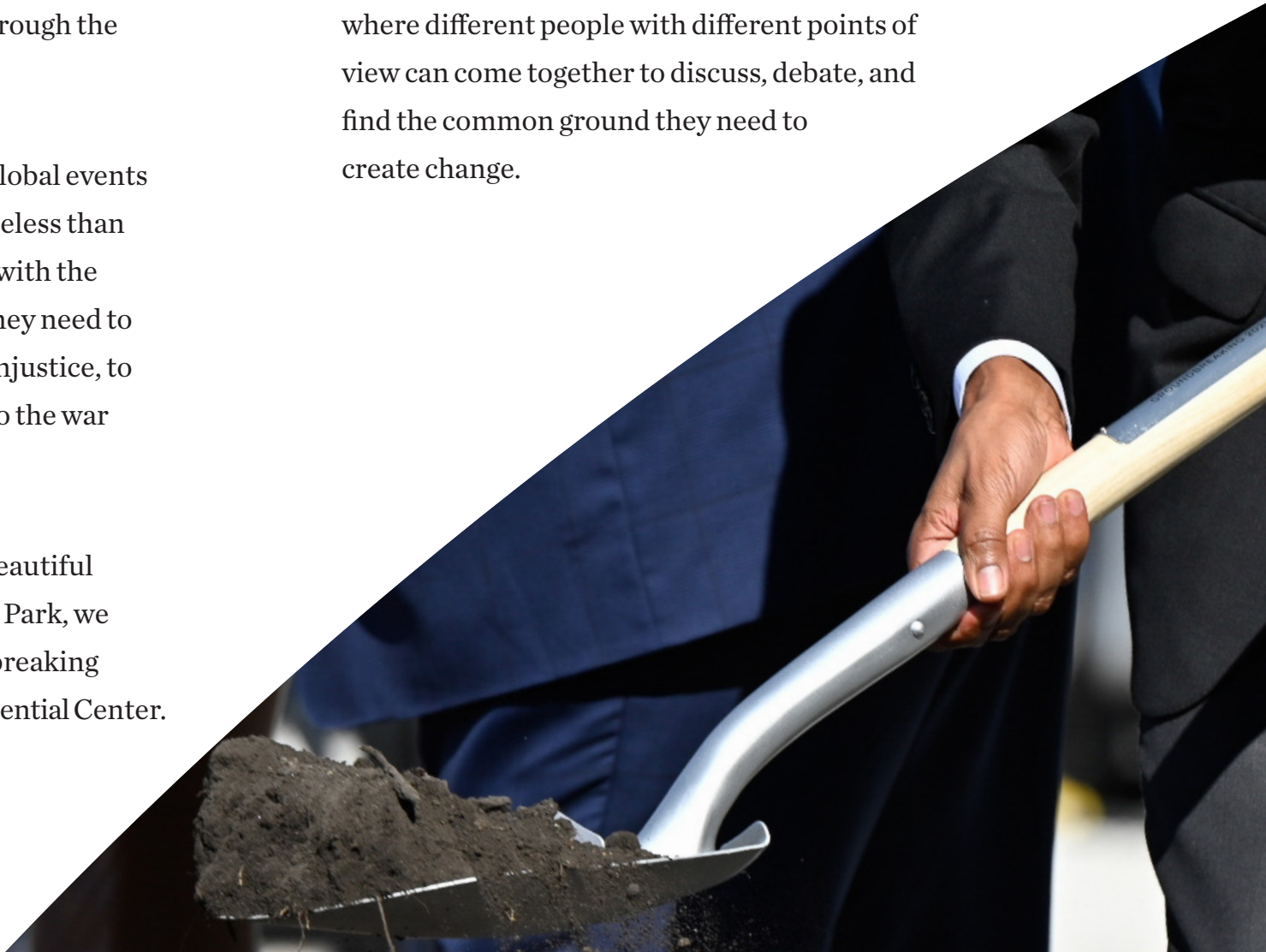
Day in and day out, we're building an ever-growing network of changemakers through our leaders' programming, fighting to remove barriers to girls' education through the Girls Opportunity Alliance, and leveraging the power of community to support young men of color through the My Brother's Keeper Alliance.

At a time when domestic and global events can make things feel more hopeless than ever, we're connecting people with the organizations and resources they need to act on everything from racial injustice, to global threats on democracy, to the war in Ukraine.

On September 28, 2021, on a beautiful early fall afternoon in Jackson Park, we celebrated the official groundbreaking ceremony for the Obama Presidential Center.

For those of you who have been with us along the way, it was an incredibly gratifying moment.

Far more than a museum, we are creating a living, breathing center of civic engagement where different people with different points of view can come together to discuss, debate, and find the common ground they need to create change.





Because when

**HOPE PAIRS  
WITH ACTION,**

there is no problem we can't solve together.

In the pages that follow, we invite you to explore how this belief came to life in 2021.

“

Change starts one person  
at a time, one school at a  
time, one neighborhood  
at a time, one community  
at a time.”

PRESIDENT OBAMA  
OBAMA PRESIDENTIAL CENTER  
GROUNDBREAKING, 2021





1

O B A M A

P R E S I D E N T I A L

C E N T E R



## A Center of Change

From the beginning, we wanted to be connected to the South Side of Chicago. Building the Obama Presidential Center here is an opportunity to give back to and reinvest in the community that forever shaped the lives, values, and beliefs of President and Mrs. Obama.

