



# A Year of Reflection, Learning, and Action

Annual Report

FISCAL YEAR 2023-24



Dorothy A. Johnson Center  
FOR PHILANTHROPY



GRAND VALLEY  
STATE UNIVERSITY

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## Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy

The Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy (Johnson Center) is an externally-oriented, applied research center of Grand Valley State University (GVSU). We work with foundations and nonprofits, scholars and students, and partners in business and government to bridge the gap between the information communities need and the change they want to make.

The Johnson Center was established at GVSU in 1992 with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The center helps individuals and organizations understand, strengthen, and advance philanthropy to support a smart, adaptive sector that helps create strong, inclusive communities.

The Johnson Center is home to the Frey Foundation Chair for Family Philanthropy and the W.K. Kellogg Community Philanthropy Chair. These distinguished scholars work with networks of national and international partners to pursue comprehensive programs of applied research, speaking and writing, professional education and teaching, and other activities.

Learn more at [johnsoncenter.org](http://johnsoncenter.org)

## A Message From Our Executive Director

True transformation is the product of reflection. It is the process of thinking deeply about information and experiences that concretizes our learning and galvanizes change. For individuals and entire communities, transformation can best be achieved through thoughtful, purposeful, and action-oriented reflection.

Philanthropy and higher education share a mission to facilitate reflection and seek transformation — not only in the classroom or in individual nonprofits or localities, but in every community and imbued across every nation where individual and collective knowledge, experiences, and skills are formative.

As part of a flourishing Grand Valley State University community, the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy lives at the intersection of this shared work, where an orientation toward lifelong learning is core to our purpose and

advancing an effective and vibrant field. As you will see in the following annual report, fiscal year 2024 (July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024) has been a time of energizing and honest reflection for the Johnson Center — a year of learning and of action. This year we undertook deeply thoughtful and strategic assessments of our current programs, offerings, and resources — much of this work is ongoing — to determine their best forms and value to the field moving forward. We took action in collaboration with myriad research partners to conduct and publish national studies that increase philanthropy’s knowledge about some of the field’s most critical and emergent questions — especially in the areas of donor-advised funds (DAFs) and collective giving. And we garnered support from scores of individuals and grantmakers who believe in our mission as passionately as we do, and who are securing that mission into the future.

“ We aim to build and share knowledge that empowers the transformation of people’s lives, organizations, and whole communities.”



LESLEY D. SLAVITT

rigorous standards of ethical research practice are paramount. In our dedication to an applied research mission, we aim to empower nonprofits and philanthropy to use research and data, to engage in meaningful and mindful training opportunities grounded in that research, and to think critically about big questions and enduring challenges in our work. We aim to build and share knowledge that empowers the transformation of people’s lives, organizations, and whole communities.

We also take the call to reflect, learn, and act as a serious mandate for ourselves as an organization and as the driver for how we contribute to

I am delighted to share the work of the center with you in this annual report and look forward to continuing to share the results of our reflections in the weeks and months to come. We draw great strength from the dynamic philanthropic ecosystem and extraordinary university communities of which we are a part, and we are profoundly grateful to everyone who joins us in strengthening these communities every day.

Lesley D. Slavitt, Ph.D.  
Executive Director  
Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy

## Reflect. Learn. Act.

How to learn and how to make change — these are higher questions that individuals and organizations wrestle with, experiment with, and seek to answer every day. While there is no one formula for supporting reflection, learning, and action universally, there are necessary conditions that make this process possible: sound sources of information and knowledge, opportunities to practice and refine skills and systems, and a degree of stability in the environment to mitigate risks and uncertainties.

In Fiscal Year 2024 (July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024), the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy pursued a wide range of activities aimed at setting those necessary conditions in place for ourselves and for our colleagues nationally and around the world. We were honored to reflect, learn, and act together with so many inspiring and visionary colleagues and supporters this year.

## National Research Projects: Illuminating Major Shifts in the Field through Data and Collaboration

### National Study on Donor Advised Funds

In February 2024, the Donor Advised Fund Research Collaborative (DAFRC), co-led by Jeff Williams, Ed.D., director of the Johnson Center's Community Data and Research Lab, published the [National Study on Donor Advised Funds](#), the **first truly national study of transaction-level DAF data ever published.**

Donor advised funds (DAFs) are among the fastest-growing tools available to donors as a vehicle for managing their charitable giving. DAFs, and specifically DAF payout rates, have also been the subject of much recent conversation and debate as leaders inside and outside our sector consider how philanthropic dollars are best activated when there is so much community need.

