

A PATH FORWARD



AMIGOS DE LAS AMERICAS
ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 2021



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A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO

When I stepped into the CEO role of AMIGOS nearly eight years ago, I never imagined I would be running this organization through a pandemic. These past two years have been the experience of a lifetime and though there were hard moments, what I carry forward is gratitude and awe. Gratitude for our remarkable community of alumni, chapter leaders, and supporters and awe of the resilience of our staff, our communities, and especially our youth.

I so appreciate this opportunity to share with you some of my most salient reflections. First, our AMIGOS team is committed, creative, and always ready to meet the moment. We have been operating programming for 57 years, and that has only been possible because of our incredible community.

What I love most about AMIGOS in 2021 are the same things I loved when I went to Costa Rica in 1997. AMIGOS volunteers share a passion for getting out into the world to learn first-hand. No matter what program you join, you learn about yourself, about community and culture, and about what it takes to tackle the issues that face our communities locally or on a global scale.

415 students stepped up to make a difference in their communities. Through online and in-person experiences, they collaborated with their peers from across the Americas, explored issues they cared about, and grew as leaders.

One volunteer who participated in our Nicaragua Project shared: "This experience has changed me so much. It changed how I think and live. It motivated me to do something better and bigger. I don't want to just go home and waste this experience. I want to change the world and community I live in."

To me, that just about sums up why we work hard to advance AMIGOS year after year. This year presented us with new and continued challenges. But we are finding our way forward and are continuing to provide youth across the Americas opportunities to connect and to make a difference.

