



# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

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# A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Lindi Duesenberg  
DMF Youth  
Executive Director

Dear friends and supporters,

**“I wish I had this program EVERY DAY!”** We heard those words more than ever during 2022. Between our afterschool and summer programs, DMF Youth served nearly 500 underserved students in Title 1 schools and homeless shelters throughout NYC.

This year was unlike any other as we continue to face challenges brought on by the pandemic. Despite these challenges, I am thrilled to share that we continued to make a meaningful impact on the lives of hundreds of underserved youth. With creativity, adaptability, and grace, our dedicated teaching artists provided a safe, joyful place for hundreds of young New Yorkers to explore dance and movement, identify their unique strengths, and build the skills needed to tackle challenges head-on. We recognized that the pandemic magnified many social and economic disparities that hindered the social, emotional, mental, and physical development of low-income students. Academically, students fell nearly two years behind.

To address these challenges, we worked with our school and shelter partners to augment specific areas of our Social Emotional Learning (SEL) -based curriculum ensuring the needs of each student were being met. The transformation we saw in our students from September 2021 to June 2022 was beyond our expectations. Students showed measured, documented growth—reduced negative behavior, increased self-esteem, improved stamina and physical health, and stronger self-regulation skills. Many parents, schools, and CBO partners have expressed the impact of our programs on their children. In fact, our success is beginning to spread rapidly, leading to a waiting list of five schools currently desiring afterschool programming.

In September, we added an additional school on our waiting list to our roster—PS 206 in East Harlem. Our 2022-2023 started with a bang, serving four Title 1 schools and two shelters in NYC’s underserved neighborhoods.

DMF succeeds with partners that believe in transformative programs in the heart of vibrant, diverse communities. We are honored to work with our community of donors, funders, schools, CBOs, and government institutions in our efforts of empowering underserved students with holistic life-skill development programs that stoke students’ self-confidence, resilience, and grit. Together, we will ensure ALL youth receive access to DMF Youth’s life-changing programs and develop the tools needed to thrive in school and as citizens of NY. The impact I’ve seen in 2022 fills me with hope for what we will accomplish together in 2023 and beyond. After-all, our work together isn’t finished until every child of New York receives the access and support they deserve.

With heart,  
Lindi

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lindi Duesenberg". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style and is positioned below the typed name "Lindi".



# ABOUT DMF YOUTH

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DMF Youth empowers underserved elementary and middle school students through comprehensive life-skill development programs that ignite their self-confidence, creativity, and determination. Our approach strategically blends two underrepresented disciplines—healthy movement and arts with Social Emotional Learning (SEL). Driven by the vision of an equitable education system for all, we partner with Title 1 schools and homeless shelters across NYC to deliver free, accessible afterschool and summer programs that leverage dance education and SEL to inspire healthy bodies, foster healthy relationships, and build grit.

DMF Youth distinguishes itself by integrating physical, emotional, and mental well-being into a single strategic approach. We acknowledge that a student's overall well-being extends beyond academic achievement, recognizing the interconnection between physical health, emotional stability, and mental resilience.

# WHO WE SERVE

Since 2015, DMF Youth has served over 1,500 students ages 5-13 across all five boroughs in NYC. Our current student population is made up of:

**55%** Black/African American

**45%** Hispanic/Latino

**90%** 1st-5th grade

**10%** 6th-8th grade



# CURRICULUM

The DMF Youth curriculum seamlessly blends dance education with Social Emotional Learning, promoting a holistic journey of physical, mental, and emotional growth among students. Crafted collaboratively alongside educators, psychologists, artists, and community members, our curriculum equips students with resources for academic achievement and life success, effectively closing opportunity gaps. Central to our methodology is the fundamental tenet of building a growth mindset. Through engaging lessons and activities, we help students foster a constructive outlook when faced with challenges and help them build an unshakable belief in their innate ability to acquire knowledge and overcome adversities. Each program imparts vital life skills, such as mindfulness, positive self-talk, grit, and leadership, nurturing both personal strengths and a thriving school culture. This empowerment paves the way for students to excel within and beyond the classroom, catalyzing their comprehensive development.

