

# 2022 annual report

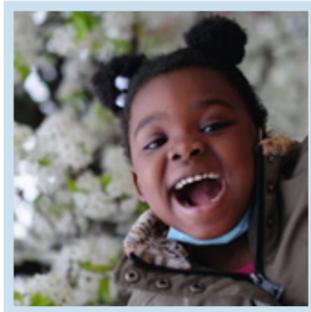


thriving  
together.



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# letter from steve

“The sense of hope is palpable, as several students from Potomac Gardens and Hopkins public housing moved into college dorms and attend classes, with little to no student debt. What seemed like a dream is truly becoming reality.” / Steve Park



Dear friend,

**2022 was a pivotal year at Little Lights. As mask mandates lifted and Covid-related restrictions loosened, Little Lights regained a sense of normalcy as students, program staff, and volunteers returned for fully in-person programs.**

Life will never be the same as before the pandemic, so like everyone, we are navigating this new normal. Yet even in the midst of this transitional period, we saw youth and families who are connected to us, thriving.

Our Next Step College and Career Program, which just launched in early 2021, continues to have an incredible impact and expand its reach. We are working with elementary students and their parents and guardians to be better informed about and prepared for the DC school lottery process. We provide concentrated tutoring to middle and high school students for college readiness and guide them through the admissions and financial aid processes.

The sense of hope is palpable, as several students from Potomac Gardens and Hopkins public housing moved into college dorms and take classes, with little to no student debt. What seemed like a dream is truly becoming reality.

There is a clear shift in the culture for our students who have witnessed dreams realized for people they know well from the community.

At Little Lights, we are thriving together by continuing to hire from within the community to provide economic growth opportunities. In 2022, we employed 24 current and former public housing residents. We are committed to economic empowerment and love seeing our residents give back and become leaders in their own communities.

In 2022, we also saw more volunteers and volunteer groups from churches, schools, and corporations join us in partnership. Not only do volunteer groups provide invaluable labor and services, but many also have life-changing experiences themselves. We want to see our volunteers thrive, too.

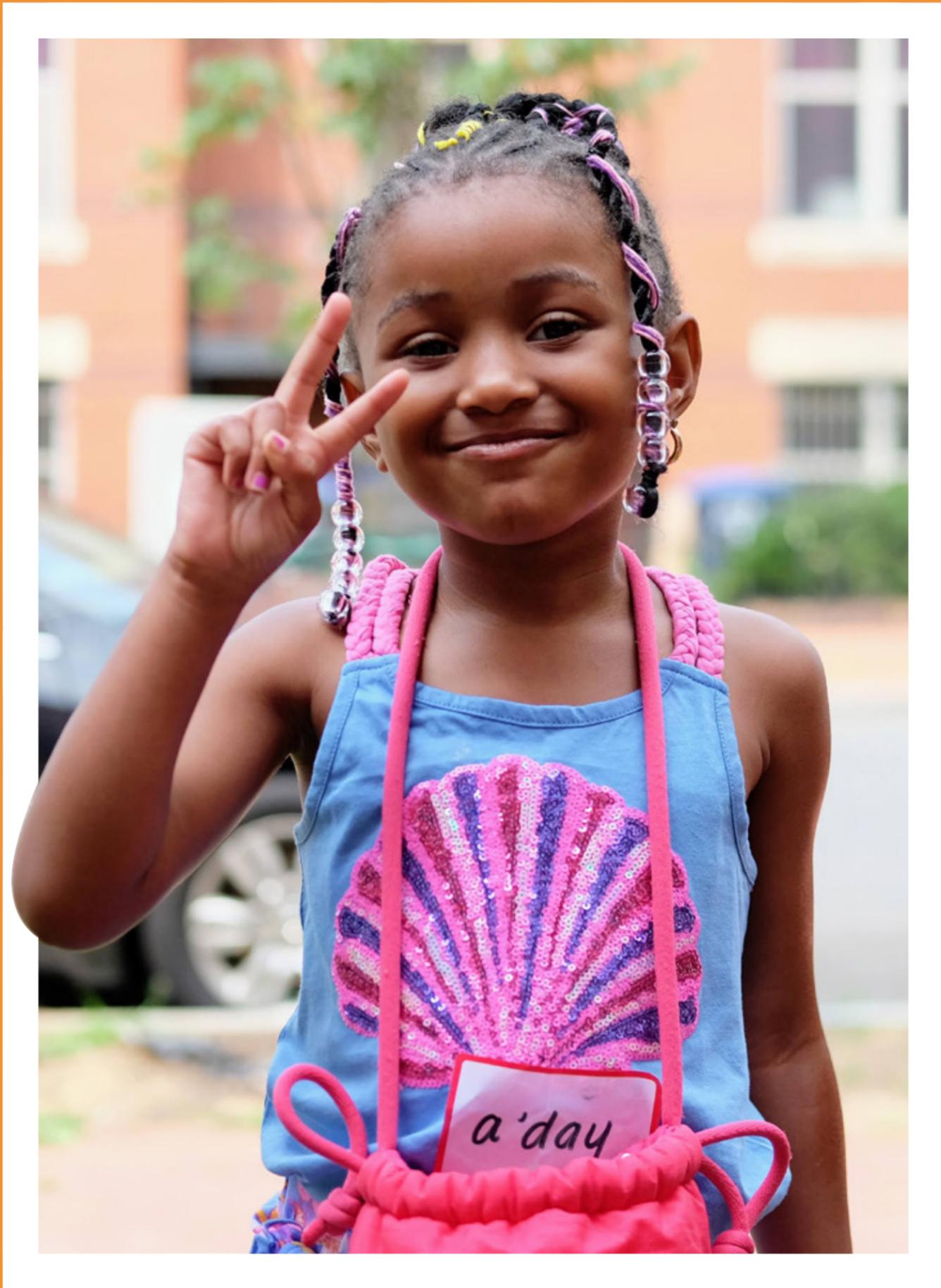
Thankfully, we were able to bring back our in-person Benefit in 2022, and joyfully celebrated with more than 230 attendees. Our donors provide strong and stable financial support to continue and expand our work. We are poised to grow more in 2023 and beyond.