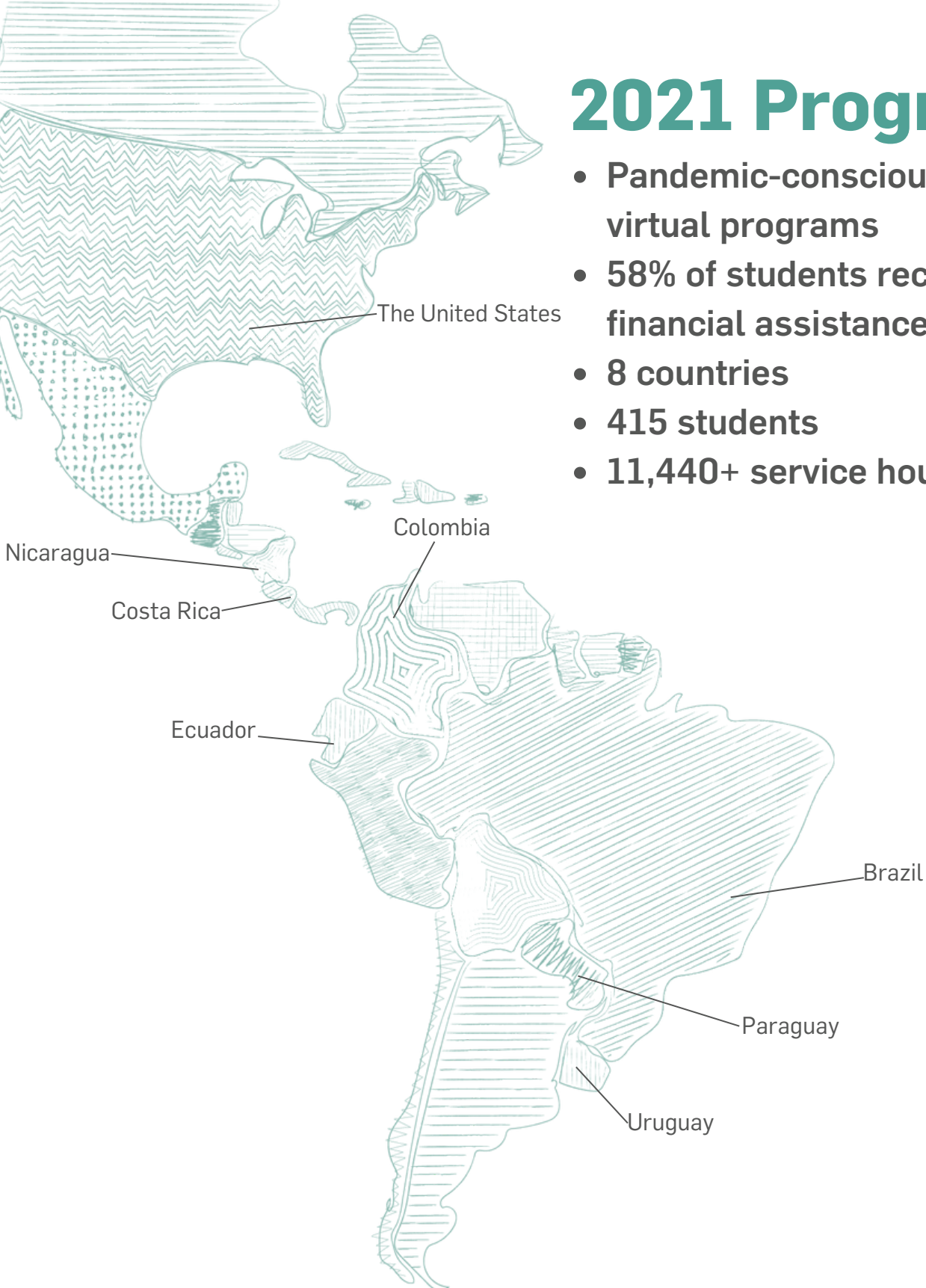


SARA NATHAN
President & CEO



2021 Programs

- Pandemic-conscious "pod" and virtual programs
- 58% of students received financial assistance
- 8 countries
- 415 students
- 11,440+ service hours



2021 PROGRAMS

Spring Gap Semester

- U.S. and Costa Rican high school student graduates
- First in-person program since the start of the pandemic
- 12-week pod program traveling throughout Costa Rica

Youth Ambassadors Program

- 9-month program with virtual 3-week exchanges, including virtual host families
- Funded by the U.S. Department of State
- Students from Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, The U.S., and Uruguay

Summer Programs

- 3-week pod programs for students ages 15-19
- Service topic themes: Renewable Energy, Conservation and Climate Justice, Indigenous Rights, and Food Security
- Locations: Costa Rica, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Colorado (The U.S.)

Social Impact Accelerator - New Follow-On Program

- 16-week virtual program to empower recent alumni to grow their leadership
- Funded by the corporation Capital Plus Financial
- Alumni from Costa Rica, Ecuador, and the U.S.

Classroom Community Impact Project

- 8-week virtual exchange program for students from the U.S. and Brazil
- School Partners: Escola Técnica Estadual (ETE) Edson Mororó Moura School in Belo Jardim, Pernambuco, Brazil and North Houston Early College High School in Houston, Texas



"This AMIGOS project was a continuous learning and growing experience. I learned a lot about myself as well as how to improve as a leader and more importantly, how to humbly serve others. These are lessons and experiences that I will use for the rest of my life."

—Cellestine Harig, Chicago, IL, Nicaragua: Nueva Segovia Project

RETURN TO IN-PERSON PROGRAMMING

After extensive consideration, we returned to in-person programming in 2021. Students have experienced a year of virtual school, canceled extracurriculars, and limited in-person social interaction. Students needed real human connection. Our team knew that AMIGOS could operate programs safely and responsibly at a time when making real connections and addressing critical issues were needed more than ever.

To limit the spread of COVID-19, students did not live with host families but rather traveled in “pods” for the duration of the program. They lived and traveled together, learning about interdependence and cooperative coexistence.

"I think that having a global perspective and interacting with people from around the world lets us see the potential of humanity." —Elaine, 2021 volunteer

Students dove deeply into local projects related to climate change mitigation, sustainable agriculture, and renewable energy. They supported local initiatives and program partners with COVID-safe service work—mostly outdoors and with masks.



We are proud that AMIGOS did not contribute to any community spread of the disease. Our screening protocols, contact tracing, and programming format ensured the health and safety of our students, staff, and community partners. To make it possible for students to have an AMIGOS experience in our 57th summer, our Health & Safety staff responded to 3,103 emails, 2,000 of which related to COVID-19.

U.S. Program Expansion: Colorado Western Slope

Since 2012, AMIGOS has operated programming in the U.S. for Latin American students via our Youth Ambassadors program. In 2021, we created our first U.S. program open to U.S. students. In the Colorado Western Slope Program, students from across the U.S. came together to support local initiatives addressing the climate crisis.