Key tenets in the DMF Youth curriculum are:



Building Growth Mindset



Developing Positive Self-talk



Impulse Control



Practicing Kindness



Emotional Regulation

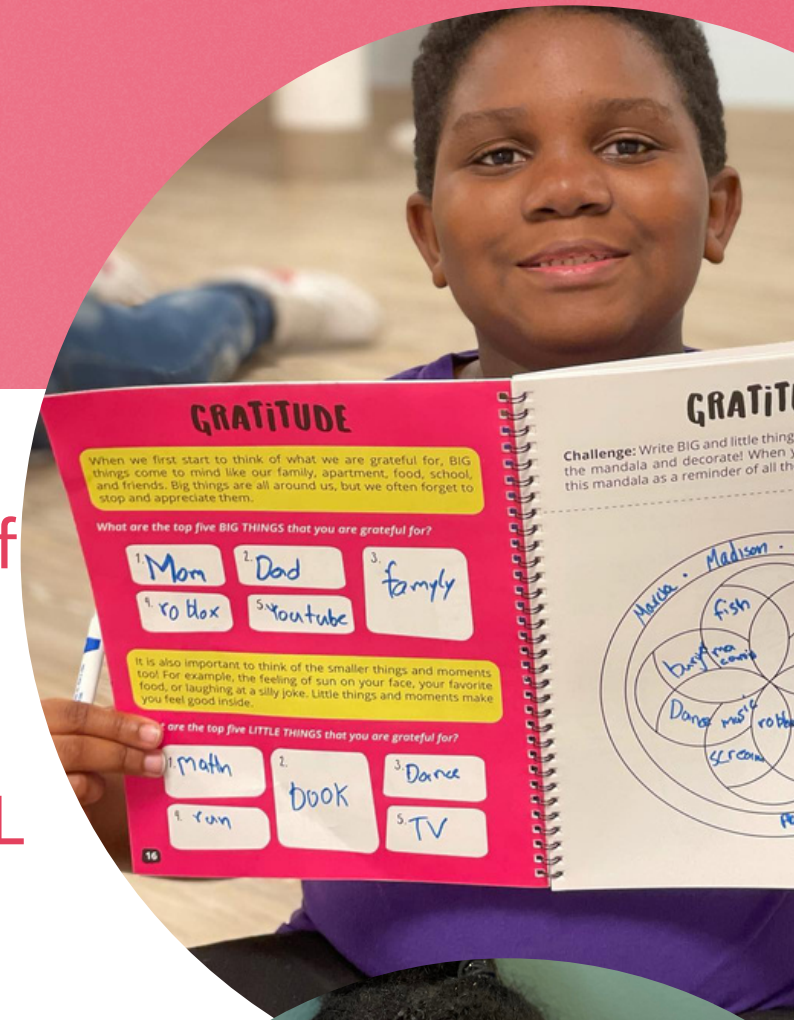
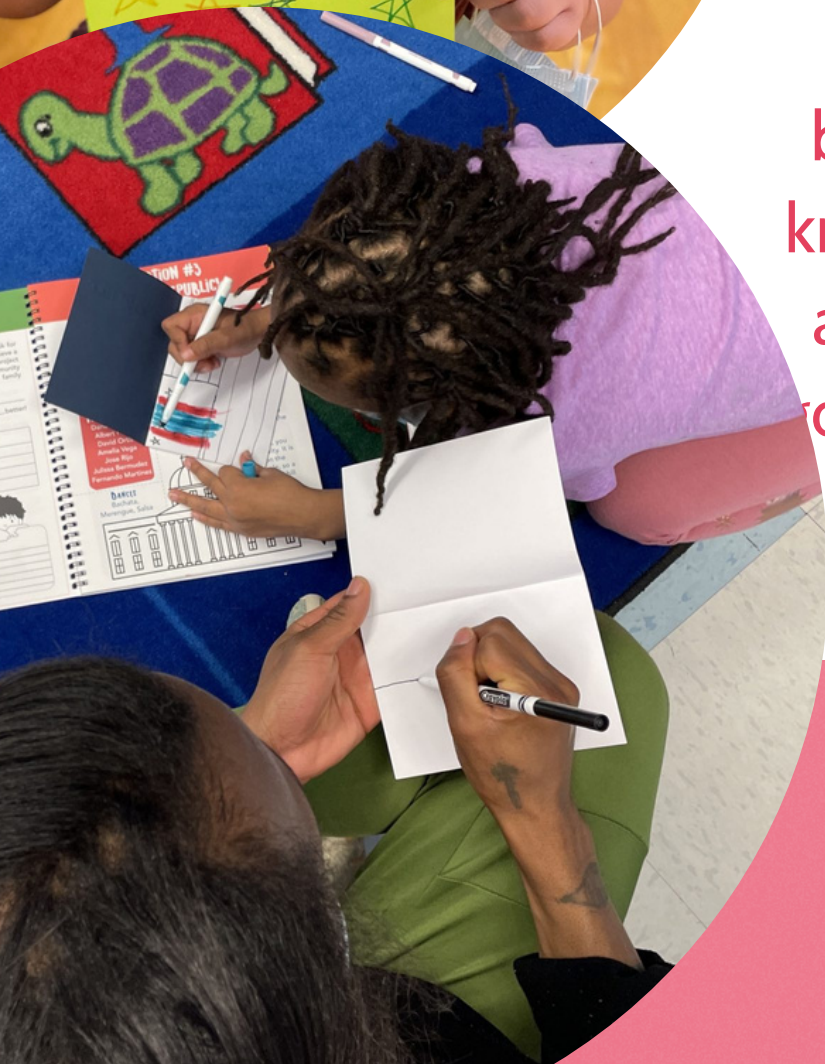