The Center will be a welcoming, vibrant campus for all. Where everyday people, from across the street or around the globe, can come to get inspired, find common ground, and take action. And in 2021, we took several major steps towards making that vision a reality.



## The Road to Groundbreaking

In February, after the completion of a careful federal regulatory review process, the way was cleared to break ground on the Center. In April, the City of Chicago and Chicago Park District began pre-construction work onsite in Jackson Park. In August, construction officially began on the Center. And in September, after years of hard work, dedication, and endless support from our Chicago neighbors and caring people all around the world, we hosted the [official groundbreaking ceremony](#).



“

I am a First Lady from the South Side of Chicago, and that is why this project is so incredibly important to me and my husband. It allows us to live out one of those values we learned, right here, and that is to give back something big and important and meaningful to the community that has given us so much.”

**MICHELLE OBAMA**  
**OBAMA PRESIDENTIAL CENTER**  
**GROUNDBREAKING, 2021**







More than a ceremony, groundbreaking became a chance to reconnect with the community. President and Mrs. Obama spoke with Chicago Public Schools students and our University of Chicago Obama Scholars, and even surprised our workforce partner Chicago Women in Trades.

**GROUNDBREAKING ALSO MARKED THE START OF SEVERAL OTHER EXCITING OBAMA PRESIDENTIAL CENTER ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

## On Whose Shoulders We Stand

We know the story of Barack and Michelle Obama would not be possible without civil rights and social justice trailblazers. That's why a significant part of the Obama Presidential Center Museum experience will be named after leaders who drove change in America and pushed it to live up to its founding ideas.

Thanks in part to the generosity of our donors, we're naming key spaces throughout the Center after leaders such as civil rights activist and Congressman John Lewis, iconic First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, trailblazers Mae Jemison and Elie Wiesel, local Chicago historic figures such as Mayor Harold Washington and Timuel Black, and the mothers of Barack and Michelle Obama, Ann Dunham and Marian Robinson. Our intention is that these [named spaces](#) will also motivate visitors to find new inspiration to make change in their own communities.





## The Ann Dunham

### WATER GARDEN



“

When I look at my values, that core belief in our common humanity and the inherent dignity of every person, that was instilled in me by my mother.”

—PRESIDENT OBAMA

Away from the bustling activity of the Center will be a special space on campus. Thanks to a campaign created by the Obama alumni community, the Water Garden will be named in honor of President Obama’s mother, [Ann Dunham](#).

Ann Dunham was the biggest influence on President Obama’s life. She believed strongly in the power of human connection and the inherent dignity in all of us, values she instilled in her children. Decades later, a commitment to those same values inspired millions of Americans to join a movement that carried President Obama to the White House.

The Water Garden will also feature a stunning art installation from one of President Obama’s favorite designers and sculptors, Maya Lin, a recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. “Seeing Through The Universe,” will complement the natural beauty of the environment—creating a space where families can enjoy a moment of reflection, children can play with the misting and cascading water, and the community can come together for intimate performances.