I am excited about what God has in store for us in 2023. We want to revitalize our mentoring program, take students on more out-of-town college tours and retreats, and help more youth find opportunities after high school whether it is attending college or learning a trade, or finding living-wage jobs. The positive change is real, and we want to see more progress this year.

Thank you for your partnership and let's continue to thrive together with the community in 2023.

Blessings and Peace,  
Steve





# mission & vision



## Mission

To empower underserved youth, families, and communities in Washington DC by sharing the hope of Christ through compassionate action, caring relationships, and racial reconciliation

## Vision

To help build communities of compassion and joy where underserved children, youth, and families flourish through holistic, wrap-around support and practical resources

## Values

- ♥ We envision a community of racial and class reconciliation where mutual respect and authentic fellowship provide a place of healing and joy.
- ☐ We envision all children and youth thriving in every way through academic support, character-development, and arts and recreation.

- 🔗 We envision adults engaged in gainful employment and moving out of the cycle of poverty.
- 👤 We envision families being strengthened, children and youth becoming healthier and safer, and loving relationships flourishing.

# thriving together: this year's theme



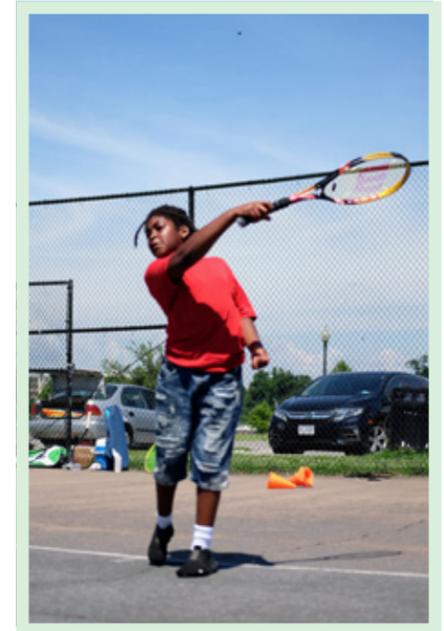
**Little Lights is thriving together! As we reflect upon this 27th year of ministry, we are delighted to be back together, in-person, for all of our programming.**

Students are growing together through our Homework Club as volunteers work with them to complete daily homework assignments after school. For those who are struggling to be on grade level, whether in reading or math, Little Lights provides one-on-one tutoring to build the skills and confidence to thrive in school. Though students across the country suffered learning losses, our students are making progress, as demonstrated by their improving reading and math assessment scores. The Next Step College and Career Program, in addition to preparing students for college, is working with families with younger children to guide them through the DC school lottery process so they can be in a school environment where they can thrive.



Community members are still working together, whether as part of our Clean Green Team or the Little Lights staff.

After taking a pause during the pandemic, in 2022, our Boys and Girls Nights have restarted and our Choir is back together again. Another highlight was being back together with supporters at our annual benefit “Brighter Futures”.



Little Lights expanded our Race Literacy 101 offerings with a 4-week Immersion program, customized for church and ministry partners. Twenty people from two churches participated in the pilot program this year.

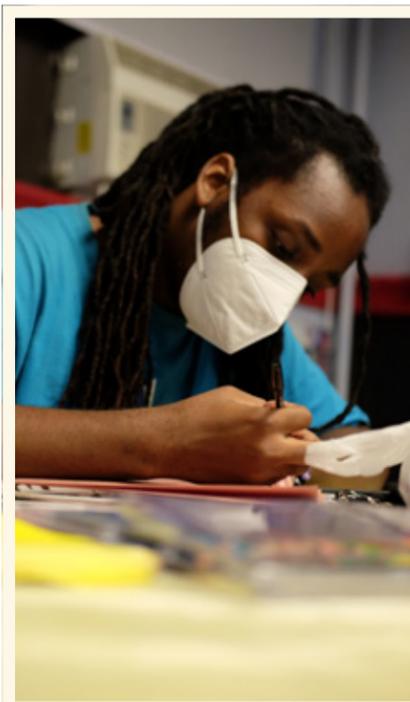
In all ways, Little Lights found that the best way to thrive—whether learning, working or serving—is to do it together.

# growing together: people-first programs

## Next Step College and Career

Teens living in Potomac Gardens, Hopkins, and Benning Terrace public housing communities often face barriers to break the cycle of poverty. Since 2021, Little Lights has provided wrap-around support to help teens imagine and plan for their life beyond high school, whether going to college, learning a trade or entering military service. This program is highly customized for each student based on their interests, abilities and needs.