Mindfulness



# SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

DMF Youth utilizes the transformative approach of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) to delve into a range of subjects, including impulse control, courage, accountability, teamwork, leadership, affirmations, mindfulness, and standing up against peer pressure. SEL embodies the intricate process by which individuals, both young and adult, acquire and apply the essential knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to comprehend and manage emotions, establish and achieve positive goals, express and exhibit empathy, foster and maintain constructive relationships, and make sound and responsible decisions.



# AWESOME HUMAN JOURNAL

A cornerstone of our Social Emotional Learning lessons is DMF Youth's signature 'Awesome Human Journal'. During the fall semesters, students engage with this custom journal, centering their exploration around personal strengths, kindness, growth mindset, and the “secrets of happiness.” Transitioning into spring, our students embark on a journey of discovery through DMF Youth's 'Awesome Human Journal: Global Leadership Edition', immersing themselves in diverse dances and cultures from around the world.

Parents and community members hailing from Nigeria, Pakistan, the Dominican Republic, Lebanon, India, Puerto Rico, and Ecuador enthusiastically participated in our global leadership curriculum. Their valuable involvement enriched our students' experiences, as they generously shared stories, dances, and treasured traditions from their respective countries, truly globalizing the learning environment.

## 4. MINDFULNESS

What does it mean to be mindful? Oftentimes, our brains are distracted by thoughts, worries, emotions, and fears. Because our minds tend to focus on the negative, we have to TRAIN our BRAINS to be more positive. The first step in training our brains is practicing mindfulness, which means focusing on the present moment.

Why is it important? When we focus on the present moment, we are able to let go of the negative and focus on what is happening right now! This is something that takes practice, just like schoolwork or learning a new skill. The reward? A HAPPIER and more POSITIVE life!

Want to learn how to unleash the KING/QUEEN of mindfulness in YOUR brain? Read on!



### DESTINATION #9 SENEGAL!

	<b>POPULATION</b> 15 MILLION (15,854,323)	<b>DANCES</b> Sabar, Amar Balde, Borokhe-Borokhe, Cooba Gui, Dagen, Ekonkong, Goana, Pouyangala Raw Tacc, Ventilateur, Wango
<b>CONTINENT</b> Africa	<b>OFFICIAL LANGUAGE</b> Wolof Learn to say "hello": Merhbe	<b>FUN FACTS</b> Hospitality is such an important part of Senegalese culture that they have a word for it. <i>Teranga</i> refers to the way one treats a guest; It means treating people with kindness, respect, generosity, and love.  The Djembe drum comes from Senegal.  At Pink Lake, the water is ACTUALLY PINK due to the algae and its high salt content.
<b>MOST VISITED PLACES &amp; LANDMARKS</b> Lac Rose/Pink Lake, Le Monument de la Renaissance Africaine (tallest copper statue in the world!), Senegambia Stone Circles, Fadiel Baobab Tree, Dinedeffello Falls, Taiba Ndiaye Quarry (archeology site)	<b>FAMOUS PEOPLE</b> Khouadia Diop (Melanin Goddess), Akon, Booba, Youssou N'Dour, MC Solaar, Safi Faye, Anna Diop	

