

world
affairs
council
pittsburgh



World Affairs Council
of Pittsburgh

2021 Annual Report

2021: Where We've Been, and Where We're Going



As the daughter of immigrants, I've often found myself navigating the in-between: seeing the world through the nostalgic eyes of parents who left their homeland behind in their fierce pursuit of a better life, and the new world I was born into by way of winning the birth lottery.

February 2022 marks 50 years since my parents and brother left Havana for Spain before making their way to the U.S. two years later. Exasperated with the static state of more than six decades of dictatorship in Cuba, my dad, in his last years of life, would come to say "I'm an American now" while waving off hope for change.

I carry a sense of responsibility to them and to all who have journeyed around the world, by choice or force, as a reminder of how urgent it is to understand the world we live in through facts and dialogue. At the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh, we aim to connect the dots between our worlds – both the real and romanticized versions of the places we call home.

In 2021, we launched a new strategic plan and website, welcomed our first cohort of Youth Fellows and Youth Board, and traveled the distance from Pittsburgh to Tokyo in our 90 For 90 virtual challenge. All the while, we sought to humanize global issues through interactive public and youth programming.

This year, we're excited to return to in-person events. We'll be getting back on bikes to explore global ties across our region, celebrating local leaders at our spring soirée with our first-ever Global Impact Awards, and hosting global learning programming for and with people of all ages.

The new year brings with it new possibilities and opportunities. Whether you're an old friend or just getting to know us, building a more globally minded and globally connected world takes everyone – join us!

In partnership,

Betty Cruz
President & CEO



I am an immigrant who fled a civil war in Lebanon as a 16-year-old teenager and was welcomed by kind communities, first in Iowa City then in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

I am a youth worker. I have served kids for the last 40 years of my life, 35 of which have focused on urban youth in Pittsburgh. While methodology and programs have taken different shapes, one thing has remained the same: the deep-seated belief that young people's dreams can only be as big as their worlds. If we want them to develop big ideas, have big impacts, and serve with big hearts, then the adults in their lives must help them discover a bigger world. Hopefully, these same adults continue to feed their own curiosity about this lovely planet that we share with nearly eight billion neighbors.

Whether through friendships, books, lectures, discussions, technology, or travel, the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh helps young, and not-so-young, people learn, celebrate, and serve a bigger world. Diligently and consistently, the Council has done this for 90 years.

As we move into our tenth decade, our Board of Directors and staff remain unwavering in our commitment to this vision. With gratitude and respect for the hundreds of caring Pittsburghers who served before us, we embrace our new opportunities as we "convene and connect people around global issues to build a thriving, competitive, and inclusive Pittsburgh."

Sincerely,

Saleem Ghubril
Chair, Board of Directors

A Note From Our Youth Board Co-Chairs



Jennifer Linn
Youth Board Co-Chair

Hello everyone,

It is a great honor for us to reflect upon how much the mission and vision of the Council have shaped us and our fellow youth throughout the Greater Pittsburgh area and beyond. Whether it be through the 51st annual World Affairs Institute, the continued empowerment of Global Minds chapters, or the strong programming at the heart of the second year of the Youth Board and Fellowship programs, the Council has provided opportunities for growth and enrichment to youth at every turn of its journey throughout the past year.



Hannah Shin
Youth Board Co-Chair

As Youth Board Co-Chairs, we have come to learn vital lessons about team-building as well as personal and professional growth. With the help of World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh leaders and its assortment of programs, we have been shaped towards embracing our responsibilities and ensuring that fellow youth become well-prepared for the next chapters of their lives, whether they hold obstacles, achievements, or anything in between. The Council community has introduced us to amazing peers and leaders that have taught us to see through different lenses and think unconventionally.

As a part of the Council, we have learned the relevance of youth leadership and the value that it holds. Inspiring journeys tied to being passionate, driving change, and inspiring others, youth leadership is essential to success. Developing these skills encourages youth to exemplify integrity and confidence as they seek to solve issues and build stronger communities. With the Youth Programming of the Council, our peers were able to participate in youth leadership far beyond traditional experiences. These programs have taught us – all of us – to not only see what we can do at our full potential but to also live more confidently and with a stronger sense of purpose.



2021

Year In Review

Introducing the incoming members of our Youth Board!