In 2022, Little Lights hosted its first College Preparation Retreat Weekend at the Little Lights Retreat House. Students from the College and Career program learned about the college application process, toured schools together and heard from Markeith, a current student at Morgan State University and part of the Little Lights community. Additionally, the Assistant Director of Admissions of Fayetteville State University, an affordable and accessible HBCU in North Carolina, visited the Hopkins Center to meet with students and their parents. Three of our high school seniors committed to going to Fayetteville State University next fall!



## Art and Design Internship

This past summer, Markeith worked as a paid Art and Design Intern with Ricky Altizer, supporting his private freelance practice by collaborating on poster concepts, illustrations, and T-shirt designs. During this 4-week internship Markeith participated in workshops to learn about typography, logo design, poster design, illustration, and design software and tools. Though there are many work opportunities in graphic design, there are significant barriers to entering the design field.

In 2016, AIGA, the professional association for design conducted a Design Census, showing that 73% percent of those surveyed are white, and only 3% were Black. This lack of representation is caused by many factors such as the steep cost of art education, including the need for mentorship, and the all-too-common practice of businesses offering unpaid internships. Little Lights provided the opportunity for Markeith to participate in a paid internship, creating pathways for future work.

In addition to helping students and their families navigate the DC high school lottery, college application and financial aid processes, this year, we expanded our programming for younger families to help guide them through the DC elementary school lottery. Families in our community have historically been less likely to participate in the DC public school lottery system. Little Lights is standing in the gap to help families find a best fit school environment so our students can thrive.

Right: Students in the Next Step College and Career Program met with the Assistant Director of Admissions from Fayetteville State University to learn more about the school and the college admissions process.

## Statistics

**56**

students participated in the Next Step College and Career Program

**6**

students accepted to college

**\$517,760**

scholarship money awarded to three students over four years





Left, top: Washington Wizards power forward Anthony Gill met with our students to share about the power of working hard to pursue your dreams.

Left, bottom: Students, volunteers, and staff at Potomac Gardens are all smiles during Summer Lights.



### Homework Club

Four days a week, students come to Little Lights after school for Homework Club to reinforce school learning and work on homework assignments. Little Lights also offers one-on-one tutoring through our Reading Heroes and Math Heroes program to ensure that students are on grade level in school.

In spite of learning losses during the pandemic, 74% of our students increased or maintained their reading assessment scores (an increase of 3.5% from 2021) and 84% of students increased or maintained their math assessment scores (an increase of 2% from 2021). These improvements are noteworthy when reading proficiency among black students in DC fell by nearly eight percentage points as a result of the pandemic.

Through our partnership with DC Central Kitchen and the Capital Area Food Bank, we served 575 nutritious meals to our students during Homework Club nights.

Little Lights also helps students thrive emotionally. By helping them to identify, name and manage their emotions, they can interact with others in healthy ways. This is especially important for our students who have experienced trauma, which may manifest in anger



### Statistics

**180**  
students participated in Little Lights programs

**74%**  
of students increased or maintained their reading assessment scores

**84%**  
of students increased or maintained their math assessment scores

### Pressing Need

A study of public and public charter schools in DC found that in the spring of 2021, 31% of at-risk students were at or above their reading levels, down from 58% in 2019.

or sadness or hopelessness. Little Lights hosts weekly Social Emotional Learning sessions and provides trained staff who can meet with students one-on-one during Homework Club nights.

### Summer Lights

At last, Summer Lights came back, fully in-person! Our students had the opportunity to cook, swim and dance. They cemented their math and reading skills. They explored new interests in various arts and crafts and photography. Parents appreciated that their kids have a safe environment to play at Little Lights.

Capital Area Food Bank provided students a healthy lunch every day.

Many mornings, the students were waiting for our doors to open. It was such a joy to welcome them back and hear their laughter and delight!

# back together: embracing in-person.

## Statistics

**27**  
mentor pairs

**1,944**  
hours spent together

**4**  
new mentor pairs



### Boys & Girls Nights and Choir

In 2022, two programs that we paused are now back, in-person.

We restarted Boys and Girls Nights. These are small group gatherings where boys and girls study the bible, build character and enjoy being in fellowship.

And, our Choir is back together again with our new choir director, Joslyn Henderson. Throughout the fall, our students diligently practiced singing and then performed at our Community Christmas Dinner for their parents and community members.

### Mentoring

Little Lights believes in the transforming power of trusted relationships. Mentors play a critical role in caring for and inspiring our students, who live in public housing complexes where 90% live in single-parent, female-headed households, on less than \$17,000 a year. Mentors remind students that they are loved freely and unconditionally by God and model what it means to love and follow Jesus.

Above: Little Lights Choir students perform at the Parent Christmas Gathering  
Left: Washington Wizards mascot G-Wiz stopped by the Hopkins Center to play basketball with our students.