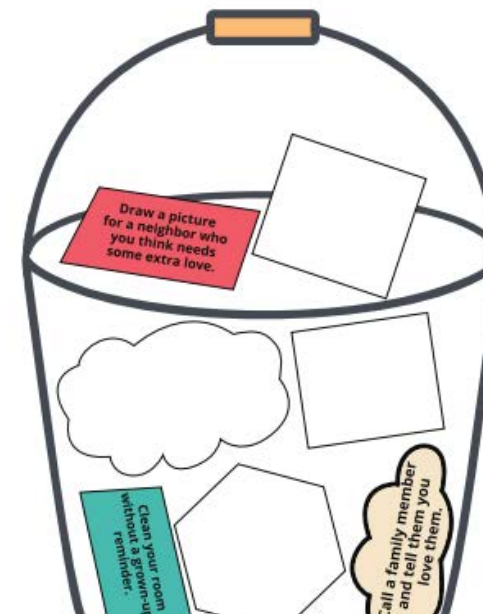


## KINDNESS

### #Stayathome: Fill up A Kindness Bucket

While we are all staying at home, we can still be kind! We are already doing an act of kindness by staying inside and keeping others and ourselves safe. What are some ways that you can be kind during quarantine?

**Challenge:** Fill up the bucket with as many ways as you can think of to be kind while staying at home.



### DESTINATION #3 DOMINICAN REPUBLIC!

	<b>MOST VISITED PLACES &amp; LANDMARKS</b> Parque Nacional Del Este/Eastern National Park, Bávaro (beach), Los Haitises National Park, (forest & caves), Punta Cana, Santo Domingo	<b>OFFICIAL LANGUAGE</b> Spanish Learn to say "hello": ¡Hola!
<b>POPULATION</b> 10.7 MILLION (10,735,896)	<b>FAMOUS PEOPLE</b> Dana Ramirez, Albert Pujols, David Ortiz, Amelia Vega, Jose Rijo, Julissa Bermudez, Fernando Martinez	<b>FUN FACTS</b> The Dominican Republic is the second largest country in the Caribbean.  Santo Domingo is the oldest city in the Americas.  In Polo Torrey, the car can defy gravity and is located in a magnetic field, facing the car facing will roll.
<b>CONTINENT</b> North America	<b>DANCES</b> Bachata, Merengue, Salsa	



# ARTS EDUCATION

Embedded within a well-rounded education, the arts emerge as a catalyst, arming students with tools that fuel not only academic success but also holistic growth. Participation in arts education yields a range of benefits, from bolstered psychological well-being to enhanced physical vitality.

The DMF Youth curriculum embraces dance education as a dynamic conduit for imparting valuable lessons to students. Beyond the realm of movement, it serves as a vehicle for learning about global history, self-expression, creativity, self-discipline, courage, and teamwork. Within this framework, students navigate the intricacies of compositional dance elements, weaving them into themes that inform group choreography. Through collaborative rehearsals and captivating performances, students not only deepen their grasp of various dance forms but also cultivate an acute awareness of their own potential.

While firmly rooted in hip hop and urban dance, our programs offer students an immersive experience spanning a diverse range of music and dance genres – from African rhythms to swing and modern styles. This curricular approach seamlessly integrates the historical context of each genre. As students conquer new dance skills and choreography, their self-esteem takes flight, laying the foundation cultivating a growth mindset – a cornerstone of our educational philosophy.



# 2022 IMPACT

In the 2022 school year, DMF Youth served:

200

Students  
Weekly

4

Title 1  
Schools

3

Summer Camp  
Partnerships

2

Homes for the  
Homeless Shelters



# EVALUATION AND DOCUMENTED IMPACT

Our students in the 2022 school year showed measured, documented growth, demonstrating substantial reductions in negative behavior and increases in self-esteem.

One of the most noted outcomes observed from DMF Youth is the decline in aggressive behavior among the students we serve. At the beginning of each year, many students face challenges in managing their emotions and peer relationships, leading to instances of aggression towards their peers and teachers. However, within just 3-5 months of joining our programs, students actively begin employing the tools they've learned to manage their anger effectively and communicate respectfully and empathetically with their teachers and peers. We attribute this transformation to the SEL component of our curriculum, which plays a pivotal role in helping students develop stronger communication skills, problem-solving abilities, empathy, and creative outlets to channel their emotions positively.

To track our impact, DMF Youth collaborates with Hello Insight, an outside service that specializes in evaluating youth-serving organizations. Pre and post surveys designed by Hello Insight measure social and emotional learning outcomes for the students. These surveys are created based on evaluation tools that have been scientifically validated to be strong measures (with no age, gender, ethnicity bias) of the SEL outcomes including self management, social skills, positive identity, academic self-efficacy, social capital, and contribution.