- January** • Kicked off Global Minds as leading youth program
- Launched Youth Board and Fellowship

- February** • Hosted “Extremism in Modern Society and Its Threat to International Security” — our best-attended event of the year, with 187 live attendees!

- March** • Welcomed Dr. Lina AbiRafeh to speak on International Women’s Rights in the Arab Region

- April** • Began six-part “What In The World?” Seminar for youth

- May** • Celebrated AAPI community in “From Hate to Joy: The Asian Experience Past & Present”

- June** • Partnered with Pittsburgh Steelers to host our youth-designed Emerging Global Leaders Conference

- July** • Began our anniversary celebration with a #90for90 virtual challenge to bike, ride, run, or move 90 miles in 90 days!

- August** • Hosted double-feature lunchtime webinar on the conflict in Tigray, Ethiopia, and a cocktail hour book club discussion on *Believers: Love and Death in Tehran*

- September** • Launched our new brand, website, and strategic plan at the second annual summit

- October** • Celebrated our 90th birthday on October 9 with a community bike ride

- November** • Reopened applications for Global Travel Scholars program after a pause due to COVID-19
- Hosted 51st annual World Affairs Institute addressing Afghanistan and current affairs in the Middle East, a topic voted on by students

- December** • Appointed Saleem Ghubril as new Board Chair

Where We've Explored

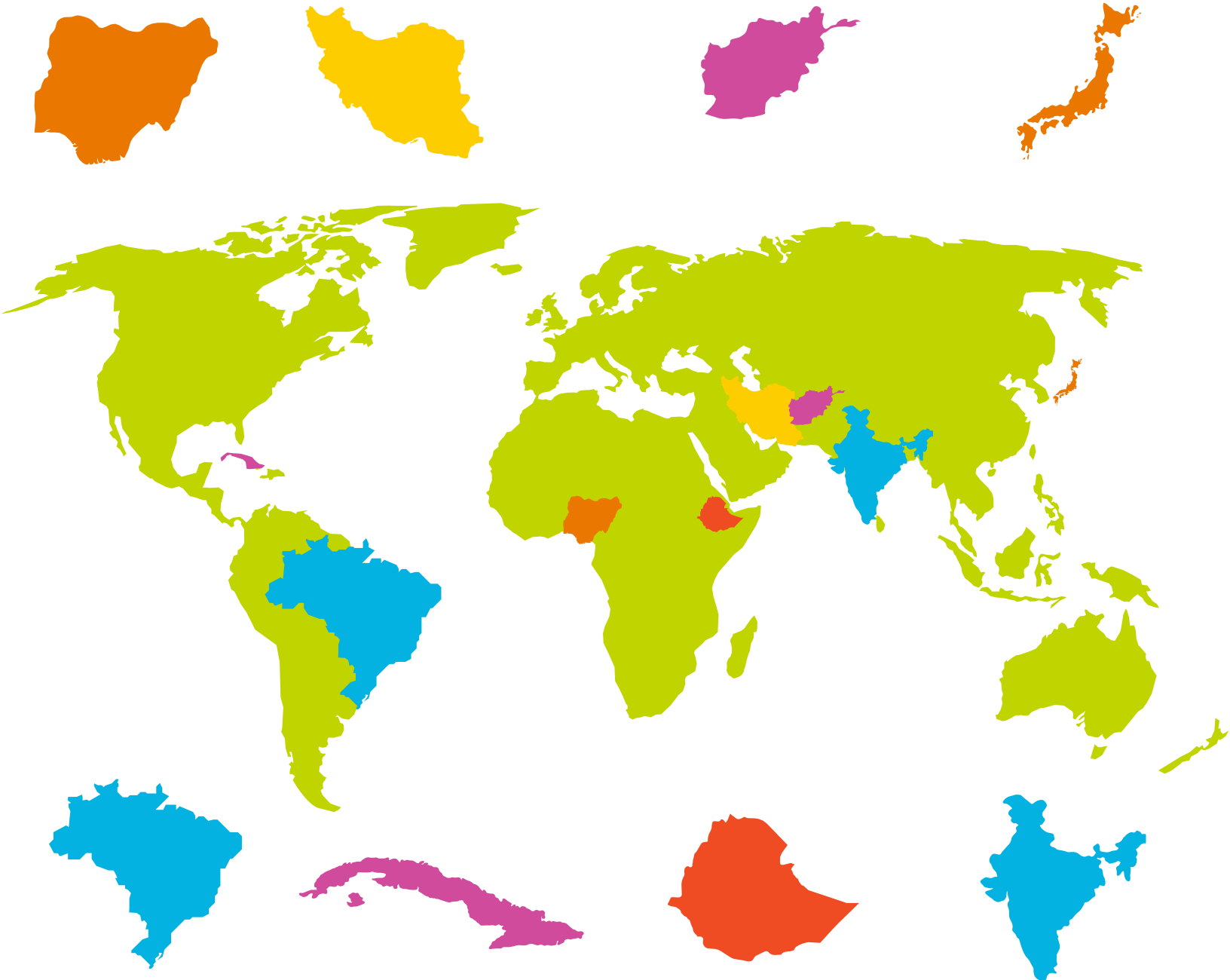
Here are just a few of the countries we visited in 2021 ...