# The Marian Robinson

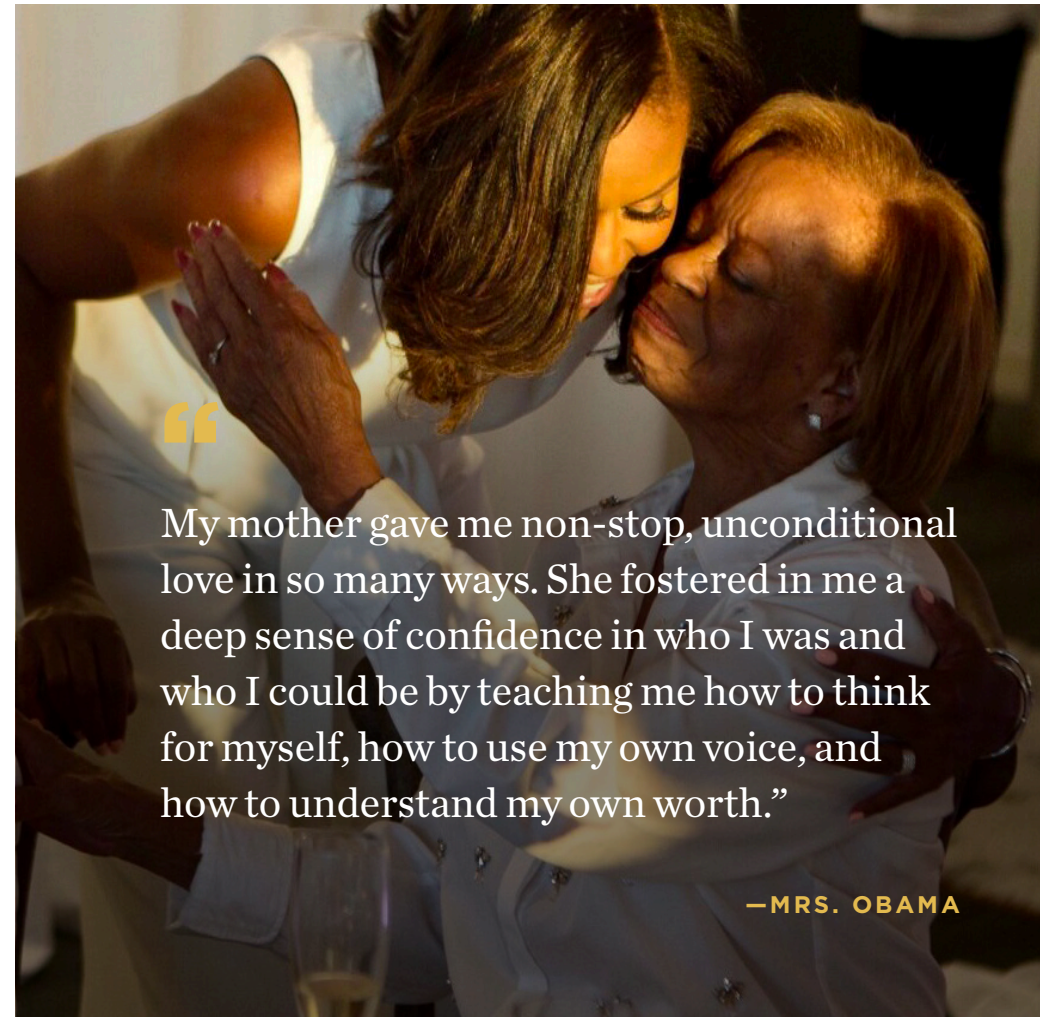
## “OPENING THE WHITE HOUSE” EXHIBIT

The “Opening the White House” exhibit at the Obama Presidential Center Museum will be named in honor of Mrs. Obama’s mother, [Marian Robinson](#).

Mrs. Robinson instilled in her children the importance of community and togetherness—an idea that Mrs. Obama wanted to bring to the White House. Alongside Mrs. Robinson, who moved in with them, the Obamas worked to make the White House an inclusive home, full of art, culture, and conversation.

This museum exhibit will showcase just that—featuring models of spaces at the White House like the East Room, the State Dining Room, and the South Lawn where many social gatherings were held during President Obama’s time in office.

It’s a beautiful way to honor Mrs. Robinson’s legacy, and one made possible thanks to the generosity of Mark Gallogly and Lise Strickler.



“

My mother gave me non-stop, unconditional love in so many ways. She fostered in me a deep sense of confidence in who I was and who I could be by teaching me how to think for myself, how to use my own voice, and how to understand my own worth.”

—MRS. OBAMA



# The Eleanor Roosevelt

## FRUIT & VEGETABLE GARDEN

We are thrilled that the Fruit & Vegetable Garden at the Center will be [named in honor](#) of trailblazer Eleanor Roosevelt.

Mrs. Roosevelt truly redefined the role of First Lady. As an activist, journalist, teacher, diplomat, and policymaker, she used her platform to become an outspoken and progressive champion of human rights. She also planted a victory garden on the White House lawn to encourage families to grow their own food in support of the war effort.

In many ways, Mrs. Roosevelt paved the way for Mrs. Obama. She also helped inspire Mrs. Obama to plant the Kitchen

Garden on the South Lawn, sparking a national conversation about the food we eat and how to create healthier lives for families.

It's a conversation we know will continue at the Fruit & Vegetable Garden—with accessible planting beds, a picnic area, and a Garden Classroom & Teaching Kitchen for hands-on workshops. The space was made possible by the generosity of Obama Foundation Board Member Connie Ballmer and her husband Steven Ballmer.



## Art at the Center

The Obamas have always believed that art can be a powerful force of inspiration and change, which is why art and art programming will be central to the Obama Presidential Center experience. From signature installations by world-renowned artists such as Maya Lin, to hands-on art programs for Chicago's youth, the power of art will offer inspiration to visitors and members of our community alike.





## Richard Hunt Sculpture

INSPIRING US ALL TO TAKE FLIGHT



This year, we were proud to announce that world renowned artist Richard Hunt is [creating a sculpture](#) for the Center. Growing up on Chicago's South Side, Richard credits his mother—an artist and librarian—with inspiring his passion for the arts and exposing him to places like the Art Institute of Chicago. We hope the Center will play a similar role in inspiring the dreams of young Chicagoans.

Richard's beautiful "Book Bird" sculpture will be located in the Library Reading Garden outside the new Chicago Public Library

branch on the Center's campus. The piece encapsulates the idea that reading can help people to make progress and "take flight."

We know the combination of Richard's art—along with a community library—will inspire future generations to soar.

# 2

O U R

C H I C A G O

C O M M U N I T Y



## Our Chicago Commitment Runs Deep

At every step on our journey toward opening the doors of the Obama Presidential Center, we've been listening to and learning from our neighbors in the Chicago community. We've supported youth initiatives, created neighborhood teams, and held open forums so our neighbors could share their ideas and voice their concerns. And all of it has made this project better.







## FULFILLING OUR WORKFORCE GOALS

We believe the Obama Presidential Center should be built by a team that looks like our surrounding community. That's why we've teamed up with [We Can Build It](#), and set ambitious workforce diversity goals above and beyond what is required in Chicago. Today, we're proud to report that more than half of our construction workforce comes from diverse backgrounds—and over half of the workforce hours are performed by Chicago residents.



**50%+** of total on-site construction work hours will be performed by city residents, as required by the City of Chicago

As of June 30, 2022

**94%**

of the the community residents assessed by our We Can Build It partners for training and placement opportunities self-identified as racial minorities:

**2,446**

AFRICAN-AMERICAN

**995**

HISPANIC/LATINO

**327**

OTHER RACE(S)  
NON-WHITE

## MEET

## Zahrah Hill

Zahrah works as a plumber and is part of the team constructing the Obama Presidential Center. The Foundation first met Zahrah through Chicago Women in Trades, a local organization that trains women to become successful tradespeople on construction projects across the city.