From 2022 to 2024, the DAFRC — led by Williams and research partners Dan Heist, Ph.D., of Brigham Young University; Danielle Vance-McMullen, Ph.D., of DePaul University; and Brittany Kienker, Ph.D., of Kienker Consulting — collected anonymized data from 111 DAF programs, compiling information on more than 50,000 DAF accounts and consisting of more than 600,000 inbound contributions and 2.25 million outbound grants.

DAFRC's analysis of this mammoth dataset in the *National Study on Donor Advised Funds* confirmed the trends and general characteristics of DAFs first made visible in the Johnson Center's [Analysis of Donor Advised Funds from a Community Foundation Perspective](#), commissioned by the Council of Michigan Foundations and published in 2021, and the [Donor-Advised Fund Account Patterns and Trends \(2017–2020\)](#) study conducted by Heist and Vance-McMullen and published in 2022. The *National Study on Donor*



## KEY FINDINGS

- Nearly half of all DAFs (49%) had total assets at the end of 2021 of less than \$50,000. Only 7% of DAFs had balances of \$1 million or more — and only 1% had a balance over \$10 million.
- In an average year, 63% of accounts made an outbound grant while 37% did not.
- Less than 4% of grant transactions were made anonymously.
- The average payout rate for all DAF accounts (calculated as a three-year average) is 18%.
- Grantmaking from DAFs is spread relatively evenly throughout the year — only 32% of grant funding occurs in the fourth quarter.

*Advised Funds* provides important information and insights to inform and shape policy and community decision-making and to ensure our collective conversations are grounded in wholistic data and sound research.

Colleagues in philanthropy and government were especially eager for the results of this study — as DAFs have received increased attention from federal legislators and regulators, as fundraisers and organizations that receive DAF contributions work to understand and best engage with DAF donors, and as foundations and others explore the most meaningful ways to resource communities and community organizations. Williams and Kienker presented the findings to an audience of over 350 people at 2024's Foundations on the Hill, and we anticipate the study's findings will surface as a meaningful resource for the federal tax code rewrite 2025-2026.

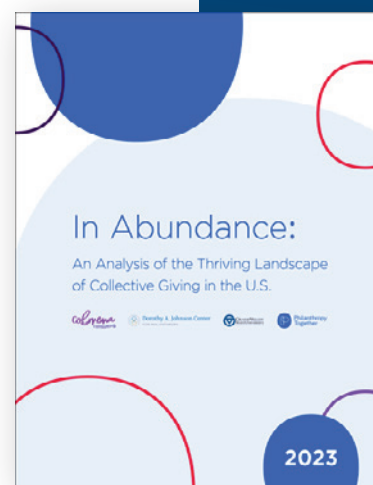
The *National Study on Donor Advised Funds* was generously supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and pursued in partnership with GivingTuesday Data Commons.

## In Abundance: An Analysis of the Thriving Landscape of Collective Giving in the U.S.

Collective giving is practiced in cultures around the world, bringing people together to pool their resources, including time, talent, treasure, testimony, and ties — often referred to as the 5Ts — to cause positive change. Groups like giving circles, SVP (social venture partners) chapters, giving projects, and nonprofit-led circles have long served as hubs for democratic and philanthropic learning and action — bringing historically marginalized voices into philanthropic decision-making spaces, challenging preconceived notions of who is considered a philanthropist, and elevating members as integral actors in our sector's efforts to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in giving.

We are honored to play an ongoing role in documenting and lifting up this extraordinary movement through research and thought leadership; collective giving has been a key area of interest for the W.K. Kellogg Community Philanthropy Chair at the Johnson Center since the chair's establishment in 2015. Under the co-leadership of Jason Franklin, Ph.D., holder of the Chair from 2015–2020, the Collective Giving Research Group published the major national study [Landscape of Giving Circles/Collective Giving Groups in the U.S.](#) in 2017, capturing the combined impact of over 150,000 individuals across 1,600 groups moving \$1.29 billion into communities.