Nigeria
1/14 - Community Conversations: Police Violence

Iran
8/4 - How Does A Story Come To Life? Writing *Believers: Love and Death in Tehran* with Ambassadors John Limbert and Marc Grossman

Afghanistan
11/16 - 51st annual World Affairs Institute: Afghanistan & Current Affairs in the Middle East

Japan
3/18 - A Resilient U.S.-Japan Alliance in 2021



Brazil
5/17 - From Hate to Joy: The Asian Experience Past & Present

Cuba
9/28 - Latin Grammy Award winner Descemer Bueno Performance and Talkback

Ethiopia
8/3 - Ethiopian Civil War: What You Need to Know About the Conflict in Tigray

India
5/4 - The State of COVID-19 On-the-Ground in India with Divya Nawale

The Pittsburgh Story

When the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh was founded in 1931, the world was in the midst of the Great Depression. The 1929 fall of the U.S. stock market triggered the longest, deepest global economic decline of the 20th century, with 25% of Americans unemployed. In 2021, 90 years after the Council began, we find ourselves again in a historic moment. The global health pandemic has caused much of the world to retreat, and the health, educational, and economic crises have upended American life in ways that will linger far beyond this year, including in the Pittsburgh region.

In this critical moment, we reassessed how we can best convene and connect people around global issues. The Pittsburgh of today is much different than the Pittsburgh of 100, 50, or even 10 years ago. For example, the Pittsburgh foreign-born population has fallen from more than 25% a century ago to less than 4% today. How does the Council contribute to or reverse these trends? What is our responsibility to antiracism, and what should guide how we view the future of our region, our country, and our world?

Over the past year, we have actively made a commitment to prioritize transformational partnerships, lift up the voices of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) in our community, engage in cross-cultural exchange, amplify youth leadership, and shine the light on other organizations advancing global learning. We are building on our legacy to strengthen the Pittsburgh community as we face global challenges and reimagine our world.



Pittsburgh in the 1940s was dark all hours of the day from air pollution.



Delores Ashford (top left) attended a World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh event when she was a student at Westinghouse High School. (Photo Credit: Her grandson Jeremiah Davis)



Students participate in a Global Minds event.



The Pittsburgh of today.

Strategic Plan & Rebrand

As the world has changed over the past two years, so must the Council. We have the opportunity to chart a new way forward – to build on the Council’s 90-year legacy, while also adapting to changing circumstances and a redefinition of the world we want to create. In our 2021-23 Strategic Plan, we’re excited to now turn toward the hard work of making our vision a reality.

MISSION Convene and connect people around global issues to build a thriving, competitive, and inclusive Pittsburgh.

VISION A globally minded and globally connected world that is equitable and just for all.

2021–2023 GOALS

- GOAL 1** Develop locally relevant, world-class programs that reach Pittsburghers of diverse backgrounds.
- GOAL 2** Become a globally recognized leader in the global learning space.
- GOAL 3** Ensure the Council's sustainability.

As a way to signal our new direction, we overhauled our brand identity with an updated logo, website, and new look.