“It’s surreal,” Zahrah says. “To be with such a diverse and family-like crew, creating history is just the coolest experience ever. I’ve seen more minority people on this project alone than in my entire career.”





Zahrah says she finds fulfillment using her passion to help craft a piece of history for the next generation of leaders, and believes the Center will be part of her legacy.

“I feel proud knowing my children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren will visit the Obama Presidential Center,” she said. “They’ll be able to say; your grandma had a hand in building this. This building will be around and will serve and provide for the community long after I’m gone. And to know that I had a hand in constructing it is no greater satisfaction in the world.”

Zahrah is following in the footsteps of her mother, an electrician and fellow member of Chicago Women in Trades. And now she’s introducing her two young sons to the businesses. Through her nonprofit, We Can Trade, Zahrah also teaches the fundamentals of building trades to disenfranchised high school students in the Chicagoland area.







## Helping Chicago's Youth See Their Future

At a December roundtable in Chicago, Mrs. Obama sat down with a group of young people from Hyde Park Academy High School—located just across the street from the future Obama Presidential Center. It was a chance to hear about their hopes and dreams for the future, as well as the challenges they face. The conversation inspired us to create the Obama Foundation Futures Series.

The Futures Series is an ongoing collaboration with Hyde Park Academy, inviting experts from different fields to share their journeys with students. We're also making sure more students are aware of the possibilities available to them at the City Colleges of Chicago. Our goal is to help more young people feel like success is within reach, and set their sights a little bit higher.

President Obama and Obama Foundation CEO Valerie Jarrett have already spoken to the group, and we're also putting the spotlight on leaders in finance, journalism, female entrepreneurship, and sports. You can view a full recap of this energetic series [here](#).





## Futures Series Speakers

**PRESIDENT  
BARACK OBAMA**

**FORMER FIRST LADY  
MICHELLE OBAMA**

**VALERIE JARRETT**  
Obama Foundation CEO

**JOHN ROGERS**  
Ariel Investments Founder

**MYLES GAGE**  
Founder of Rapunzl

**CARL MACK**  
Former President of the  
Seattle King County Branch of  
the NAACP

**ELLE RAMEL**  
Director of Gender Equality  
in Tech (GET) Cities, Chicago

**ELENA VALENTINE**  
Skill Scout Media

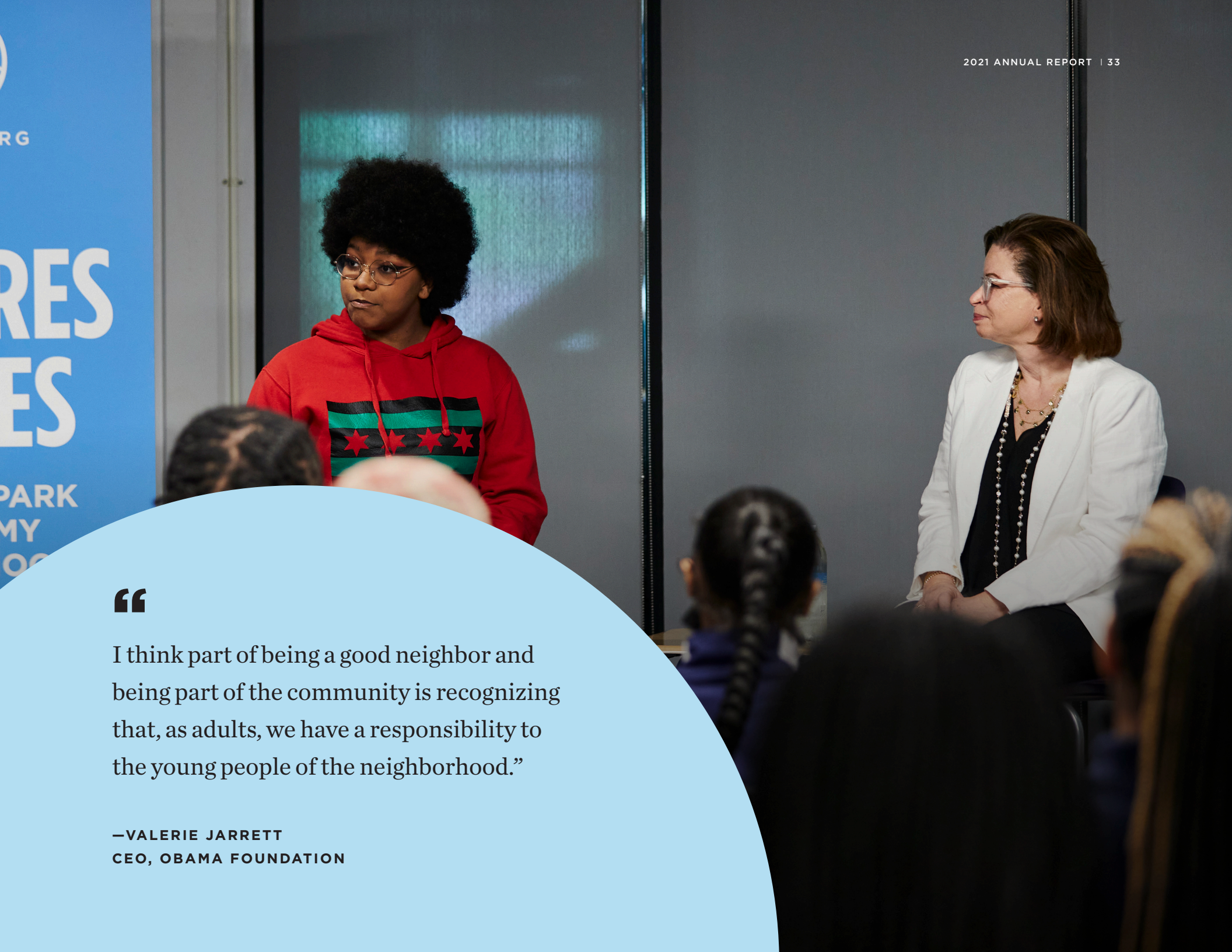
**BRITNEY ROBBINS**  
Gray Matter Experience