This year, the center continued to grow the body of research available to the sector on collective giving — its overall scope, characteristics of members and groups, and broad impact — with the publication of [In Abundance: An Analysis of the Thriving Landscape of Collective Giving in the U.S.](#), a research project jointly



## KEY FINDINGS

### Collective giving...

- Is democratizing and diversifying philanthropy.
- Greatly expands what gets funded.
- Pushes the bounds of how philanthropy is practiced.
- Deeply impacts members themselves.
- Is a catalyst for social cohesion and change

designed, conducted, and published with Colmena-Consulting and Philanthropy Together.

The research was pursued in 2023 and 2024 by W.K. Kellogg Community Philanthropy Chair Michael Layton, Ph.D., and Adriana Loson-Ceballos, Ph.D., of Colmena-Consulting. The researchers found that, **between 2017 and 2023, nearly 4,000 collective giving groups mobilized approximately 370,000 philanthropists to donate more than \$3.1 billion — indicating more than 140% growth in both participation and total monetary donations across the movement since the 2017 findings.**

What's more, based on their findings, Layton and Loson-Ceballos project that the collective giving movement is on a path to double again in the next five years — effectively making collective giving, as termed by *Barron's* in their coverage of this new research, “the Fast Track of Philanthropy.”<sup>1</sup>

*In Abundance* ultimately explores the transformative impact of collective giving on philanthropy, underscoring collective giving groups' role in reshaping philanthropic practices, fostering social connections, and amplifying the voices of marginalized communities. An April 2024 webinar sharing the results attracted hundreds of registrants and hundreds more views after the fact. The findings have been enthusiastically welcomed by proponents of collective giving across the sector and many major national and regional publications — including *Barron's*, *Axios*, *Crain Currency*, *CNN.com*, *Fortune*, *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, and other outlets — reported the results widely.

## 11 Trends in Philanthropy for 2024

In January, the Johnson Center published [11 Trends in Philanthropy for 2024](#), the eighth annual edition of the center's marquee publication supporting the work and uplifting the curiosity of colleagues around the world.

To more deeply explore the potential impacts and implications of this year's list, the Johnson Center convened a [panel webinar](#) in February, moderated by Lesley D. Slavitt and featuring Don Chen, president and CEO of the Surdna Foundation; Stacy Palmer, chief executive of *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*; and Dr. Akilah Watkins, president and CEO of Independent Sector. The free webinar “sold out” with 600+ registrants.

This year's *11 Trends* featured original research on grantmaking in the U.S. South, explored philanthropic responses to the affordable housing crisis, highlighted the dangers of the “glass cliff,” and more. The report was generously supported by the Lubbers Philanthropy Innovation Fund.



<sup>1</sup> Serwer, A. (2024, April 2). “Grass-roots ‘giving circles’ are the fast track of philanthropy.” *Barron's*. <https://www.barrons.com/articles/giving-circles-philanthropy-donors-4e17fd9e>



## “Do You See Us?” Campaign for Data Disaggregation in Michigan

The Johnson Center launched “[Do You See Us?](#)” — a campaign to promote the use of expanded race and ethnic identity data standards by nonprofits and state agencies in Michigan — with campaign collaborators, state leaders, and nonprofit and philanthropic partners at a summit in Detroit on May 2, 2024.

The recommended standards are based on the [newly adopted protocols released by the federal Office of Management and Budget](#) in April 2024. Michigan communities and community members who identify as Middle Eastern North African (MENA) especially stand to see increased representation and visibility in public data with the adoption of these changes. The project is supported by the Leadership Conference Education Fund.

In the video below, Tore Price, program coordinator at the Michigan Collaborative to End Mass Incarceration (MI-CEMI), provides valuable insights into the state of incarceration data in Michigan. His powerful words shed light on key issues and the impact of data disaggregation.

**“True public safety only comes when we’re helping everyone and not just a specific population.”**



WATCH NOW

# Investing in Shared Opportunities and Resources for Reflection and Knowledge Building

## The Foundation Review: Celebration and Reimagination at 15 Years

Launched at the Johnson Center in 2009, [The Foundation Review](#) is the nation's first peer-reviewed journal of philanthropy. Throughout 15 years of publication, the journal has shared hundreds of articles aimed at building and sharing knowledge to transform practice — through in-depth evaluation results, practical tools, and thought-provoking insights. Articles and full issues have been downloaded over 500,000 times across more than 220 countries.