Previous:

World Affairs Council
of Pittsburgh

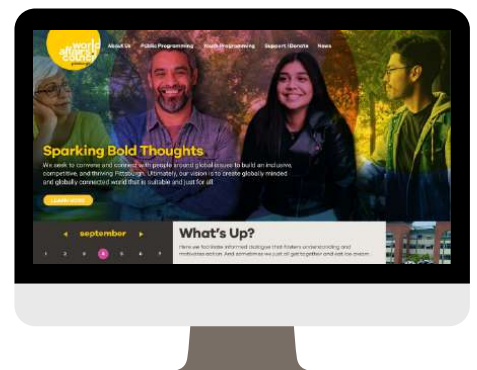


Updated:



CORE VALUES

- INCLUSION** We celebrate and embrace diverse lived experiences.
- INQUIRY** We lead with curiosity.
- INITIATIVE** We take action to solve problems.
- INTEGRITY** We build on a foundation of trust and reliability to consistently deliver quality.



Theory of Change

If we work in partnership with young people, educators, business leaders, and the community at-large to...

Explore & Educate
on critical global
and local issues



Convene
people of diverse lived
experiences



Inspire & Support
leadership and advocacy

then Pittsburghers will have...

Informed Dialogue
and deepened understanding
of global and local issues



Greater Empathy
for those different
from them



Relevant Skills
and meaningful
relationships

and therefore Pittsburghers will...

act for positive economic, environmental, and social outcomes in their communities

which will result in...

**Transformed
Leadership**



**Inclusive Policies
and Practices**



**Greater
Acceptance and
Sense of Belonging**



**Shared Learning
and Innovative
Problem-Solving**



a thriving, competitive, and inclusive Pittsburgh



a locally relevant and globally recognized model for other communities to adopt

and ultimately realize our vision of...



**a globally minded
and globally connected
world that is equitable
and just for all.**

By The Numbers

45 youth programs



1,106 public program attendees



6,312 miles traveled

92 expert speakers

27 public programs

1,100 young leaders served



19 Global Minds chapters



+2 in 2021!

45 community partnerships



37 schools served

90



years of connecting Pittsburgh to the world!

1 new website and strategic plan

52 Global Travel Scholarship applicants

Sabrina Saunders Mosby

"From small business owners to Fortune 500 companies to nonprofits, more than ever, what was once solely local can now be global."

I'm proud to be from Pittsburgh, where a stranger can turn into a friend after a short conversation reveals one degree of separation. From unknown to known in an instant.

It's also true that this proximity can sometimes act as an invisible wall to people who, because of a different lived experience, feel like outsiders. Sometimes, the distance between two zip codes can feel like an ocean. Other times, language barriers and cultural differences can cause us to feel worlds apart.

Still, the Pittsburgh story has continued to wrap itself around the globe in the form of innovators, entrepreneurs, artists, and many others who, like me, understand that for our region to fully thrive in today's interconnected world, it will take all of us. From small business owners to Fortune 500 companies to nonprofits, more than ever, what was once solely local can now be global.

With its more than 90-year-long history and new momentum, the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh is calling on all of us – business leaders, elected officials, and community members – to rally together to bring the vision put forth in their new strategic plan to life so that we can, together, build “a globally minded and globally connected world that is equitable and just for all.”

At Vibrant Pittsburgh, we know that ensuring our region is a place where difference is celebrated, creativity can flourish, and everyone in our communities thrive, will only happen through meaningful collaborations. I look forward to an even deeper partnership with the Council in 2022 and invite you to join us in shaping the Pittsburgh we know is possible and can all be proud of.



Sabrina Saunders Mosby
*President & CEO of
Vibrant Pittsburgh*



Suzie Vo



Suzie Vo
Youth Fellow

*Global Minds Chapter Leader
Lewisburg High School*

"In all fields and settings, today's youth offer a valuable, innovative perspective about the world that can serve to enrich the ideas of every other generation."

As a person with a multicultural background, Global Minds is an extremely meaningful part of my life because it allows me to connect with other people of diverse lived experiences and create an inclusive, welcoming space within my community.

Throughout my three years in Global Minds, I have deeply enjoyed expanding my worldview through our group activities and discussions. Last year, my Global Minds chapter did an activity about implicit bias. The activity began with all of us taking quizzes on Harvard University's Project Implicit website to discover some of the biased beliefs that we each held. The results from these quizzes opened up an eye-opening and thought-provoking group conversation about our personal bias and the practices that we, as individuals, could use to ensure that we do not act on our bias. This activity is one of many instances in which my participation in Global Minds has encouraged me to be more open-minded and accepting—not only toward those around me, but also toward myself.