**SIERRA COUNCIL**  
Gumbo Media

**CRAIG ROBINSON**  
Executive Director of the  
National Association of  
Basketball Coaches and  
Mrs. Obama's brother

**KIM GODWIN**  
ABC News President

**JUAN SALGADO**  
City Colleges of  
Chicago Chancellor



“

I think part of being a good neighbor and being part of the community is recognizing that, as adults, we have a responsibility to the young people of the neighborhood.”

—VALERIE JARRETT  
CEO, OBAMA FOUNDATION



# 3

O U R

P R O G R A M S

## GLOBAL PROGRAMS

## Leading the Charge

Despite all the challenges we face here at home and around the world, the optimism and ideas of young leaders continually gives us hope for the future. That's why, across all of our Obama Foundation global programming, we continue to focus on providing young changemakers with the support, values-based leadership training, and network they need to accelerate positive and lasting change.

Our programming includes [Obama Leaders](#) across Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Europe, [Obama Scholars](#) at the University of Chicago and Columbia University, and our future [Voyagers](#). It also includes the work of the [Girls Opportunity Alliance](#) and the [My Brother's Keeper Alliance](#).

Around the world, our program participants are taking on the biggest challenges of our time—from fighting climate change, to strengthening democracy, to protecting LGBTQ+ rights, and much more. And these young leaders are also learning from each other, with opportunities to connect, collaborate, and find common ground.





## Collaboration in Action

A great example of our network coming together happened after President Obama's climate roundtable discussion with Obama leaders at the COP26 summit. 2020 Europe Leader Luisa Neubauer (Germany) and 2019-2020 Obama Scholar Christian Vanizette (France) were inspired to partner on climate justice. They brought together dozens of climate activists and representatives across sectors in a campaign to stop the creation of the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP). The pipeline is slated to be the largest of its kind in the world, and would threaten endangered wildlife and displace communities.

Today, the #STOPEACOP campaign has grown into a global movement, garnering support from 260 organizations and obtaining public commitment from 20 commercial banks saying that they will not financially support the development of the pipeline. Other leaders from our global network have also joined the cause to prevent financial institutions in their communities from contributing to the pipeline, including 2020-2021 Scholar Zelda Liang and 2019 Obama Fellow Johnny Chatterton.



“

Movements and transformation typically is not just a matter of good policy and planning, but is a matter of being able to bring people together around their common interests and their common stories.”

—PRESIDENT OBAMA  
UCHICAGO OBAMA SCHOLARS ROUNDTABLE





## OBAMA LEADERS

# Redefining Hope to Action

In response to the pandemic, our 2020 Leaders Europe became our first fully virtual program, providing a new model for building connections. In 2021, we used the same model for Leaders Africa and Asia-Pacific. Across all regions, we also started creating smaller, 35-leader cohorts and a more intensive six-month experience that included weekly virtual sessions, individualized coaching, community groups, and a suite of optional enrichment elements like office hours. While the structure looked different, it didn't change the inspiring work that came from our cohort members.



## MEET

## Michelle Cho

Michelle Cho, a 2019 Asia-Pacific Leader, is the founder of Singing Beetle, a company designed to build a creative and institutional support system for artists and songwriters in the K-pop genre. With a name that references the fable of The Ant and the Grasshopper, Singing Beetle encourages quality music and entertainment while helping musicians and artists to earn a fair living.

Michelle's latest project is a collaboration with fellow Obama Leaders Joe Lim, Dahyun Kim, and Holly Kang to create the first-ever North Korean refugee K-pop band; a new genre of K-pop nicknamed "NK-pop." Currently, Singing Beetle has signed on one full-time artist from North Korea, and continues to train and inspire young North Korean refugees to pursue careers in the K-pop industry and see themselves in a new light: as artists with a voice and a platform.

Singing Beetle recently hosted a successful K-pop camp with 25 North Korean youth—creating a safe community where artists can develop sustainable and authentic artistry. The organization is now expanding its training program to provide basic English skills, global citizenship education, and media training sessions along with vocal, rap, and dancing lessons. Michelle has also leveraged the Obama Leader network to start an angel round of fundraising to raise capital and acquire advisors in the entertainment industry.







## MEET

# Javnyuy Joybert

Javnyuy Joybert is a 2019 Africa Leader and the founder of the Community Skills Development Foundation Group. This Cameroon-based social enterprise supports startups taking on Africa's most-pressing issues like equitable and sustainable employment, education, and job training.

With four subsidiaries, the group provides entrepreneurs with the funding and resources they need to raise money and turn their business ideas into unique, viable solutions. They also support small and medium businesses from sectors including fashion, retail, restaurants, food processing, and photography.

Javnyuy says he finds great joy in helping people improve their lives. In 2021, Javnyuy helped fund more than 200 women-led businesses in Cameroon. By the end of 2022, he expects the businesses will employ more than 900 people.