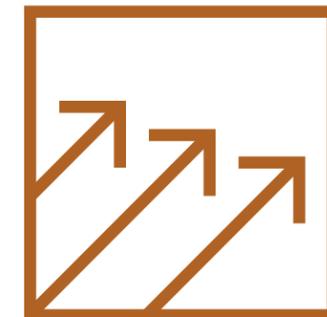
### Mark and Tyron

Mark and Tyron have been a mentor/mentee pair for about a year. Mark first got involved with Little Lights by attending the Race Literacy 101 class and through his church community group's involvement in our Saturday DIP program at Potomac Gardens.

Mark and Tyron love to spend time together grabbing a bite of Texas BBQ at Union Market, tossing the football in front of the Capitol, and riding scooters near the White House. Not only do they have fun together, they engage in intentional conversations.

**Mark described his connection with Tyron: "Our relationship feels brotherly/friendly. When I make space for him to be himself, he asks questions about the world, sings along to Spotify, or shows me a recent video he thinks is funny."**

# working together: more than jobs.



Little Lights tries to hire as many people from the community as possible. Residents are part of Little Lights staff, serving as tutors, academic support staff, van drivers, and part of the Clean Green Team. In 2022, Little Lights provided 24 current and former public housing residents with fair wages, job training and professional development, giving their families a chance to thrive.



### Clean Green Team

Now in its 12th year of operation, the Clean Green Team steadily provides landscaping services—mowing, tree trimming, leaf removal—with its 7 member crew. As a social enterprise business, it provides ongoing job training and employment for our community members.

This year, the Clean Green Team lost one of its major clients, due to a change in leadership at the DC Housing Authority. Though the Clean Green Team's quality of work has been solid, this change resulted in a loss in revenue and jobs for two team members. Challenges like these are a reality for our community, but the Clean Green Team persists.

### Statistics

**1,021**

jobs completed across Washington DC

**197**

customers served

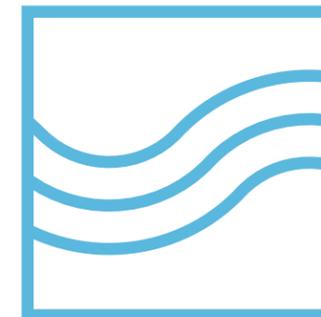
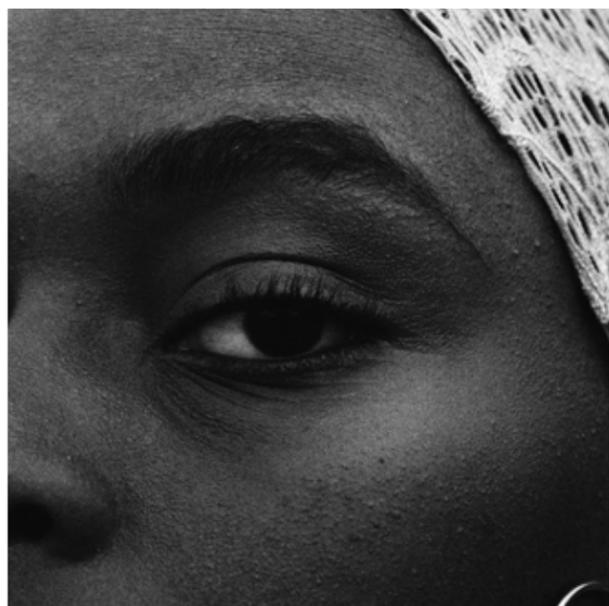
**“Quality Landscaping, Affordable Prices and Doing Good” / Team Motto**

### Adult and Employment Programs

The Little Lights Family Center provides a space with computer access for community members. Trained staff assist community members as they search for jobs by helping with resumes and cover letters and coaching them on interviewing.

Additionally, through a contract with the DC Department of Employment Services, Little Lights served as a work placement for 23 students from the community. They were involved in our youth programs, notably Summer Lights and after school programs.

# learning together: race literacy.



Since our Race Literacy 101 class was first offered in 2016, Little Lights has adapted its content for different audiences. In 2022, Little Lights launched Race Literacy Immersion, a 4-week version for churches.

## RACE LITERACY

Race Literacy 101 is a 12-week study that helps participants to become more racially literate to work towards healing racial divides. With the help of trained small group facilitators, participants engage in honest yet grace-filled conversations.

In July, BEMA Discipleship and Impact Campus Ministries invited Steve Park to speak about his ministry experience and how Little Lights has evolved to meet the needs of vulnerable communities, and why it's important for Christians to engage in conversation about race.

Race Literacy Connections is a membership program for those interested in continuing anti-racism learning and investing in Little Lights' anti-racism efforts through affinity groups, classes and workshops.

Race Literacy Immersion is a 4 week abridged version of Race Literacy 101. Participants engage on the history and science of race, consider what scripture says and dialogue in racially diverse groups with the aim of helping people heal from the collective wounds of racism.