In my role as the Global Minds Youth Fellow this year, I have learned that although Global Minds is rooted in its goal of diversity and inclusion in schools, the program is entirely unique for every individual chapter because each school community has unique circumstances and goals. By granting me ample opportunities to work alongside fellow student leaders, this Fellowship has also solidified my belief that youth leadership is the future. In all fields and settings, today's youth offer a valuable, innovative perspective about the world that can serve to enrich the ideas of every other generation.



Global Minds Chapters

- Baldwin High School
Pittsburgh, P.A.
- Chartiers Valley High School
Pittsburgh, P.A.
- *NEW Fox Chapel Area High School
Pittsburgh, P.A.
- Keystone Oaks High School
Pittsburgh, P.A.
- North Allegheny Intermediate School
Pittsburgh, P.A.
- Taylor Allderdice High School
Pittsburgh, P.A.
- Lewisburg High School
Lewisburg, P.A.
- Long Reach High School
Columbia, M.D.
- M.S 88
Brooklyn, N.Y.
- Salem Youth Commission
Salem, M.A.
- West Aurora High School
Aurora, I.L.
- Bliss Carman Middle School
Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada
- Devon Middle School
Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada
- Fredericton High School
Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada
- George Street Middle School
Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada
- Leo Hayes High School
Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada
- Moncton High School
Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada
- Nashwaakis Middle School
Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada
- *NEW Tamarac Education Centre
Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia, Canada

"As Pittsburghers, we need to ask what Pittsburgh can offer to the world and what we can learn from the world."

Pittsburgh has global roots, with a lot of global stories and global connections. Unfortunately, it's not always aware of it or knows how to leverage it. That's why the Council and organizations rooted in a worldly vision for Pittsburgh are existentially important.

As a city, Pittsburgh will not thrive if it has a limited vision boxed in what was. We need people and organizations that promote a vision of Pittsburgh that realizes its responsibilities and opportunities as a global city. And the Council is doing just that.

No city can thrive these days without raising residents who can be responsible global citizens. No city can do that without embracing and deeply understanding the complexities of the world. As Pittsburghers, we need to ask what Pittsburgh can offer to the world and what we can learn from the world. We need to be world aware. That's another reason why the work of the Council is integral to Pittsburgh's success. It makes us smarter, more connected, and more prepared to live in a complicated global ecosystem.

It's especially essential during times like these when historic shifts of power are happening everywhere and we as Pittsburghers need to have skills to work in the world and know how to mitigate the rise of autocracy, protect human rights, and constructively solve the climate crisis.

As a journalist, immigrant, and a partner who worked with the Council, I value the expansive and beautiful vision of Pittsburgh that the Council offers to us. It has an element of courage and pushes "mainstream Pittsburgh" outside of its comfort zone. That's where the growth happens. That's where we need to be as a city, courageous and always curious.



Mila Sanina
*Journalist, Former Executive
Director of PublicSource*



In September 2021, Council Youth Voice & Innovation Fellow, Connor Dalgaard, [wrote in PublicSource](#) about the limits of social media activism and how youth can work to create change in their communities.

"With the pandemic keeping us apart from those who we typically saw in work or school, we resorted to sharing our newfound selves through social media.

It may be difficult to understand now, but if teens fail to separate the online political content from real-world politics, I fear that we will face a lack of activism in the future."

John McCaslin

"I feel very lucky to be a part of the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh."

I joined last year after serving 35 years as a career U.S. diplomat with assignments mostly overseas and in Washington. We retired to Pittsburgh mainly for family reasons, but I quickly connected with the Council and have been amazed at the range and quality of their programs, and in particular their contributions to energizing discussions on a variety of international issues that have real impacts on the local community here.

One of those issues is women's rights. I particularly enjoyed the 2nd Annual Summit program that featured Lina AbiRafeh, Executive Director of the Arab Institute for Women. She is clearly a highly influential global leader helping to raise awareness of women's rights around the world and their central importance to key issues of political, economic and social equality, especially in the developing world, but also here at home as well.



Dr. Lina AbiRafeh spoke at our 2nd Annual Summit program, "[Here Today, Gone Tomorrow: Why We Must Fight for Women's Rights Long After the Headlines have Faded](#)"

Julianne Slogick



"I am grateful for the Council presence in the Pittsburgh region and for its commitment to schools and young people."