**OBAMA SCHOLARS**

## Supporting Our Scholars

In 2021, we welcomed our third cohort of University of Chicago Obama Foundation Scholars and fourth cohort of Obama Foundation Scholars at Columbia University. For the first time, the Scholars program was open to both United States citizens and residents—bringing new perspectives to the program.

We also redesigned and relaunched the University of Chicago Obama Foundation Scholars Program. The new interdisciplinary approach includes graduate students in their final year of study at the Booth School of Business, the Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy and Practice, and the Harris School of Public Policy. We're already seeing how more diverse points of view are helping our Scholars connect their work in new ways.





## MEET

## Flávia Neves Maia

A 2020-2021 Obama Scholar, climate leader, and feminist, Flávia Neves Maia is on a mission to promote justice and gender equality. Flávia used her year in the Obama Scholars program—and specifically the immersive systems thinking workshops—to co-found Filha do Sol, a Brazilian nonprofit that works to regenerate nature and restore climate justice across the Tropics. The organization works as a climate adaptation accelerator, and provides women with the tools to become ambitious climate leaders. She is currently working on the Women of the Mangroves Program in Piauí, a women-led effort to rewild mangrove forests while generating profit, creating carbon sinks, and protecting communities from flooding. Flávia says she's proud to be a part of the solution for climate justice.



Now Flávia is tapping into the Obama Foundation network to support and accelerate her efforts. She's a contributor to the Brazilian Center for Climate, a think tank led by 2019-2020 Scholar Guilherme Syrakis (Brazil) that mobilizes society and government to advance climate action. Flávia is also collaborating with fellow 2020-2021 Obama Scholar Hamza Arsbi (Jordan) on a project called Leading Self, which they hope will help spread contemplative and mindful leadership practices through online platforms. Flávia serves as a co-lead of the Climate Leaders Community of Practice for leaders across the Foundation's Global Leadership Network. Through a connection made by 2018-2019 Obama Scholar Hong Hoang (Vietnam), the Obama Foundation nominated Flávia to participate in The Explorer's Passage 2041 ClimateForce Antarctica, an expedition for climate activists to observe the effects of climate change and further their sustainability leadership efforts. On this expedition, Flávia met a group of supporters who now form her board, and are providing funding and strategic advice for the first stages of her mangrove project.





## MEET

## Celina de Sola

2018 Obama Fellow Celina de Sola is the co-founder and president of Glasswing International, a non-governmental organization based in El Salvador and dedicated to addressing the root causes of poverty and violence through education, health, and community empowerment. Celina's work focuses on designing and implementing innovative, community-based initiatives to help children heal from violence and trauma and become changemakers in their communities.

Obama Fellowship training and resources have helped Celina scale her work to directly impact more than 1.5 million lives. Glasswing has also expanded its programming to 12 countries, with more than 400 team members and almost 140,000 volunteers. The organization is increasingly focused on the impact of violence on mental health, and the lack of mental health care professionals who can serve these communities. The momentum has led to Celina winning the TED Audacious prize last year—a \$42 million investment over five years that will make mental health support accessible for over 9 million Central Americans. She says the organization's work stems from its belief in human dignity, agency, and potential—and its commitment to helping people cope, heal, and thrive.



GIRLS OPPORTUNITY ALLIANCE

## Supporting Girls Education When They Needed it Most

The Girls Opportunity Alliance works to remove barriers to adolescent girls' education by supporting community-based organizations around the world. Through the Girls Opportunity Alliance Fund, we've supported 54 projects from organizations in 20 countries, and have inspired nearly 10,000 individuals in all 50 states and more than 40 countries to contribute to these projects. The Girls Opportunity Alliance Network has also grown to include 4,000 leaders across the globe.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic and other devastating world events have only made this work more important. That's why we've doubled down on our efforts to find new ways to help girls when and where they need it most.



## Being There During a Crisis

In a year with so much uncertainty, we channeled our efforts toward areas of urgent need during these times. In India, that meant supporting organizations that kept girls learning as the pandemic severely impacted the country. After a destructive earthquake struck Haiti, we supported two organizations that help girls receive mental health and psychosocial support. And in Afghanistan, we partnered with UNICEF and CARE International to direct \$400,000 in relief funds to girls and organizations in urgent need.

## Connecting Leaders Through Virtual Learning Sessions

We were also able to provide resources and connect our network of leaders worldwide by hosting virtual learning sessions covering topics ranging from financial literacy, to navigating COVID-19 and climate change, to developing resilience. These sessions were hosted in partnership with several external organizations, including CARE International, UNESCO, and Room to Read, as well as leaders in the Girls Opportunity Alliance Network.



## Launching Innovative New Approaches to Fundraising

In 2021, we explored creative new ways to fundraise. In February, we partnered with POPSUGAR for a televised fundraiser that raised more than \$200,000. The fundraiser featured Mrs. Obama in conversation with two students from India and Namibia who shared how the pandemic had impacted their education. It also included over 20 celebrity allies and aired primetime on The Oprah Winfrey Network, Discovery+, and TLC, and featured a QR code where viewers could donate live throughout the broadcast.

By teaming up with corporations like Lululemon and Saks Fifth Avenue, we successfully raised more than \$3 million to support girls' education around the world. Our Saks holiday campaign featured Mrs. Obama unveiling Girls Opportunity Alliance-themed windows at the Saks flagship store in Midtown Manhattan, with QR codes that drove shoppers to donate. Saks also hosted a career day shadowing experience for the local Girls Inc. chapter, and donated a portion of sales from a curated collection of merchandise to the Alliance. Lululemon featured the Girls Opportunity Alliance on the side of some of their physical store locations to help raise awareness about our work.