The program equipped students with the tools and perspective to better understand the environmental challenges communities across Colorado face. We partnered with the Coldharbour Institute, the Colorado Fourteeners Initiative, Mountain Studies Institute, Mountain Roots Food Project, and the Great Arkansas River Nature Association for service project initiatives.

This program empowered students not only to make an impact for local communities during the program; it shaped students into leaders in environmental stewardship for a lifetime.

AMERICORPS VISTA PROGRAM

In 2020, AMIGOS became a sponsor organization for the AmeriCorps Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) Program aimed at building the capacity of nonprofits. 2021 marked the first cycle of full-time VISTA members supporting the fund development, programs, and enrollment departments of AMIGOS. This grant is helping AMIGOS deepen our impact and build out U.S.-based programming. Our three VISTA members have contributed to the organization in powerful ways:

- Launching the follow-on Social Impact Accelerator program in October 2021
- Launching the Colorado Western Slope Program
- Building a new foundation and grant management system
- Growing the Adelante Festival Silent Auction
- Developing a model for a formal AMIGOS Educator Network

We are grateful to the AmeriCorps VISTA Program for helping our team build the capacity of AMIGOS in this new era of our programming.



LIFELONG LEADERS LUNCHEON BENEFIT

The 2021 Lifelong Leaders Luncheon Benefit was a great success. 200 guests attended the event, with 175 guests in-person at the Hotel ZaZa and with 25 friends joining the benefit virtually on Zoom. It was a true celebration full of laughter, connection, and inspiration.

Wall Street Journal best-selling author and keynote speaker Dr. Stefanie K. Johnson delivered an upbeat speech on the importance of including diverse perspectives and communities in leadership groups of organizations. She shared three ways that each attendee in the room could make their workplaces and communities more inclusive through mentorship, sponsorship, and recognition.

Meah Matherne, featured student speaker, shared her journey with AMIGOS, which began in 2020 when her original trip was canceled due to the pandemic. She shared, "...Those three weeks in Nicaragua gave me the opportunity to step back from my own life and examine my exact place in the world. Yes, I am still small in the face of time and the universe, but I still have my place in it, and it is my job to make that space as beautiful of a garden as I can..."

Sara Nathan, AMIGOS President & CEO, recognized two high schools, each of which received the AMIGOS Global Citizenship Award for their exemplary commitment to developing global citizens and empowering young leaders. Award honorees Escola Técnica Estadual (ETE) Edson Mororó Moura School in Belo Jardim, Pernambuco, Brazil and North Houston Early College High School in Houston, Texas partnered with AMIGOS in the 2021 Classroom Community Impact Project.

Lifelong Leaders Luncheon Benefit Co-Chairs

Alma Del Toro and Clint Ford

Laura and Steve Otilar

Samantha Schnee and Michael Hafner



THE AMIGOS CHAPTER NETWORK

The AMIGOS chapter network consists of dedicated volunteer boards around the United States who make our mission possible by providing young leaders our program in their local communities. Since our founding, AMIGOS chapters have supported 20,000 students to join our programs.

The chapter network's normal operations were disrupted by the pandemic, as the traditional local recruitment and training functions have not been possible during times of social distancing. The chapters have provided critical support to AMIGOS Headquarters over the past 18 months by making contributions from their reserves. This financial support has enabled AMIGOS to develop new programs and COVID protocols.

The chapter network returned to more normal operations in fall 2021 by kicking off the 2022 recruitment cycle. Across the U.S., chapter leaders are leading local fundraising efforts to make our programs more accessible to more students and are preparing the next cohort of AMIGOS volunteers who will join our 2022 summer programs. We are excited to have many AMIGOS chapters back in action!



Partnerships for Impact

AMIGOS relies on strong partnerships to operate our programs. During the pandemic, partnerships have enabled us to launch new programs like our Civic Action Gap Semester Program that we ran with Tufts University last year. And of course, we have depended on our local service partners for current in-person programs. This year, the below partnerships allowed us to launch two new programs.

Social Impact Accelerator: Powered by Capital Plus Financial

In October 2021, Capital Plus Financial (“CPF”), a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) and Certified B Corporation, committed \$169,500 over a four-year span to underwrite the Social Impact Accelerator Program, a 16-week virtual, bilingual program for high school-aged alumni to take community-based projects from the ideation phase through the implementation phase in their home communities.