The World Affairs Council provides superior programming to high school students and their teachers. I can always count on Council events to be informative and engaging.

Students not only learn about the world and current affairs at these events, but they get to engage with passionate professionals who inspire and advise them. First hand testimonials from professionals who are "in the field" provide invaluable insight that I can use to enhance my interactions with students.

I appreciate that the Council is including students in leadership roles in many facets of their organizational structure. Students practice career skills and leadership skills, and they build important connections with their peers and others.

I see the Council trying new ways to engage youth, and I think this is exciting! The revitalization of the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh programming is commendable. I am grateful for the Council presence in the Pittsburgh region and for its commitment to schools and young people.

Thank You To Our Partners!



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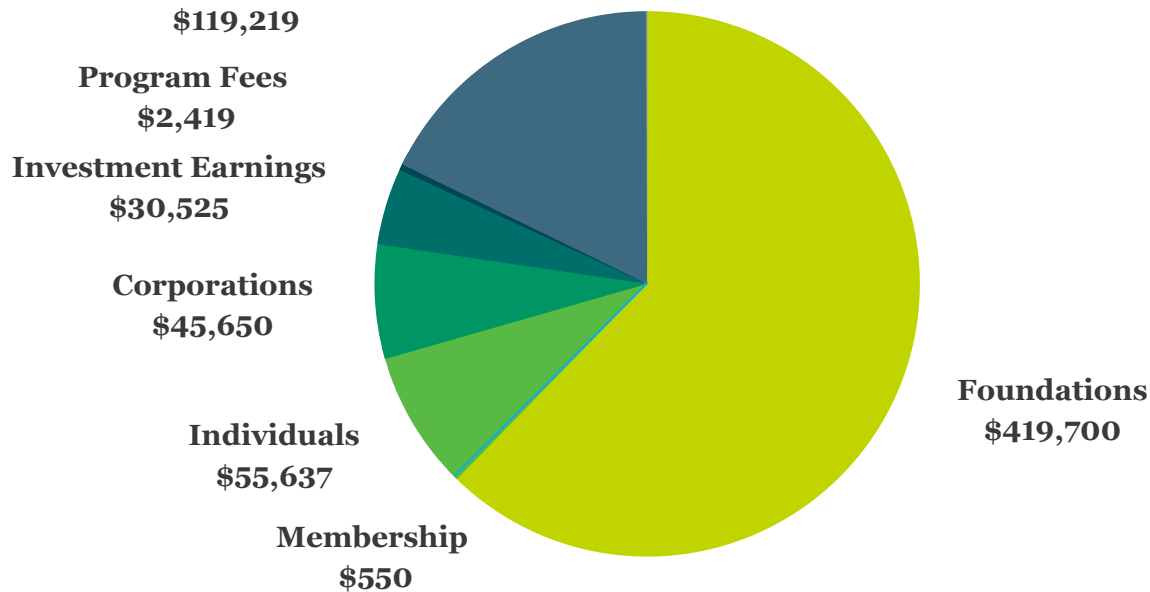