Mrs. Obama meets with students from Girls Inc. in front of the Saks Fifth Avenue holiday windows in support of the Girls Opportunity Alliance. (Photo courtesy of BFA).



## SPOTLIGHT

## Milaan Foundation

We proudly support organizations like the [Milaan Foundation](#). This nonprofit empowers adolescent girls from low-income communities across three states in India through an experiential life-skills based journey—providing safe spaces where they can amplify their voices and mobilize their communities. The organization serves 7,000 adolescent girls between the ages of 12 to 18

years old through its Girl Icon program, which provides leadership training, life skills education, and mentorship for girls. This allows young girls to continue their education and learn how to advocate for themselves and other girls in their communities.



## MEET

# Rachel

As a student in Katutura, Namibia, Rachel struggled to continue her education during the pandemic. But with the help of Physically Active Youth, a community-based organization supported through the Girls Opportunity Alliance Fund, she received learning materials and homework sheets so she could continue learning while her school was closed. Physically Active Youth checked in with her regularly to offer support, and sent food to her and her family each week. Now in grade 12, Rachel is applying to university. She says she hopes to become a doctor or geologist.

Rachel took over Mrs. Obama's Instagram account on International Day of the Girl, and was able to share her story with millions of people—highlighting the impact that organizations supported by the Girls Opportunity Alliance are making in the lives of girls worldwide.





MY BROTHER'S KEEPER ALLIANCE

## Building a Restorative Movement

My Brother's Keeper Alliance took root 10 years ago after Trayvon Martin was senselessly murdered as he walked home from a convenience store.

As President Obama recently reflected, Trayvon's tragic death was a powerful reminder of the prejudice, discrimination, and stereotypes that so many Black and Brown boys and young men face in America. It also sparked broad-based, grassroots activism—including the creation of the My Brother's Keeper Alliance.

Today, our mission is to build safe and supportive local communities where our boys and young men feel valued and have clear pathways to opportunity. And with more than 250 communities participating, it's a mission we continue to pursue with urgency.

## A Call to Reimagine Policing

In the summer of 2020, we issued a pledge with President Obama asking mayors and city officials to review their use of force policies and identify ways to change how police interact with residents and communities. Nearly a year later, we released the [Reimagining Policing Report](#) to share the progress. Across more than 40 states and 300 communities, residents are more engaged, reviews and updates to use of force policies are more common, budget allocations are changing, and communities are coming up with more innovative new policing programs. In 2022, we are partnering with John Jay College of Criminal Justice to continue this important work.

## Bringing Communities and Leaders Together

In 2021, we also hosted the [My Brother's Keeper Leadership Forum](#), a two-day virtual gathering of MBK Communities. During the event, guests celebrated progress, shared best practices, and spotlighted what works. The Forum also featured the release of the [MBK Equity Framework](#)—a new resource tool that delivers a blueprint for any community looking to improve the lives of boys and young men of color.





## Completing of Community Challenge Competition Grant

Finally, this past year marked the completion of our Community Challenge Competition. Since 2018, this successful program offered grants to local organizations doing the hard work on the ground to remove barriers and create opportunity. While the grantees' work looks very different—and was made even harder by the pandemic—today we are proud to report that over 18,000 boys and young men of

color were served directly, and over 300,000 young people were impacted by the activities of the grant. The leveraged funds raised across the communities we serve helped us more than double our investment.





**SPOTLIGHT**

## Liberty Hill Foundation

For 40 years, the [Liberty Hill Foundation](#) has led the fight for social justice in Los Angeles. They've been working tirelessly to support the activists and organizers who form the connective glue of their community, and are working to build a society where everyone's voice can be heard, loud and clear.

Today, Liberty Hill is using a \$475,000 grant from My Brother's Keeper to transform a youth development system that will generate tens of millions of dollars in public resources to support low-income families and youth—expanding the infrastructure that's been driving positive change in Los Angeles for decades. Read more about the impact [here](#).



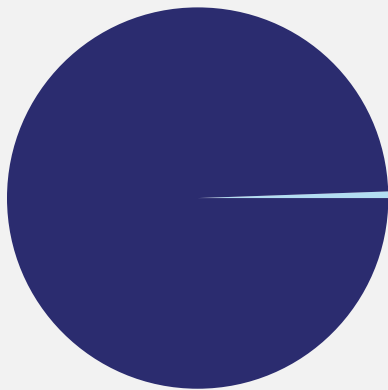
# 4

## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

As we work to advance our mission in Chicago and around the globe, we are grateful for the support and partnership of individuals, corporations, institutions, and foundations who share our sense of urgency and purpose.