“This program will help the next generation of socially conscious leaders make a positive contribution and address challenges within their communities. We are grateful for the opportunity to support AMIGOS and are looking forward to seeing the service projects these students will develop.”

–Thiru Vignarajah, CPF CEO

Classroom Community Impact Project

The Classroom Community Impact Project took place in spring 2021 as a virtual exchange program designed to teach students how to approach local issues through a global framework. The result was a powerful blend of civic and social entrepreneurship empowering high school students to recognize their potential as global citizens.

The program was a direct result of partnerships between AMIGOS and our two partner schools in the U.S. and Brazil. The Escola Técnica Estadual (ETE) Edson Mororó Moura School in Belo Jardim, Pernambuco, Brazil connection was made possible through the support of The Consulate General of Brazil in Houston, Texas. Our growing partnership with the Houston Independent School District (HISD) kick-started the program with North Houston Early College High School in Houston, Texas. We presented both schools with our Global Citizenship Award at the 2021 Lifelong Leaders Luncheon Benefit.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The vision of AMIGOS is a world where all people are lifelong leaders sharing responsibility for our global community. To realize this, we must work to eliminate barriers to representation and inclusion within our organization and in our programs.

In the spring, we created a new organization-wide roadmap to identify our short and long-term Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion goals. Key goals for 2021 included:

1. Create inclusive and equitable HR and Internal Policy systems;
2. Conduct yearly DEI workshops with staff and stakeholders;
3. Formalize and expand inclusion of Latin American youth in all programs; and
4. Support the recruitment and inclusive nurturing of diverse volunteers.

In 2021, we also updated the AMIGOS curriculum, specifically around diversity, equity, and inclusion modules. The following activities were added to the curriculum:

- Individual Action & Allyship: Volunteers gained an understanding of the role of individual action and allyship in social change by analyzing examples and by identifying ways to ally with others for social change in their communities.
- Collective Action: Volunteers learned collective action and the pivotal role that young people have to play in making social change by examining different methods of social change and by examining how young people have shown up in recent social movements.
- Privilege: Volunteers gained an understanding of the concept of privilege and an understanding of ways to recognize their own privilege and the relationships between power, privilege, and injustice.

"[I want to work in] an environment where we all recognize everyone's value, regardless of their identity."

-Elizabeth, staff member

"[I believe it is critical that] all students who join AMIGOS feel welcome and a part of the organization."

-Lily, staff member

"I learned more about my own identity and privileges, core values, and how to interact with others in a mutually-beneficial way."