Results from past  
evaluations showed

**30 to  
70%**

increases in students'  
social/emotional skills  
and grit (perseverance,  
determination, courage,  
and bravery).

# WHAT OUR COMMUNITY HAS TO SAY ABOUT DMF YOUTH

**"I'VE WATCHED CHILDREN EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS BECOME EMPOWERED BY DANCE—THROUGH BOTH THE PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SKILL SETS REINFORCED IN DMF'S APPROACH AND CURRICULUM."**

-Gretchen Hernandez, Executive Deputy Director of Homes for the Homeless

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**"BEFORE DMF YOUTH, I DIDN'T BELIEVE IN MYSELF, NOW I DO. I'M SMART, I'M STRONG, I'M A GOOD FRIEND, AND I'M A GOOD DANCER."**

-Autumn, 4th grade student

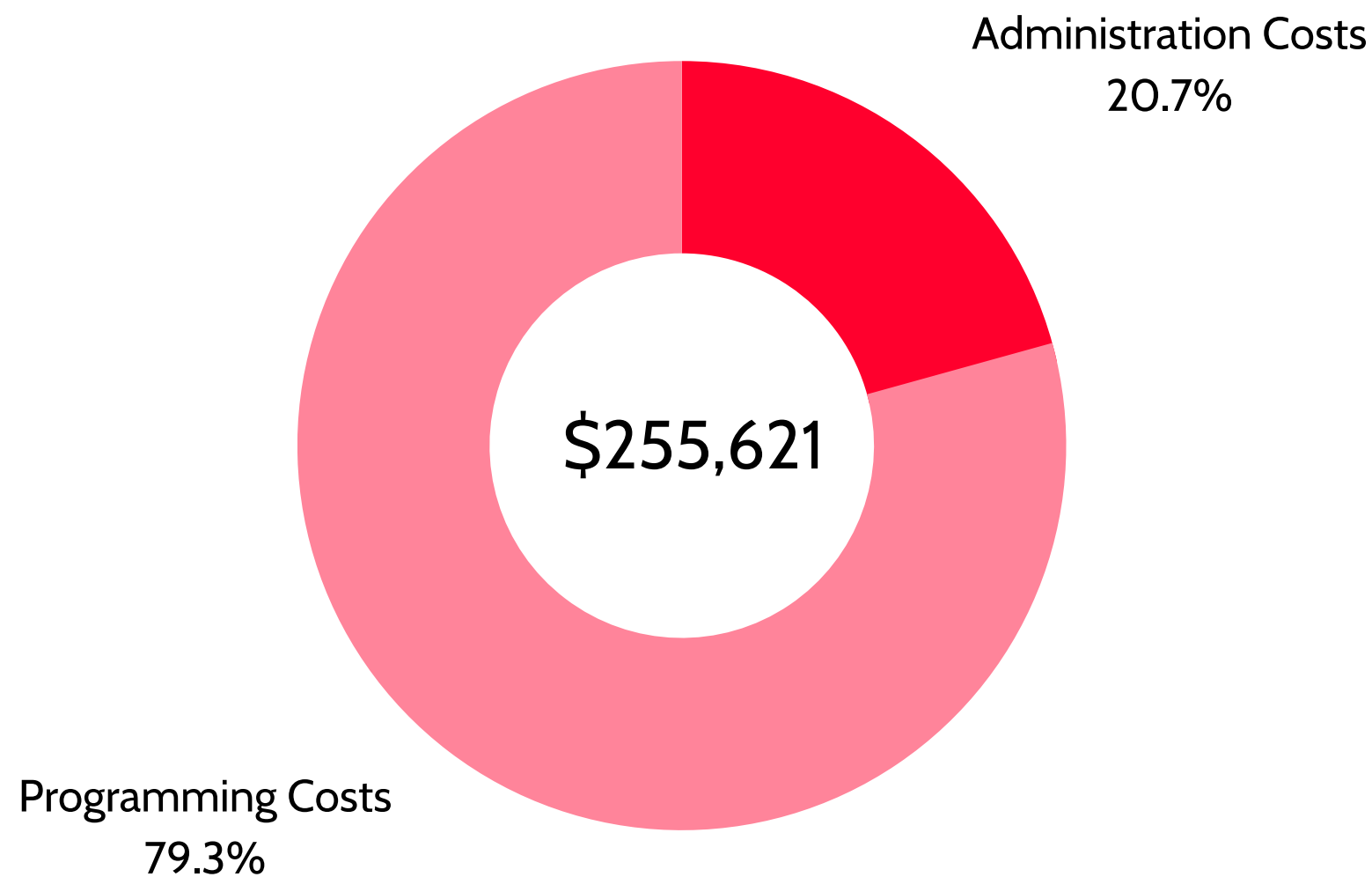


**"[THIS PROGRAM] HAS MADE US MORE UNITED. WE SPEAK ABOUT HER EXPERIENCES IN DMF DAILY."**

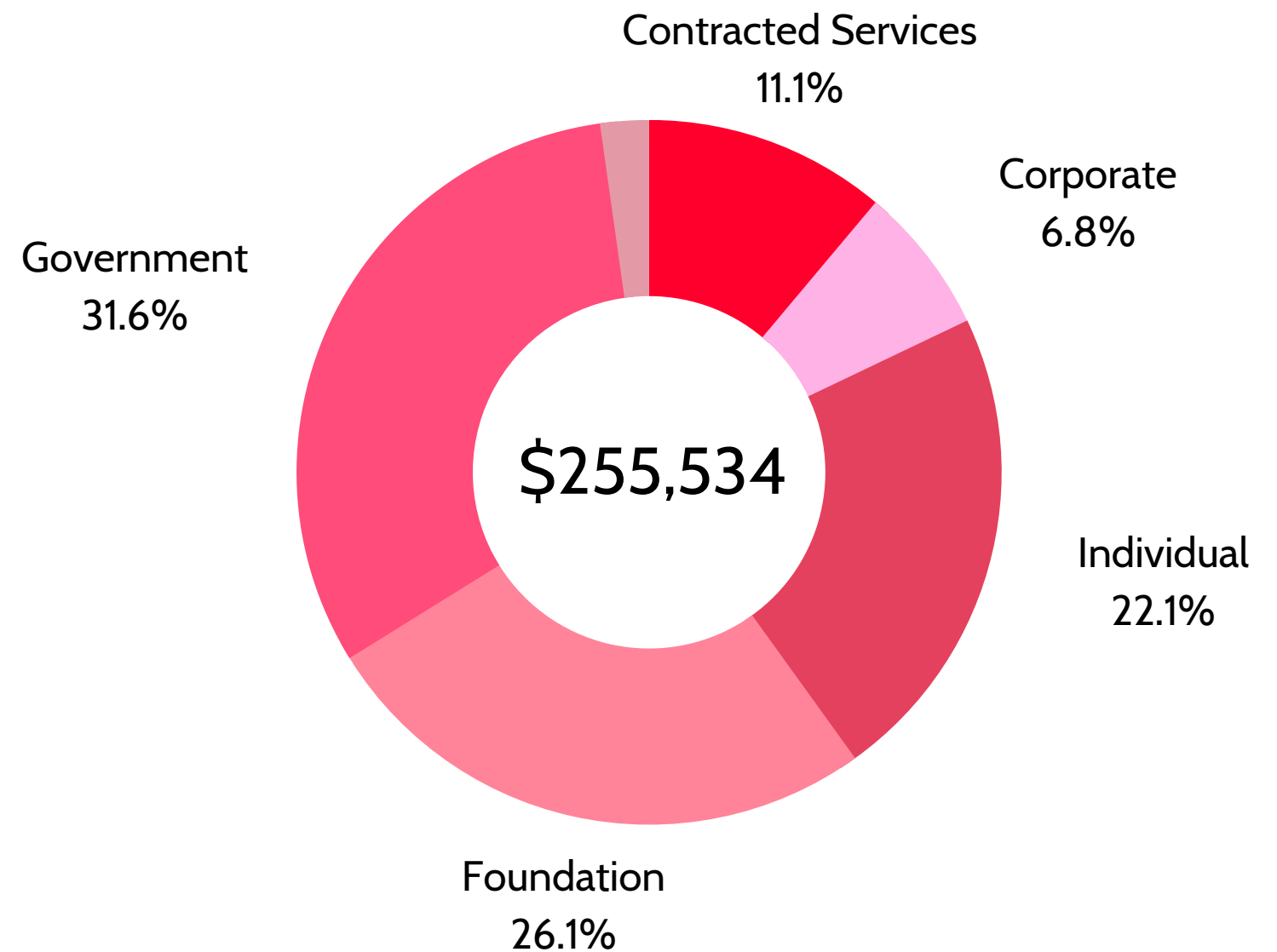
-Natasha, 4th grade parent

# BUDGET OVERVIEW

## Expenses



## Revenue



\*A 2021 surplus rolled over into 2022 to cover the fiscal year deficit.