## Revenue

TOTAL: \$160,788,970

### CONTRIBUTIONS

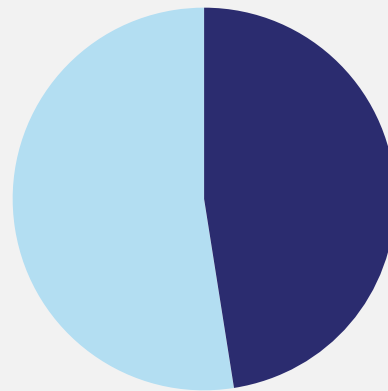
99.64%  
\$160,210,813

### OTHER INCOME + INTEREST

0.36%  
\$578,157

### NET ASSETS

\$680,055,607



## Fundraising

TOTAL: \$160,210,813

### FOUNDATION + CORP

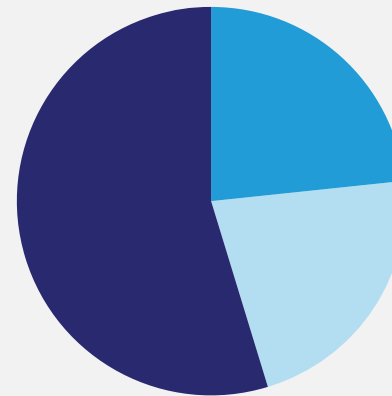
47.58%  
\$76,232,757

### INDIVIDUAL

52.42%  
\$83,978,056

### CONSTRUCTION IN PROGRESS COSTS

\$114,552,436



## Operating Expenses

TOTAL: \$41,388,027

### PROGRAMS

54.83%  
\$22,693,532

### GENERAL + ADMIN

23.22%  
\$9,611,991

### FUNDRAISING

21.95%  
\$9,082,504

## Diverse Spend

TOTAL: \$4,200,000

In 2021, we spent over \$4M with 135 diverse businesses on professional services, and \$1.2M—representing over a quarter of total spending—with Chicago-based companies. As we continue to build the Obama Presidential Center, 40 percent of the services that we have contracted and paid for are being delivered by diverse businesses.

As the Foundation grows, we will continue to increase these numbers so that diverse businesses across industries have meaningful opportunities to participate in the work we do.

# 5

## B O A R D O F D I R E C T O R S



A message from  
our Board Chair  
Martin H. Nesbitt.

Over the past year, I have seen so many people, including our leaders, continue to come together to tackle some of the world's biggest challenges. I am proud of the progress we've made to create a culture of action and a physical manifestation of the hope that guides the Obama Presidential Center. When the Center is built, it will bring an estimated 700,000 people to the South Side of Chicago every year, and generate \$3.1B in economic impact.

The hundreds of thousands of visitors that come to the Obama Presidential Center will help us showcase the community we love and strengthen small businesses across the area. Breaking ground on the Center last year was only possible thanks to all of the community members who are helping us make this dream a reality. We're beyond excited to show you the finished product.

We are governed by a  
board of directors.

**MARTIN H. NESBITT**

Obama Foundation Board Chair,  
The Vistria Group

**CONNIE BALLMER**

Ballmer Group

**THELMA GOLDEN**

The Studio Museum in Harlem

**DR. MAHALIA A. HINES**

Common Ground Foundation

**GLENN H. HUTCHINS**

North Island

**BRODERICK JOHNSON**

Comcast Corporation

**DEMOND MARTIN**

Adage Capital Management

**SEAN PARKER**

The Parker Foundation

**DAVID PLOUFFE**

Stand Up Strategies

**J. KEVIN POORMAN**

PSP Partners

**PENNY PRITZKER**

PSP Partners

**JOHN W. ROGERS, JR.**

Ariel Investments

**MICHAEL J. SACKS**

GCM Grosvenor

**JUAN SALGADO**

City Colleges of Chicago

**JULIANNA SMOOT**

Blue Lake Strategies

**VALERIE JARRETT**

Chief Executive Officer,  
Obama Foundation

**ROBERT WOLF**

32 Advisors



# 6

L O O K I N G  
A H E A D



LOOKING AHEAD

# We're Just Getting Started

While there's so much we've accomplished together in 2021, there's so much more to look forward to. In 2022, we've already seen new initiatives that will continue to change our world for the better.



## The Voyager Scholarship

An increasingly globalized world needs young leaders who can bridge divides and help solve our biggest challenges together. But too often, those who wish to make a difference by pursuing public service get buried under college debt. That's why the Obamas teamed up with Airbnb CEO Brian Chesky to launch the Voyager Scholarship for Public Service. This scholarship offers college students financial aid to alleviate the burden of college debt, meaningful travel experiences to expand their horizons, and a network of mentors and leaders to support them. We can't wait to welcome our first cohort of Voyagers this fall—and see where this journey takes them.

## Local Lunchbox Initiative

We're committed to building a strong foundation for young people in Chicago over the long term. But for many families, access to healthy and reliable meals, especially during the summer months, is a challenge right now. To help take on that challenge, we're proud to announce that we've joined forces with Local Lunchbox, an inventive program born in Boston and created by the Shah Family Foundation, that connects local small food businesses with community organizations to serve delicious, high-quality, locally-made meals to the community's youth. Together, we've already helped distribute close to 100,000 meals—and we're just getting started.



**THANK YOU**

We're incredibly grateful for the support we have received over the last five years. We couldn't do any of this important work without our donors from around the world who give to our global programs and are helping us build the Obama Presidential Center here at home in Chicago. Because of you, we are so proud to keep doing our part to turn hope into action—and help pave the way to a brighter future for us all.

[SEE THE FULL LIST OF DONORS >](#)

[MAKE A TAX-FREE DONATION >](#)

**ABOUT THE OBAMA FOUNDATION**

The Obama Foundation is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation established in 2014 to support President and Mrs. Obama's lifelong goals to empower leaders, build stronger communities, and create lasting change at the local, national, and global levels. The Foundation oversees planning for the future Obama Presidential Center, as well as a range of domestic and global programs. The Foundation calls the South Side of Chicago home and is headquartered just a few blocks away from the future site of the Obama Presidential Center.