Financial Statement

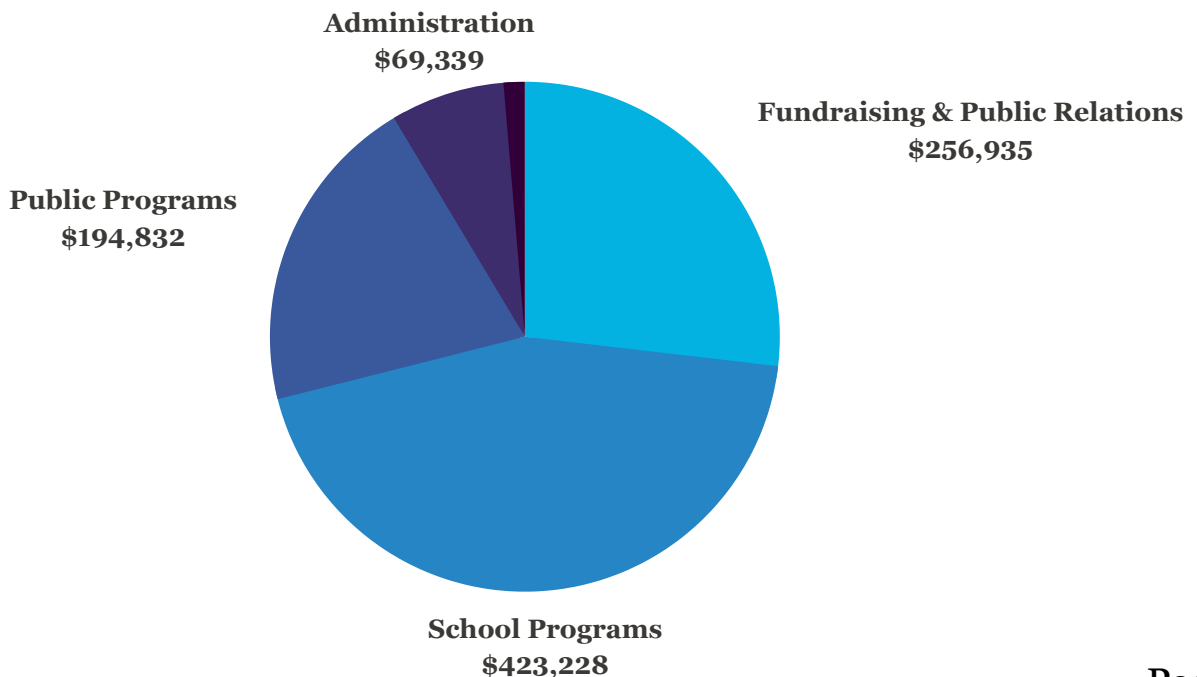
Total Revenue: \$673,700

End of year net assets: \$2,225,547

Contributed Services/Facilities



Total Expenses: \$957,179



Donor Listing

A special thanks to our growing community of foundation, corporate, and individual donors! Their enduring support of our mission has had a meaningful impact on the community we serve each day. Thank you!

A special thank you to our 90th anniversary sponsors!



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**Past Chair*

***Deceased*

Youth Board

In 2021, the Council launched a nine-member Youth Board giving high school students the opportunity to directly impact our programming and services. These students provided valuable feedback, contributed to meaningful projects, publicly represented the Council, and have been integrated into our adult Board of Directors. We are grateful for the pilot cohort and their work and dedication to shape our new signature youth leadership program.

January 2021 - June 2021

Co-Chairs

Amanda Hulver — North Allegheny Intermediate High School

Alina Zaidi — North Allegheny Intermediate High School

Members

Neveen Khalil — Baldwin High School

Raafay Khan — Mt. Lebanon High School

Kaitlyn Legge — Fox Chapel Area High School

Tomi Taiwo — Taylor Allderdice High School

Kritika Timsina — Baldwin High School

Suzie Vo — Lewisburg Area High School

Julian Westray — Winchester Thurston School

July 2021 - June 2022

Co-Chairs

Jennifer Lin — Taylor Allderdice High School

Hannah Shin — North Allegheny Senior High School

Members

Alexis Alarcon — Winchester Thurston School

Arhan Badjatia — Barack Obama Academy of International Studies

Aidan Green — Peters Township High School

Amanda Hulver — North Allegheny Intermediate High School

Sofia Khatiwada — Baldwin High School

Jake Rechenmacher — North Allegheny Intermediate High School

Ayushma Neopanay — Baldwin High School

THANK YOU

From Our Staff



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Ways to Get Involved

[Subscribe to our newsletter.](#)

Sign up to receive email updates on upcoming events and programs.

[Attend one of our programs.](#)

From webinars and panel discussions to conferences and trainings, our programs amplify the stories of people whose voices often go unheard, while demonstrating how global issues intersect with local issues of relevance to Pittsburghers.

[Start a Global Minds chapter.](#)

Global Minds is a school-based program of the Council that catalyzes youth-led action for inclusive and welcoming schools. Apply today to start a chapter in your school or community.

[Join the Forge Circle.](#)

By becoming a Forge Circle supporter with a monthly gift of any size, you will be part of a dedicated community that understands the importance of sustained giving and the Council's value as a convener and connector on global issues.

[Partner with us.](#)

We look to our network of community partners and sponsors to curate and present locally-relevant and engaging content for our many audiences. We love to collaborate with regional and national partners on high-quality programming and speaking engagements, and we also offer a wide array of visibility opportunities for companies seeking to increase their brand exposure.

Contact Us

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