Scan or click to listen to the podcast:



### Impact

**22**  
people participated in a 12-week Race Literacy 101 class

### RACE LITERACY 101

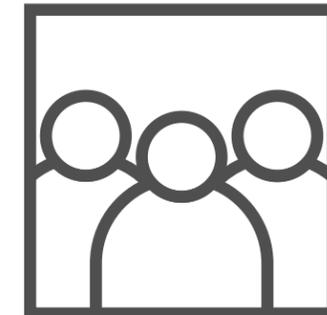
**156**  
people enrolled in the Race Literacy Connections

### RACE LITERACY CONNECTIONS

**20**  
people participated in the new Race Literacy Immersion pilot program

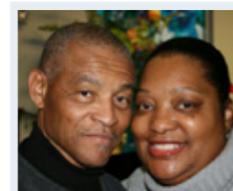
### RACE LITERACY IMMERSION

# **grieving together:** loss and lament.



**The work of justice is always challenging, but even more so when we experience loss. In 2022, we lost two men who are very special to Little Lights. We are grieving together.**

### **Mr. Thomas Rice**



Mr. Thomas Rice and his late wife Linda were dear friends who fostered a

sense of community at Little Lights. In February 2022, we lost Mr. Thomas, a co-laborer of 15 years and father figure to the youth and families served by Little Lights. He knew how to laugh and create a sense of belonging for those who were in his midst. We miss Thomas' and Linda's presence. To honor their legacy, we set up a scholarship fund for Little Lights students.

Scan or click to donate to the Rice Scholarship Fund:

### **Mr. Joon Park**



In July 2022, we lost a true champion for Little Lights, Mr. Joon Park. A Korean immigrant and entrepreneur who

operated several businesses including a diner, thrift shop and furniture store, Mr. Park believed that the children in under-resourced communities were worthy and supported his son Steve Park, founder of Little Lights, from his earliest days of ministry. Whether making his Tae Kwon Do studio available to Little Lights to offer after school programming or providing a vehicle, equipment and supplies, Mr. Park modeled life-long generosity and kindness. Little Lights is part of his legacy. May he rest in glory.

### **Gun Violence**

Gun violence is an ugly reality in America, and our community is not immune. It is uglier when we understand the links to racism and Christian nationalism. So, we are lamenting together.

In 2022, there were 203 homicides in Washington, DC. 18 of the victims were teenagers, double the number of teens killed in 2021.

In November, Little Lights co-hosted a "Plowshares and Prayers" service to lament gun violence, invoking the prophet Isaiah who spoke against the oppression and violence in his time by inviting God's people to return to the Lord. 80 people joined us for a corporate time of lament and call to action as we lifted our voices and hearts to God in song and prayer.

# partnering together: collective effort.



Our partners help meet the tangible needs of our community, whether practical provisions such as diapers and backpacks or thoughtful gifts during the holidays. The Little Lights community is blessed by our generous partners!



### MEALS

**6,708 nutritious meals**

were served through our partnership with the Capital Area Food Bank and DC Central Kitchen



### DIAPERS + BABY PANTRY

**29,500 diapers distributed**

(valued at \$8,850). Little Light served as a DC Diaper Bank site, providing diapers to families in our community and \$5,381 worth of baby products



### THANKSGIVING

**300 Thanksgiving baskets**

filled with non-perishable food and a grocery gift card for a turkey, provided by churches and the Little Lights Junior Service Council



### CHRISTMAS

**170 gifts**

students chose for their parents and guardians. Gifts were donated by One Kind Act and Chesterbrook United Methodist Church

**500 gifts**

for our Parent Christmas Store donated by various donors



### DONATED SPACE

**\$286,752**

value of donated space provided by DC Housing Authority and First Rock Baptist Church

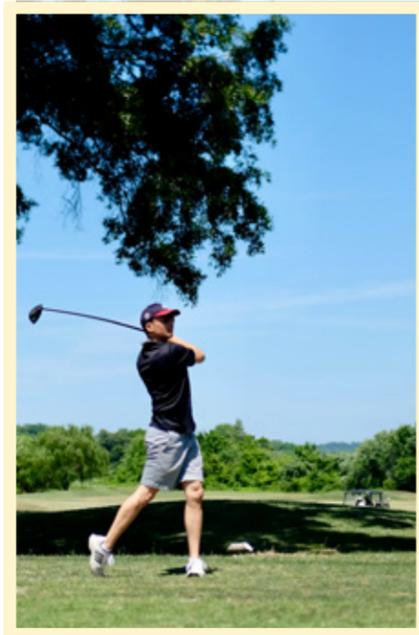
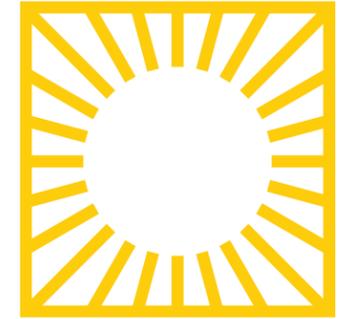


### SCHOOL SUPPLIES

**154 backpacks**

with school supplies distributed

# celebrating together: centering joy.



## Golf Tournament

Little Lights hosted its first ever charity golf tournament to benefit students in our Next Step College and Career Program over Juneteenth and Father's Day weekend at the historic Langston Golf Course. Opened in 1939, as one of less than 20 (of more than 5,000) courses nationwide open to Black golfers, Langston Golf Course served Black golfers during segregation, housed the oldest Black women's golf club in the nation, and played host to esteemed politicians, celebrities, and professional athletes. 112 golfers helped raise \$15,000 for our students.