Much has changed in the philanthropic sector and the national and global context since the founding of *The Foundation Review*. While the journal's unique purpose and mission remain relevant today, the journal's 15th anniversary and the retirement of its founding editor-in-chief, Teresa Behrens, Ph.D., created an important opportunity to strategically assess the journal's strengths and potential to further impact philanthropic knowledge and practice. In late 2023, Hanh Cao Yu, Ph.D., was appointed editor-in-chief of special issues to lead a strategic evaluation of the journal's current position and future potential, and to oversee the production and publication of two open-access special anniversary issues.

This strategic assessment and celebration activities are ongoing through calendar year 2024, and include:

- **Publication of Two Special Issues:** The Johnson Center will publish two entirely free-to-download special issues in calendar year 2024 to mark the journal's anniversary and celebrate its broad impact. The first special issue, "[Celebrating 15 Years of Knowledge Building for Transformation](#)," published in June 2024 and presented the ten most-read articles from the journal's history, paired with new prologues written by each article's author(s) reflecting on the impact and importance of their content and the journal's place in philanthropy. The second special issue, "Democracy, Equity, and Power," publishes in October 2024.
- **Launch of Ricardo Millett Author Equity Fund:** A pioneer in the field of foundation evaluation, Ricardo Millett was the first person to hold the title of evaluation director at the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. When Millett passed away in 2023, the Johnson Center was honored to establish the Ricardo Millett Author Equity Fund to accelerate the diversification of authors, perspectives, and examples appearing in *The Foundation Review*. Made possible by the generosity of our 15th Anniversary Celebration Funders, the Ricardo Millett Author Equity Fund provides stipends and enhanced editorial support for authors from underrepresented communities and organizations. The Johnson Center is especially grateful to Jan Millett for this opportunity to further Ricardo's path-breaking vision.



Hanh Cao Yu, Ph.D., was named editor-in-chief of special issues for *The Foundation Review* in October 2023. In this role, Dr. Yu oversaw the development of two special anniversary issues and led a strategic assessment and reimagination of the journal ahead of its next chapter. She brought more than 25 years of experience in qualitative and quantitative research and evaluation practice and extensive expertise in health and racial equity social change philanthropy, leadership development, organizational effectiveness, policy advocacy, community organizing, and more to the role.



- **Consultations With Peers:** Yu — supported by independent evaluation consultant Tom Kelly and colleagues from across the Johnson Center — has conducted countless conversations with colleagues at foundations, at other philanthropy publications, at scholarly and library resource organizations, and with other relevant partners to assess *The Foundation Review's* unique value and to reflect on process, audience, and content.

The Johnson Center is deeply grateful to the Celebration Funders who made this strategic assessment and celebration activities possible and the Celebration Partners who have enthusiastically and graciously shared this year's special content and announcements with their audiences:

### CELEBRATION PARTNERS

- Independent Sector
- Worldwide Initiative for Grantmakers Support (WINGS)
- National Center for Family Philanthropy (NCFP)
- National Network of Consultants to Grantmakers (NCCG)
- Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (GEO)
- BerkeleyHaas Center for Social Sector Leadership

### CELEBRATION FUNDERS

- Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
- David & Lucille Packard Foundation
- Ford Foundation
- Margaret A. Cargill Foundation Fund of the Minneapolis Foundation
- Walton Family Foundation
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- James B. Duke Endowment



Explore the first special anniversary issue of *The Foundation Review*, Volume 16, Issue 1.

[READ NOW](#)



## Nonprofit Board Connect: Building a Strong Ecosystem of Community Leadership

In September 2023, the Johnson Center hosted Nonprofit Board Connect, an in-person networking event designed to introduce board-ready recruits to West Michigan nonprofits looking for additional leadership and advisory support. Held on GVSU's Pew Campus in Downtown Grand Rapids, the event brought together nearly two dozen nonprofit organizations and 130+ professionals, community leaders, and GVSU students hoping to create meaningful connections, to learn more about West Michigan's nonprofit ecosystem, and to identify opportunities to grow in changework together.

The event was held with support from the Michigan Community Service Commission, presenting sponsorship from Lake Michigan Credit Union, and partner sponsorship from Maner Costerian — as well as with the support and participation of table hosts and attending nonprofits.

## A New Course From the Grantmaking School

The Johnson Center publicly premiered a new half-day course for The Grantmaking School called "Professional Writing for Grantmakers" in May 2024. The course is an advanced version of a previously offered course called "Find Your Voice: Persuasive Writing in Grantmaking," which was last offered in 2021.

With a combination of discussion and writing exercises, "Professional Writing for Grantmakers" focuses on authentically and effectively representing grantee voices when writing various types of communications at foundations. The course is now offered as part of our professional development programming to equip emerging professionals and long-time practitioners alike to pursue their mission-focused work with confidence, accountability, and the resources they need to advance equity and trust.

# Johnson Center in the Field

In addition to the programs and presentations mentioned throughout this report, Johnson Center team members presented at a number of conferences and events across the U.S. and Canada.

## JULY 21, 2023

Lesley D. Slavitt appeared on the panel “Serving Your Local Community Through Research” at the **Nonprofit Academic Centers Council Biennial Conference** at Auburn University in Alabama.

## AUGUST 3, 2023

Jeff Williams and Kallie Bauer discussed the role of neighborhood surveys as panel participants on a **National Promise Neighborhoods** webinar.

## OCTOBER 18, 2023

Michael Layton co-presented a session called “Collective Giving: A Radical Way Forward for Philanthropy” at the **CHANGE Philanthropy Unity Summit** in Los Angeles.

## OCTOBER 26, 2023

Mandy Sharp Eizinger led a breakout session called “Activating the Next Generation of Volunteers” at the **Michigan YMCA Leaders Conference** in Lansing, Mich.

## NOVEMBER 6-7, 2023

At the **51st Annual Conference of the Council of Michigan Foundations** in Detroit, Michael Layton co-presented a session called “Disrupting Philanthropy & Rebuilding Trust through Collective Giving” and Aaron Yore-VanOosterhout co-presented a session called “Disaggregated Data: Best Practices & Building Better Metrics.”

## DECEMBER 12, 2023

Kallie Bauer co-presented “Data Analysis to Identify and Meet Community Needs” at the **Promise Neighborhoods and Full-Service Community Schools Conference** in Washington, D.C.

## FEBRUARY 15, 2024

Jeff Williams and Trish Abalo presented a webinar called “Philanthropic Investment Trends in the U.S. South” for the **Mississippi Alliance of Nonprofits and Philanthropy**.

## MARCH 21, 2024

Michael Layton spoke on a panel about donor trust and participation, alongside panelists from Spain, Germany, and Mexico, at the **BBB Wise Giving Alliance & Charity Monitoring Worldwide Annual General Meeting**.

## MAY 16, 2024

Lesley D. Slavitt facilitated a session called “From Inspiration to Action: The Journey of Flow Funding” at the **River Network’s 2024 River Rally**.

## MAY 17, 2024

Michael Layton co-led a webinar for **Grapevine** called “The Power of Giving Circles: A Deep Dive on the Landscape of Collective Giving.”

## JUNE 25, 2024

Mandy Sharp Eizinger was a panelist in a webinar hosted by **The Chronicle of Philanthropy** called “Build a Thriving Nonprofit Culture.”

## JUNE 27, 2024

Michael Layton spoke on a panel at an event called **Community Philanthropy: Canadian and International Innovations** at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada.

# Building the Johnson Center's Sustainability With Visionary Philanthropy

## Launch of the Lubbers Philanthropy Innovation Fund

Three decades ago, then-President of Grand Valley State University Don Lubbers set out to build a place at GVSU that could elevate the collective power of generosity and of the countless individuals and organizations everywhere who work for the public good. In partnership with the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Lubbers' leadership led GVSU in 1992 to establish what is today the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy. Every community and every philanthropist who has been supported by the Johnson Center's rigorous research, transformative training opportunities, and unique insights to advance impactful giving has his vision and persistence to thank.

After more than four decades of visionary leadership, Lubbers retired from his position at GVSU's helm in 2011. He joined the Johnson Center's Leadership Council, serving as a sustaining member of the group for a decade more. Over the summer of 2023, as we celebrated the center's 30th anniversary, we also marked Lubbers' official retirement from the group.

"West Michigan's extraordinary tradition of community philanthropy was our inspiration for establishing a center on philanthropy at GVSU. The two uplift each other, ensuring our collective reach is even greater."

Arend D. Lubbers

The center's namesake, Dottie Johnson, had more in mind. In the fall of 2023, Johnson launched the [Lubbers Philanthropy Innovation Fund](#) at the Johnson Center — an initiative that will power meaningful community innovation and carry Don Lubbers' passion and values forward for years to come — and rallied a community of dozens more supporters to join her in surpassing a \$1 million initial goal for the fund.

The impact of the Lubbers Fund was felt immediately — the fund directly supported the production and publication of [11 Trends in Philanthropy for 2023](#). The Lubbers Philanthropy Innovation Fund was conceived as a way to carry his legacy forward while securing a flexible and resilient future for the Johnson Center — a future where meaningful philanthropy helps to shape the kind of world where everyone can thrive.

## Thank you to the generous donors of the Lubbers Philanthropy Innovation Fund!

Dorothy A. Johnson  
Megan and Noel Rydecki  
Kyle and Juliann Caldwell  
Tom and Marcia Haas  
John and Barbara Dillbeck  
Karen Stokes  
Jean W. Enright  
Peter Turner  
Sylvia Kaufman  
Dick and Karen Rappleye  
Robert Smart and Sara Kane-Smart  
Betty Upjohn-Mason  
Mark and Elizabeth Murray  
Earl and Donnalee Holton  
Lesley D. Slavitt  
Bob Hooker  
Jason Franklin  
J. Michael Schultz and Shirley Loesch  
Gail McClure  
Linda Patterson  
Robert Long and Patricia Mendez-Long  
Dan and Pamella DeVos  
Jeff Williams and Joy Whitten  
Mike and Rachel Goorhouse  
Karen Loth  
Joel and Florence Orosz  
Jim and Donna Brooks  
Dan and Ann Tabor  
Ron and Jessie Dalman  
Christine M. Kwak  
Egner Family Fund  
Jan Heerspink  
Fred P. and Katherine Keller  
Steve and Amy Van Andel  
Shannan Denison and Kevin Hubbard

*Additional matching funds were provided by GVSU, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and Grand Rapids Community Foundation.*

[DONATE NOW](#)

## Frey Foundation Chair for Family Philanthropy

Family foundations and other family donors play an essential and increasing role in addressing social challenges and enhancing the quality of life in communities across the globe. In the early 2000s, the Frey family in Grand Rapids, Mich., recognized the critical importance of supporting family philanthropists with the in-depth research, thoughtful partnership, and field-building support they need to thrive themselves and to contribute to vibrant communities.

In 2008, the Frey Foundation — established in 1974 by Edward J. and Frances T. Frey — made a generous gift to the Johnson Center to establish the Frey Foundation Chair for Family Philanthropy, the first of its kind. Today, the Chair works with a network of partners to pursue a comprehensive, international program of applied research, speaking and writing, professional education and teaching, and other activities.

In 2023, the Frey Foundation renewed their tremendous commitment to uplifting a dynamic and growing field of family philanthropy by making a second gift of \$1.2 million to the Frey Chair's endowment. Coupled with a generous \$1 million gift from an anonymous donor, these two commitments ensure the Chair will continue to play a robust and deeply impactful role in supporting family donors and foundations on their giving journeys.

View of the Frey Foundation Courtyard  
on GVSU's Pew Campus in Downtown  
Grand Rapids, Michigan.





## Supporting the Next Generation of Philanthropy's Leaders at GVSU

The Johnson Center is proud to play an important role in supporting outstanding GVSU students and faculty through our graduate assistantships, research fellowships, and student positions for undergraduates. In 2023–2024, the Johnson Center hosted:

- Two graduate assistants supporting the W.K. Kellogg Community Philanthropy Chair Dr. Michael Layton: Gideon Darko (M.S. candidate, criminal justice, expected graduation 2024) and Katie Swiderek (M.S. candidate, school psychology, expected graduation 2025).
- Russell Mawby Faculty and Student Fellows in Philanthropy: Dr. Elena Lioubimtseva, Geography and Sustainable Planning Department, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, along with students Katherine Carron (B.S., nursing and environmental & sustainability studies, graduated 2024) and Bushra Mohamed-Elmabruk Rashrash (B.S., biomedical science, graduated 2024).

Together, the Mawby Faculty and Student Fellows published the results of their research in “Equity and Inclusion in Climate Action and Adaptation Plans of Michigan Cities.” Their article appeared in the journal *Sustainability*, Volume 16, Issue 17, published September 2024.

### A 30-Year View of the Nonprofit Sector

GVSU's Project-Based Applied Mathematics Capstone course (MTH 498), taught in Winter 2024 by Lauren Keough, Ph.D., engages “teams of students [to] solve real-world problems originating in business, industry, or government.” This year, the Johnson Center worked with a team of six students in the course to mine our 30-year database of information on nonprofits. The students — all 2024 graduates with B.S. applied mathematics: Virginia Berger, Keana Ilagan, Elinor Kochanski, Alyssa Koza, Malachi Neil, and David Turner — were asked to determine how the number of nonprofits, their revenue and asset size, and the number of organizations working in each service area (approximated using NTEE codes) fluctuated from 1989 to 2022. Further inquiry revealed differences in the scope and scale of the sector across regions of the U.S. and in response to major national and global events, such as the Great Recession. The students shared their research at the end of the Winter 2024 semester both to their classmates and to the full staff of the Johnson Center in a special presentation.



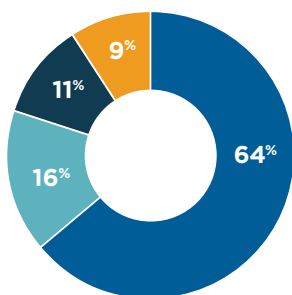
## Finances and Financial Narrative

The Johnson Center’s mission is supported by a diverse mix of funding sources that includes program revenues, general operating support, and earnings from several endowments. As a unit of GVSU, the university provided significant support for our operations this year in the form of administrative and facility costs and allocations from the GVSU. The leadership and staff of the center were responsible for raising the earned and contributed revenue necessary to cover our remaining annual budget of approximately \$3.1 million.

We deeply value our relationships with the many passionate donors, partners, and clients who empower our work. Together, we are building a world that is shaped by smart, adaptive, and effective philanthropy.

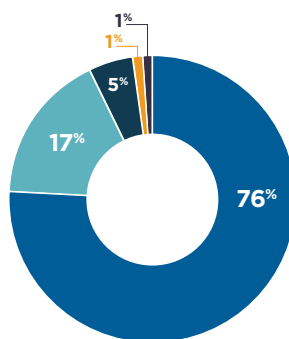
### Funding and Expenses for Fiscal Year 2023-24 (July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024)

#### Funding Sources by Category



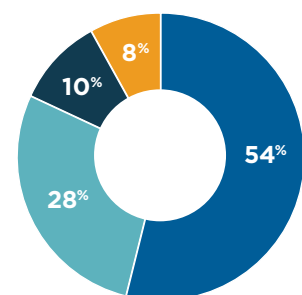
- 64%** Program Revenues
- 16%** Endowment Earnings
- 11%** Foundation Support
- 9%** GVSU General Fund

#### Expenses by Category



- 76%** Personnel
- 17%** Purchased Services
- 5%** Other
- 1%** Travel & Meetings
- 1%** Supplies & Computers

#### Expenses by Program Area



- 54%** Research & Consulting Programs
- 28%** Operations & Communications
- 10%** Endowed Chairs
- 8%** The Foundation Review



## Supporters & Clients, 2023-2024

### Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy Operations Endowment

Rob & Diane Collier  
Julie Couturier  
Priscilla Kimboko  
Donna L. Murray-Brown

### Juan Olivarez Learning Equity Endowment

Kevin Peterson  
Pat & Dan Robinson

### Dorothy A. Johnson Library Endowment

Pat & Dan Robinson

### Philanthropy Circle Fund

Jonathan R. Hufford

### *The Foundation Review*

#### 15TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION & STRATEGIC REIMAGINATION

Conrad N. Hilton Foundation  
Ford Foundation  
Luminare Group  
Max and Marjorie Fisher Foundation  
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation  
The Duke Endowment  
Walton Family Foundation  
Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies (via the Minneapolis Foundation)

The David & Lucile Packard Foundation

#### ARTICLE SPONSORS

Tishman Environment and Design Center

### Lubbers Philanthropy Innovation Fund

For a full list of donors to the Lubbers Philanthropy Innovation Fund, see page 12.

### Flexible Operations Support

Ford Foundation  
Kresge Foundation

### Nonprofit Board Connect, 2023

#### PRESENTING SPONSORS

Volunteer Michigan  
Lake Michigan Credit Union

#### PARTNER SPONSOR

Maner Costerisan

#### TABLE HOSTS

American Red Cross West Michigan Chapter  
Arbor Circle  
Camp Roger  
Conductive Learning Center  
Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services  
Down Syndrome Association of West Michigan  
Family Promise of Grand Rapids  
First Tee West Michigan  
Grand Rapids Pride Center  
Grandville Avenue Arts & Humanities  
Healthy Homes Coalition of West Michigan  
In the Image  
Puertas Abiertas, Inc.  
Senior Neighbors  
The Other Way Ministries  
The Storehouse of Community Resources  
Treetops Collective





## Consulting Engagements

21/64

Anishinaabe Circle  
Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan  
ASME Foundation  
The Association of Theological Schools  
Bosch Community Fund  
Brigham Young University  
Center for Nonprofit Resources  
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation  
City of Grand Rapids  
CLAS Center for Experiential Learning  
Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta  
Community Foundation of Elkhart County  
Community Information Now  
Conductive Learning Services of North America  
Corewell Health Foundation Leadership  
Council of Michigan Foundations  
The Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation  
Data Driven Detroit  
Feeding America West Michigan  
Fremont Area Community Foundation  
Geneva Global & Global Impact  
Giving USA/JGA  
Global Impact  
Grand Haven Area Community Foundation  
Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation

Grandville Avenue Arts & Humanities -  
Cook Arts Center  
Grand Valley State University College of Education  
Grand Valley State University Padnos-Sarosik  
Center for Civil Discourse  
Junior League Grand Rapids  
Kalamazoo Community Foundation  
KConnect  
Kent County Health Department  
Kent District Library  
KLA Foundation  
Land Conservancy  
The Leadership Conference Education Fund  
Lowell Arts  
Michigan Community Service Commission  
Michigan Municipal League  
Midland Area Community Foundation  
Mid-State Health Network  
Office of the Foundation Liaison  
Philanthropy Southeast  
Ralph C. Wilson Jr., Foundation  
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation  
Ruth Mott Foundation  
State of Michigan  
Uptown Grand Rapids  
W.K. Kellogg Foundation  
Western Michigan University

## Meet Our Leadership Council

The Johnson Center's Leadership Council advises on our strategic direction. We would like to thank the members for providing their time and expertise to help shape the center's direction.

### David Egner, Co-Chair

President & CEO

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation

### Kate Pew Wolters, Co-Chair

President

Kate and Richard Wolters Foundation

### Dan Cardinali

Senior Fellow, PolicyLink and

Board Member, The Bridgespan Group

### Isaiah Oliver

President & CEO

Community Foundation for Northeast Florida

### Robert Collier

Trustee

Russell and Annabelle Woodard Family Fund

### Robert Smart, Ph.D.

Vice Provost for Research Administration

Grand Valley State University

### Mae Hong

Vice President

Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors

### Akilah Watkins, Ph.D.

President & CEO

Independent Sector

### Dorothy A. Johnson

President Emeritus

Council of Michigan Foundations

### Donna Murray-Brown

Vice President of Strategy and Development

National Council of Nonprofits



Dr. Akilah Watkins, President & CEO of Independent Sector, joined the Johnson Center's Leadership Council in April 2024.



# Johnson Center Staff as of June 30, 2024

Trish Abalo	Research Associate
Alexandra Akaakar, M.S.	Data Analyst
Kallie Bauer, M.B.A.	Director, Strategy and Planning
Crisol Beliz	Research Associate
Emily Brenner, M.P.A.	Program Manager
Sherry Collver	Operations Assistant
Julie Couturier, CPA	Director, Operations
Emily Doebler, M.P.P.	Research Associate
Emily Dorn Jex, M.S.	Data Analyst
Jana Einfeld	Office Coordinator
Brian Herron	Senior Web Developer
Karen Hoekstra	Marketing & Communications Manager
Aimée Laramore, M.B.A.	Limited Life Philanthropy Strategist
Jennifer Lawson, Ph.D,	Project Director
Michael Layton, Ph.D.	W.K. Kellogg Community Philanthropy Chair
Tory Martin, M.A.	Director, Communications & Strategic Partnerships
Pat Robinson, M.P.A.	Associate Director, Special Projects
Jill Roof, M.P.A.	Research Manager
Mandy Sharp Eizinger, M.S.	Program Manager
Lesley D. Slavitt, Ph.D.	Executive Director
Melyssa Tsai O'Brien, M.P.H.	Research Manager
Joe VanDoornik, M.S.A., PMP	Project Manager
Jeff Williams, Ed.D.	Director, Community Data and Research Lab
Aaron Yore-VanOosterhout, Ph.D.	Research Manager
Hanh Cao Yu, Ph.D.	Editor-in-Chief of Special Issues, <i>The Foundation Review</i>