# LOOKING AHEAD

Our programs made a strong impact, leading to five schools expressing interest in joining DMF Youth by the end of 2022. To address this demand, we're taking a step forward in 2023 by hiring a dedicated program director. This strategic addition will not only ensure the seamless oversight of our existing programs but also strengthen our infrastructure, all while charting a course toward fortified funding channels. With these measures in place, DMF Youth stands primed to further its reach, nurturing its trajectory of growth and expansion.

## In 2023, we will:

- Expand our impact by introducing an additional summer program
- Extend our reach by welcoming a new school to our roster in September 2023
- Elevate our current programming through the strategic oversight of a dedicated program director.



# DONORS

*Thank you to our  
supporters!*

## \$20,000+

Alison Maher Stern Foundation  
BNP Paribas Foundation  
New York State Council of the Arts

## \$10,000-\$20,000

Adams Family Foundation  
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New York City Department of Cultural Affairs  
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## \$5,000-\$10,000

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Anne Koski  
Secretary

Katie Cook  
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Lindi Duesenberg

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Lindi Duesenberg  
Executive Director

Jackalyn Carione  
Development and Communications Associate

Ronnie Plasters  
Development Consultant

## Teaching Artists

Lindi Duesenberg

Alexa Lindberg

Rathi Varma

Albanus Strickland

Mariah Soto

Colleen Unda

Nicole Golonka

Mil Brand

Sabrina Kalman

Sarah Shah

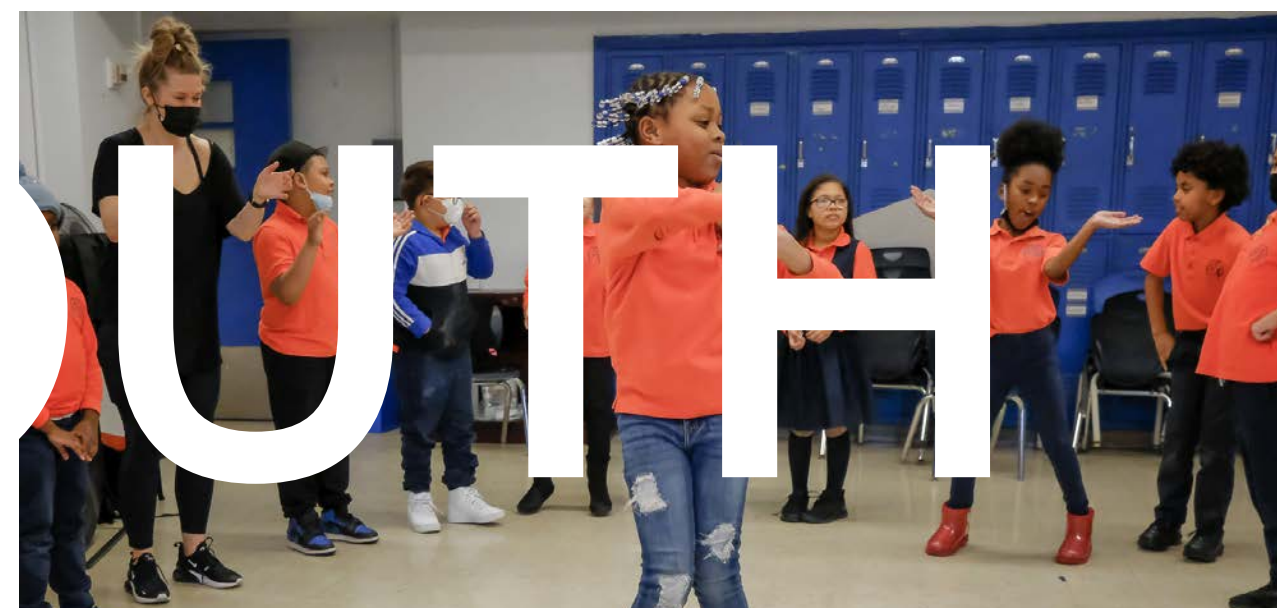
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Antonia Vivino

Jazz Washington

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