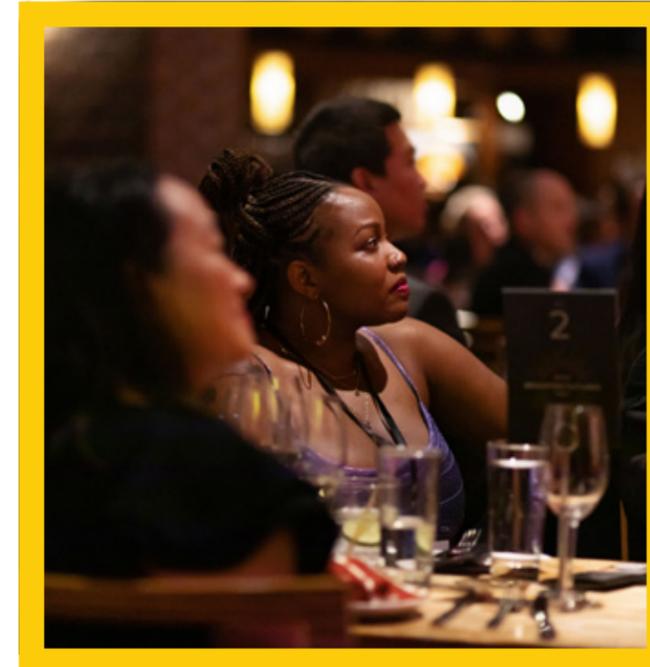
## Brighter Futures Benefit

In October, we celebrated together the accomplishments of the youth involved with Little Lights at our Benefit. "Brighter Futures" drew over 230 guests to the City Winery where two students shared about the impact of Little Lights in their lives and one treated guests to a musical performance (above). Little Lights' generous partners help fuel the dreams of our students and families. In total, the event raised \$153,450.



## Annual Christmas Party

For the first time since 2019, we welcomed families back to our annual Community Christmas Party! 55 students, parents and volunteers gathered at the Hopkins Center to feast together, listen to a message about Christmas and hear the Little Lights Choir perform. It was a festive and joy filled evening!



# partners

## Statistics

**377**  
volunteers

**7,094**  
volunteer hours

**Volunteers are a vital part of Little Lights, and in 2022, we were able to welcome back more volunteers for our in-person programming. Little Lights is grateful for our one-time volunteers as well as our faithful regular volunteers.**

### COMMUNITY

11th Street Bridge Park  
Black Swan Academy  
Building Futures  
Capital Area Food Bank  
Christian Community Development Association  
DC Central Kitchen  
DreamWakers  
Dress Lab  
Falls Church Fellows  
Fuller Asian American Center  
Fund for American Studies  
Gonzaga College High School  
Greater DC Diaper Bank  
Guerrilla Gardeners  
Hill Havurah  
Howard University Chicago People's Union  
Initiative on Faith and Public Life  
Little Lights Junior Service Council  
One Kind Act  
SHARE Food Network  
St. Albans School  
Turning the Page  
Tyler Elementary School  
University of Maryland Terps for Change

### CORPORATE

B.Lin Catering  
Chu Contracting  
First Citizens Bank  
Fulcrum Properties group  
The Gaskins Team  
Highlands Residential Mortgage  
SuprTEK, Inc.

### CHURCH

All Saints Church  
Bridgeway Global Church  
Capitol Hill Baptist Church  
Chesterbrook United Methodist Church  
Christ Central Presbyterian Church  
Christ City Church  
Christ Church Washington Parish of Washington DC  
Christian Reformed Church of Washington DC  
Church of the Advent  
Citizen Heights Church  
District Church  
First Baptist Church of Glenarden (Willing Workers Ministry)  
First Rock Baptist Church  
Great Commission Community Church  
Grace DC  
Gracepoint DC

Grace Capital City Church  
Grace Community Church of Arlington  
Grace Community Church of Howard County  
Korean Presbyterian Church of Washington  
Lord Jesus Love Presbyterian Church  
National Presbyterian Church  
Open Door Presbyterian Church  
Passion City Church  
Redemption Hill Church  
Restoration Anglican Church  
Washington Community Fellowship

### FOUNDATION

The Capitol Hill Community Foundation  
Crowell & Moring Foundation  
Heinz and Liselotte Nehring Stiftung  
Herb Block Foundation  
JKBae Foundation  
John Edward Fowler Memorial Foundation  
The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation  
New Life Foundation  
Richard E. and Nancy P. Marriott Foundation, Inc.  
United Planning Organization  
4G Foundation