– Olivia, 2021 Nicaragua Project alum

2022 FINANCIALS

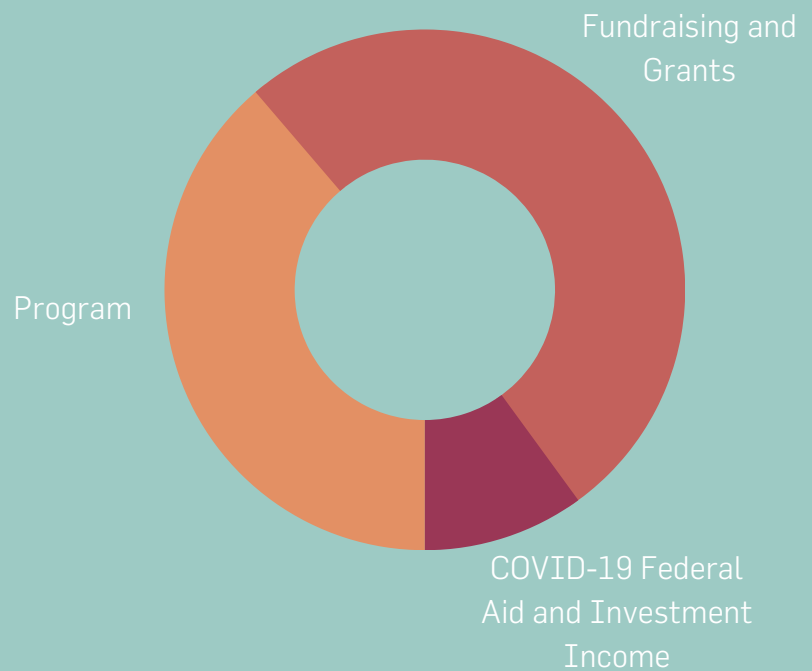
Revenue

\$3,588,100

Program (including fees and
group fundraising)
\$1,389,820

Fundraising and Grants
\$1,838,301

COVID-19 Federal Aid and
Investment Income
\$359,979



Expenses

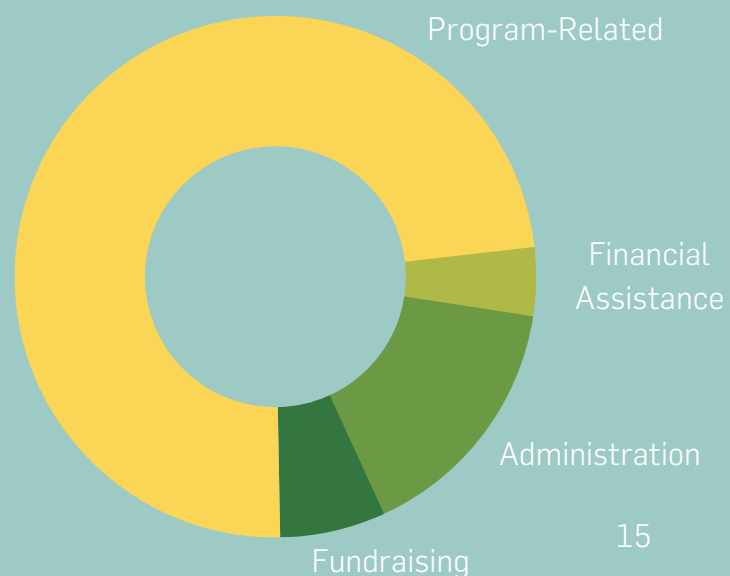
\$3,813,362

Program-Related
\$2,801,625

Financial Assistance
\$161,988

Administration
\$600,011

Fundraising
\$249,738



LEADERSHIP

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Howard Wright

AWARDS

Bill Arnold Leadership Award

The Bill Arnold Leadership Award was created to remember a cherished member of our AMIGOS community. Each year, we select a volunteer or project staff member as a Bill Arnold Fellow. The award provides each fellow a stipend to pursue an educational opportunity or a civic engagement opportunity.


"In the upcoming months, I would like to learn more about my community in order to serve it in the best way possible. This stipend will allow me to jumpstart my dream of having my own community center by allowing me to begin working on community projects for youth. I would like to create workshops and interactive programs to help the youth in my community heal and grow."

—Angely Francisco, 2021 Bill Arnold Fellow

Philip C. Johnson Alumni Service Award

The Philip C. Johnson Alumni Service Award is bestowed to an alum who has shown exceptional leadership and service to the organization. The 2021 recipient of the award is Joe Crownover, who served AMIGOS in a number of roles over three decades.

Joe was first a volunteer and then a Project (Field) Staff team member. Next, he joined the professional staff team as the Latin American Programs Director. After leaving the staff team, he became a volunteer Chapter Leader. And most importantly, he was also an AMIGOS parent. Joe sadly passed away shortly after receiving the award during a small ceremony with his family and dearest AMIGOS friends.



“It has been a very stressful year overall and having this class to look forward to at the end of the day has definitely been one of the highlights. I really do enjoy holding conversations with my Brazilian peers and having cultural exchanges because I feel like it’s made me more aware of what life is outside the U.S.”

–Emily, Houston TX, Classroom Community Impact Project

“The classes address very important topics, and the debates are helping me to open my mind more, showing that each person has a different reality and that everyone should be heard and respected.”

–Hellen, Pernambuco Brazil, Classroom Community Impact Project

DONORS

*Monetary or in-kind donations of \$1,000 or more to
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John D. Cowsar Sr. (1925–2021)

Joe Crownover (1967–2021)

Ronald M. Katzman (1932–2021)

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Contact us to learn more about AMIGOS.

impact@amigosinternational.org

amigosinternational.org

**POWERFUL
SERVICE AND
IMMERSION
PROGRAMS FOR
YOUTH ACROSS
THE AMERICAS**

Amigos