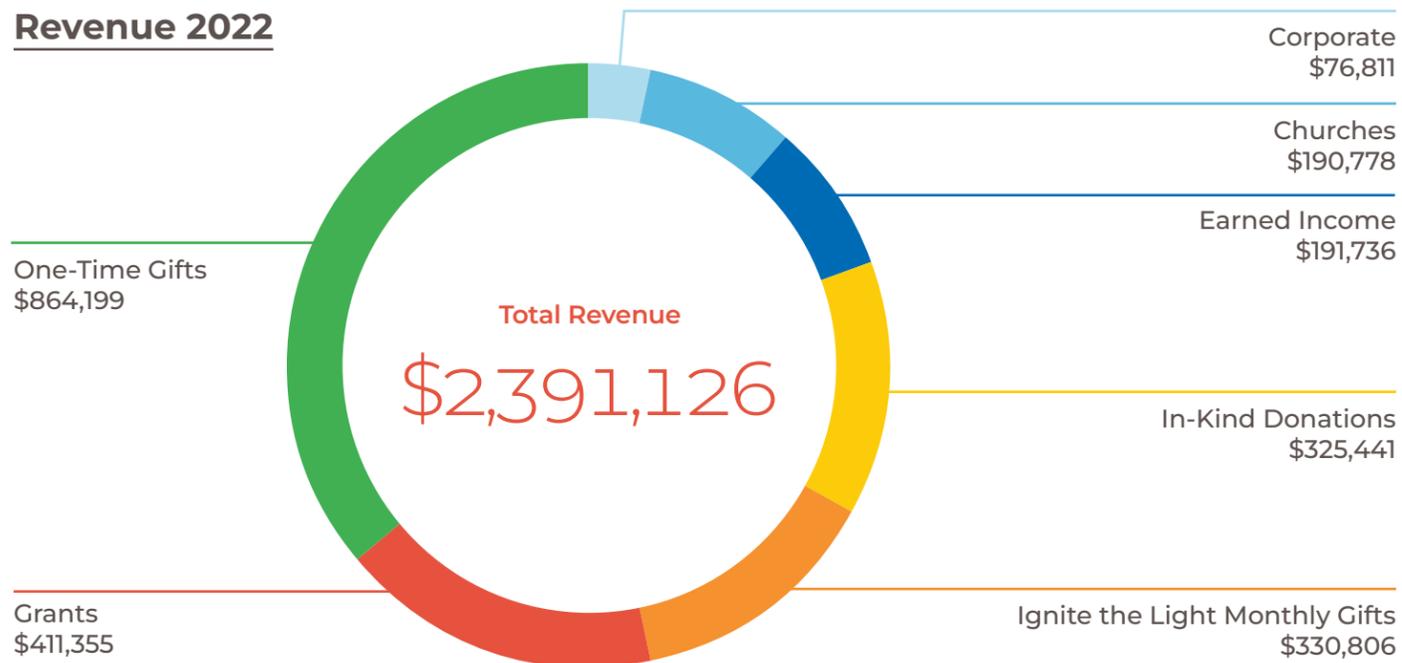
### GOVERNMENT

DC Housing Authority  
DC Public Schools  
Department of Employment Services  
Learn24 OST

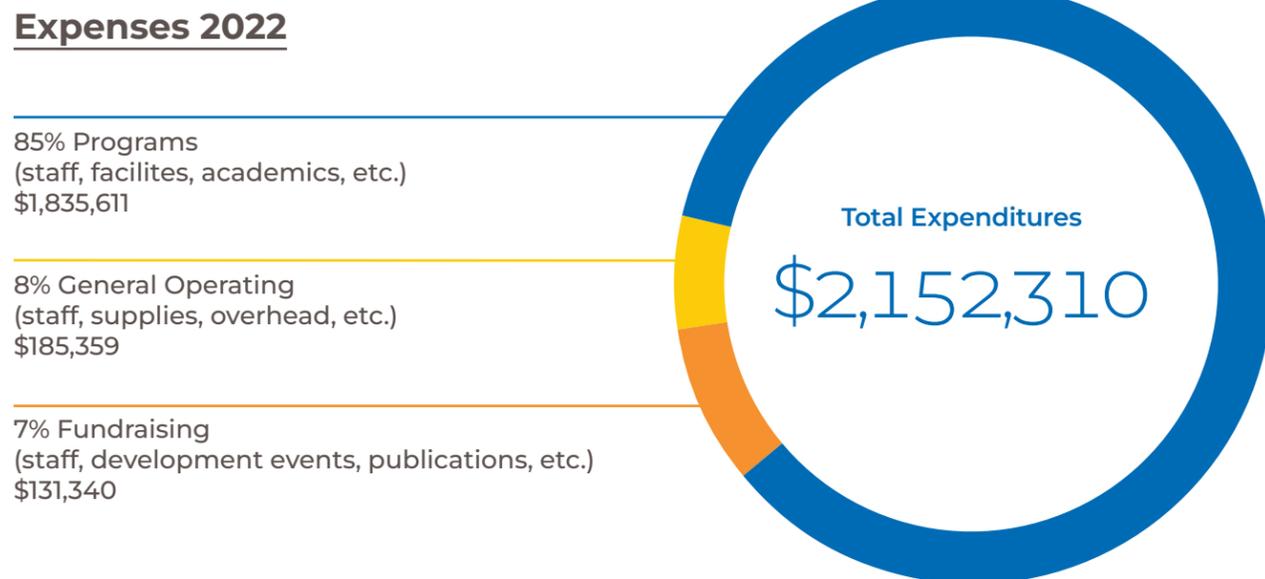


# financials

## Revenue 2022



## Expenses 2022



# staff & board



## FULL-TIME STAFF

James Ahn  
 Alizah Wilson  
 Theodora Beschel\*  
 Mary Daniel Cheek  
 Isaac Choi  
 Aaronica Glover  
 Kathryn Larkins  
 David Lee  
 Sophia Nalty  
 Courtenay Oliver  
 Mary Park  
 Steven Park  
 Cierra Peterson  
 Dominique Scruggs\*  
 Karmen Taylor  
 Kristy Wallace\*

— Above: Little Lights full-time staff at the 2022 Brighter Futures Benefit.

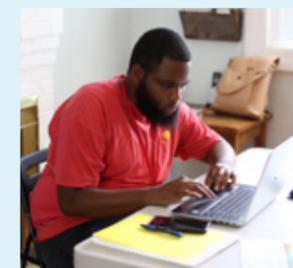
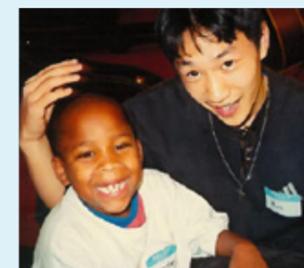
## PART-TIME STAFF

Ricky Altizer  
 Manuela Asamoah  
 Teresa Breland\*  
 Amanda Briggs\*  
 Milton Brown\*  
 Christine Buchholz  
 Sam Carrasco\*  
 Donna Cartwright  
 Markeith Davis  
 Christopher Dellaporta\*  
 Grace Dickerson  
 Caulah Francis  
 Bonita Guerrero  
 Shakyra Harris\*  
 Charmaine Hart  
 Joslyn Henderson  
 Keith Hicks\*  
 Kevin Hollins

Kyona Hunt  
 Kirsten Jackson  
 Juanita Jenkins  
 Barbara Leathers  
 Shelly Malcolm  
 Deverrick McAllister, Jr.\*  
 Ta'Shawn McKinney  
 Patricia Moten  
 Tyra Mullen\*  
 Jane Pak  
 Jarmal Pannell  
 J'mia Pendleton  
 Shantelle Powell  
 Kassidy Powers  
 Anna Rozzo  
 Jamiyah Scruggs  
 Katherine Shapiro\*  
 Camille Smith  
 Deonte' Smith  
 Jerry Smith\*  
 Maria Smith\*  
 Madisyn Starks  
 Aaron Tinch  
 Jennifer Tomlinson  
 Danyel Turner  
 Deniesha Tyree  
 Joseph Washington  
 Amaria Williams\*  
 Kreceda Williams  
 Antwan Wright  
 Daniel Yim\*

## CLEAN GREEN TEAM

Henry Dent  
 Lawrence Dozier  
 Kelvin Gordon  
 Gary Sams, Jr.  
 Antonio Smith  
 Bernard Tyree



## Dominique

As a child, Dominique Scruggs participated in Little Lights programs. He returned to Little Lights, as an adult, to serve as the Program Coordinator/Site Leader of the Hilltop Center in Ward 8. Now we celebrate Dominique and his new role with the KIPP DC's Aim Academy as a 6th grade Homeroom Teacher.

He also created a non-profit organization called the YES Foundation DC to address gun violence, social-emotional learning, education and sports for youth growing up in underserved communities. He credits Little Lights for preparing him well to thrive in all aspects of his life.

## BOARD

**Ted Kim, Board Chairman**  
 Deputy Associate Director, Refugee, Asylum, and International Operations, USCIS

**Steve Park, Board President**  
 Executive Director, Little Lights Urban Ministries

**LaToya Archibald, Secretary**  
 Director of Leadership and Governance, The International Association for the Study of Pain

**Derek Sykes, Treasurer**  
 Vice President of Finance and Operations, Community of Hope

**Cherie Bellamy, Member**  
 President, LaVie Medical

**Andy Biggers, Member\***  
 Realtor, Keller Williams Realty

**Audrey Donnell**  
 Founder, Audrey Donnell Coaching & Consulting

**Candace Essel**  
 Pharmacy Manager of Regional Outpatient Center, Maryland, Children's National Hospital

**Andrew Ho, Member**  
 Director of Development, The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine

**Kay Kim, Member**  
 Director of Practice Innovation, Simpson Thacher LLP

**David King, Member**  
 President & Founder, Neuma Consulting, LLC

**Alex Knight, Member**  
 Vice President of Business Development, Cooley LLP

**Phillip Lee, Member**  
 Associate, DLA Piper LLP

**Matt Luecke, Member**  
 Deputy Associate Director at Board of Governors, the Federal Reserve System

**Anthony Minter, Member**  
 Pastor, First Rock Baptist Church

**Jared Noetzel, Member\***  
 Director of Strategic Partnerships, Stand Together



**Michael Oh, Member**  
 Director, FINRA, Office of Financial Innovation

**Jake Thomsen, Member\***  
 Managing Partner, Sovereign's Capital

**Tina Yoon**  
 Director of Philanthropy Consulting, The Nature Conservancy

— Above: Little Lights Board of Directors at the 2022 Brighter Futures Benefit.

\*indicates that they are no longer on staff or on the board



## Courtenay

Courtenay Oliver, like Dominique, grew up participating in Little Lights programs as a student. She's returned to Little Lights as the new site leader for Hilltop Center where she will focus on empowering students in the Benning Terrace and Benning Heights community.

**"Growing up in Little Lights was amazing...I decided to return because I wanted to be a part of something great. Little Lights impacts many different families in Washington DC and I also want to be a part of that. Making a difference is what I long for being a part of at such a wonderful organization."**



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/LittleLightsUrbanMinistries  
/company/little-lights-urban-ministries

growing, working,  
learning, grieving,  
partnering, celebrating,  
thriving together.

Scan to Give:

