

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



SO WHAT ELSE, INC.

LETTER FROM THE FOUNDERS

2021 was a trying, but phenomenal year in service as we continued to inspire communities to ask So What Else...can we do to help? We saw our Emergency Food Response team led by Megan Joe and Christine Garrahan, rescue and distribute nearly 8 million meals to 65,000 individuals throughout the Baltimore-Washington Metro Area.

Our Youth Development area slowly transitioned from virtual after school programs back to the in-person programs that our youth so desperately needed. Our summer camps hosted over 52 weeks of good old fashioned fun as well as social and emotional learning and innovation.

We expanded in DC and Baltimore with four new full time sites, getting nearly 2/3's of the way back to our 3,658 kids we served in 2019. In the fall we kicked off two new full time programs at Cedar Heights in SE and Washington View apartments in NE welcoming in sets of new and eager children.

So What Else created over 50 new, meaningful jobs helping our service economy bounce back. We believe SWE had the impact of a 18.5 million dollar organization as we took in over 16 million dollars worth of in-kind donations to distribute directly to the community which included: Christmas toy drives, Thanksgiving meals, clothing and home goods. We even furnished 37 houses this year all with the help of community donations.

Although 2021 proved to be a year of uncertainty and confusion, it was also a year where people came together to help serve those in need. The compassion and dedication of SWE staff, volunteers, and clients made all the challenges worth it. We hope to have an even greater and more impactful 2022.

Sincerely,

 Robert Schless

Dave Silbert & Bob Schless

MEETING NEEDS IN OUR COMMUNITY

Every child deserves to have access
to nutritious food three times a day

YET, EVERY DAY, THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN LIVING
IN THE BALTIMORE-WASHINGTON METRO REGION
WONDER WHERE THEIR NEXT MEAL IS COMING
FROM

And the pandemic continues
to intensified food insecurity

BUT SO WHAT ELSE IS DETERMINED TO
TRANSCEND BARRIERS TO FOOD ACCESS AND
GET CHILDREN THE NUTRITIOUS MEALS THEY
DESERVE

2021

OUR MISSION

"To improve the lives of children & families living in underserved communities in the Baltimore-Washington Metro Area by providing food security, access to basic necessities and high quality out-of-school time programs in literacy, athletics, and the visual & performing arts while inspiring young people to give back to the community by creating volunteer opportunities for citizens of all ages."

MISSION

2021 AT A GLANCE

INDIVIDUALS SERVED

65,080

AMOUNT RAISED

\$1,793,910

IN-KIND DONATION VALUE

\$15,000,000

SERVICE HOURS

37,500

YOUTH PROGRAMS


122

MEALS SERVED

7.5 MILLION

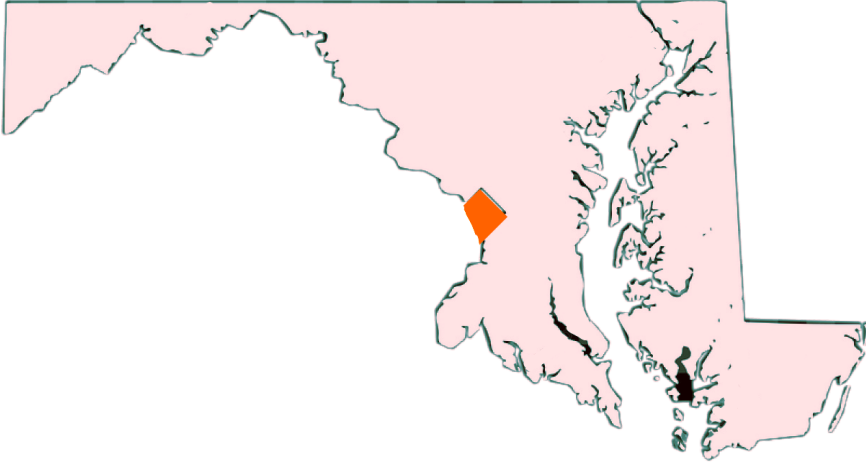
FOOD
DELIVERY

OUR PROGRAMS

A man with dreadlocks, wearing a black t-shirt with a circular logo that says 'BLACK MARCH 2016', is looking down at a large, dark, circular metal car wheel hub. He is holding it with both hands. To his right, a young boy is looking at the wheel hub with interest. The boy is wearing a dark hoodie and grey gloves. In the background, there are stacks of tires and other mechanical parts, suggesting a workshop or a community center. The overall scene is one of hands-on learning and community support.

It's every child's right to have their basic needs met. So What Else offers opportunities for children and their families to access food & necessities as well as no-cost extracurricular programs. So more children in our region have food security and a safe place to go when the school bell rings.

In 2021, So What Else permanently incorporated The Emergency Hunger Relief Program into our mission.



We now operate both youth development and hunger relief programs in these locations.

- WASHINGTON DC**
- HOWARD COUNTY**
- PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY**
- FREDERICK COUNTY**
- BALTIMORE CITY**
- MONTGOMERY COUNTY**
- ALEXANDRIA, VA**

PROGRAM MODEL



ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

Bringing the community together by creating service opportunities for all ages and abilities.

BUILDING HOPE & RESILIENCY

Our food pantry, community events, delivery services and youth programs give families something to believe in during a times of hardship.

TRANSCENDING ACCESS BARRIERS

The innovative 5-prong distribution method finds ways to break down barriers for families facing food insecurity

EMPOWERING YOUTH

Through offering enriching opportunities for children to gain life skills, during out of school time.

STANDING BY OUR MISSION

When Covid first struck in March, 2020, the team at So What Else immediately responded by asking our program sites, "If we can't do programs right now, So What Else.....can we do to help?" And the communities replied with an overwhelming need for food, diapers and basic necessities. So our team at So What Else answered by mobilizing volunteers and distributing those items directly to the communities in need. Breaking down transportation, age, ability, qualification and language barriers, to get families basic necessities. Now in 2021, we have continued to stand by our mission to offer access to food, diapers, clothing, furniture, books, PPE and more to our community. Our powerhouse volunteer and in-kind donation structure allow So What Else to make the impact of a \$16 million organization, while only operating with \$1.5 million.

And although the Emergency Hunger Relief Program has grown astoundingly over the past two years, So What Else has remained steadfast in our commitment to serving children and has continued offering after school programs, summer camps, teen clubs and family events through our youth development branch.

Now, So What Else is proud to serve as a regional hub to offer families living in underserved communities access to the opportunities and food security that each and everyone of us deserve.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

FOOD PANTRY

On May 18, 2020 SWE opened up our first warehouse to the public as a “walk-up” food pantry where we served about 100 families per day. The food pantry drew crowds from across the region and we soon outgrew our initial location.

In July, 2021 SWE moved the food pantry to Lake Forest Mall, where we have an indoor and outdoor warehouse, a storage unit, a free shop and are able to accommodate the 400 or more families that visit the warehouse each day.

The So What Else Food Pantry now hosts 2,900 volunteers per year and has the capacity to serve millions of meals through its 5-pronged distribution method: neighborhood pop-up pantry, home delivery, walk-up, group pick up and group drop-off.

PANTRY IN NUMBERS

400 Families per day

12,000 Meals per week

130,000 Service Hours

2,900 Volunteers

6 Days Per Week

1 No cost shop




EVALUATIONS

This year, as So What Else slowly regains momentum in re-opening youth programs, our leadership team made it a priority to create and execute evaluations on our Emergency Hunger Relief Program.

MAJOR FINDINGS

- 95%** of Food Pantry clients are satisfied with the services they receive from So What Else
- 100%** of clients believe that the food that they receive from So What Else is healthy and nutritious
- 100%** of clients feel that they are more food secure now that they have access to So What Else's Hunger Relief Program
- 86%** of clients say they have felt an increase in their level of health and wellness after utilizing So What Else services for one or more months. (Many attribute this fact to decrease in stress due to not having to make tough financial decisions and being able to stretch their monthly budget)

PROGRAM STRATEGY



Through taking into account the dozens of food access barriers as well as lack of opportunities for children from low-income households, So What Else connects families with the resources they need, building hope and resiliency in the community.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY CENTER MODEL

This model serves as an open door to children of all ages and their families 5 days a week during after school hours. These programs also aim to build community through incorporating family and community events, meal service and workshops, all free of cost to anyone in need.

CURRICULUM BASED PROGRAMMING

85% of our programs are now operated based on one of our 8 comprehensive, hands-on learning curricula that integrate positive youth development, common core outcomes and The 10 Pillars to provide students with a meaningful and fun learning experience.

FUTURE LEADERS PROGRAM

This program engages older youth and young adults to become proactive in their community through serving others. This year, SWE future leaders program completed grew to nearly 150 youth who completed nearly 1000 hours of service.

STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PARTNERING

This year, we collaborated with over 100 different non-profits, businesses, schools and community centers in order to bring high quality programs to youth who need it the most.

THE BIG IDEA PROGRAM

SWE's Big Idea Program is the cornerstone of our mission to support the community through philanthropy and youth innovation. The Big Idea is an educational and interactive program designed to encourage students to create novel and innovative ways to serve their community and Earth. Through teamwork, open dialogue, activism and ultimately action, students are able to learn and demonstrate that people of any age can create positive change.

[View A Full SWE Curriculum Here*](#)

HUNGER RESPONSE

NEIGHBORHOOD DELIVERY

A team of volunteers and staff make deliveries every week to 85 communities. This community-based distribution model or “pop-up food pantry” ensures accessibility for children and families without transportation to receive healthy food in their apartment complexes.

FOOD PANTRY

SWE’s food warehouse, located at Lake Forest Mall in Gaithersburg, acts as a “walk-up” food pantry where we now serve food and supplies to at least 400 families per day. SWE’s average client’s family is made up of a female head-of-household with multiple children.

HOME DELIVERY

Our team delivers food and diapers to over 300 individual family homes per week.

GROUP PICK UP

Over 100 churches and community organizations drive to the SWE pantry and warehouse to pick up and re-deliver meals that feed up 50-75 families per group in their home communities.

GROUP DROP OFF

A SWE team member delivers food in bulk to up to 6 community organizations per week, which then redistributes it to their constituents.

BASIC NECESSITIES ACCESS

In addition to meals and groceries, So What Else distributes high volumes of necessities to families in need. In 2021, SWE distributed 1.48 million diapers, 210,000 lbs of clothing, 60,000 educational items, and 102,000 PPE.



COMMUNITY PARTNERS

124

CHILDREN SERVED THROUGH YD

2,700

PROGRAMS

120

MEALS

7.5 MILLION

COMMUNITY EVENTS

43

VOLUNTEERS PLACED

3,252

VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY SERVICE

HOURS

156,500

STUDENT SERVICE HOURS

42,020

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

SO WHAT ELSE PLACED 3,252 VOLUNTEERS AT

**7 Community Events and Initiatives,
340 Open days at the Food Pantry
and
30 OST Programs
resulting in
156,500 Hours of Service
given back to the community**



SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

In 2021, So What Else placed volunteers, staff and students to serve the community through our Emergency Hunger Relief program and at partner non-profit's events and initiatives. Here are some ways the community got involved

**Martin Luther King Junior Day Global Youth
Service Day**

The Friendship Circle

Bike to the Beach

Mentoring Through Athletics

Thanksgiving Meal Distribution

Christmas Week Food and Toy Deliveries

Home Food Deliveries

Walk-Up Food Pantry



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brett Bernstein, President of the Board
Robert Schless, Treasurer and Co-Founder
Dr. Matt Ammerman
Michelle Cooper
Amy Katz
Tosha Dyson
Meredith Heller
Scott Mendelson
Gregory Minkoff
Josh Ross
Nicolle Davis
Wesley Okerson
Michael Meers
Brad Sherman
Amy Holmwood
Jane Dunigan

ADVISORY BOARD

Jonathan Holmes, Advisory Board
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Ken Brodkowitz
Kathleen Corey
Karla Daly
Anthony DeCicco
Sondra Frank
Meloni Harris-Barber
Ricardo LaGrange
Mark Leisher
Patti Ross
Samantha Ross
Joel Schwarz
Lillian Teng
Kim Williams
Dave Winokur
Natasha Romano



OPERATIONS

Since So What Else began 12 years ago, we have always taken the "karma" approach to operations, meaning if we do good work through service to our community, everything else will fall into place.

OUR TEAM

Our diverse team of staff are made up of community members, professionals, college interns and tenured players.

In 2021, in order to accommodate our growing number of programs, sites and clients, we expanded our team and created 60 new & meaningful jobs in the community. When other businesses were closing down, So What Else continued to expand



OUR COMMUNITY

We are powered by our community—our supporters, donors, volunteers, partners and team. In 2019, our community grew larger and more generous than ever before.



OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Aaron and Jennifer Snyder
Alice and Eugene Ford Foundation
Albertsons Company Foundation
The Agarwal Family
Ammerman Family Foundation
American Seniors Housing Association
Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County
Banner Team
Barbara Bender Family Trust
The Bender Foundation
Bernstein Management Group
BGR CPAs
Big Stuff Inc.
Bike 2 The Beach
Brickman Family Foundation
BRP Family Law
Caryn Clayman
Chesapeake Bay Trust
Chong Yi/ Fairway Mortgage
Cigna
City of Rockville
Clark-Winchole Foundation
The Curwin Family
Dunkin Joy In Childhood Foundation
Eagle Bank
Edge Commercial Real Estate
Enterprise Community Foundation
Eugene B. Casey Foundation
Ferrari of Washington
The Fowler Foundation
Fran and Rich Silbert Philanthropic Trust
Global Guardian
George Preston Marshall
Hattie Strong
Heffron Companies
Homespire Mortgage
The Insurance Exchange
JG Murray Foundation
Kathy and Bill Corey

Kevin Gates
Kay Real Estate
Goldman Sachs
Five Guys/Pyramid Enterprises, LLC
The Market at River Falls
Metro Bethesda Rotary
Mid City Financial
Minkoff Company, Inc.
Montgomery County Collaboration Council
Montgomery County Economic Development
The Nature Conservancy
Nora Roberts Foundation
Origen Vodka
Outlier Realty Capital
Pieology Pizzeria
Pop for a Cause
Robert Joseph Group
Rogers & Peters/Apatoff Peters Ebersohl
Ross REMAX
Gilday Renovations
Gittleson Zuppas Medical Realty
Senator Investment Group
Sherman Wealth Management
Synergy Home Care
Sygan Tech
Susan Loring
Trawick Foundation
Truman Charities
Upward Bound Foundation
US Foods
Wapakoneta Foundation
WC Smith
West Baltimore Renaissance Foundation
XML Financial

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

With more than 100 partners in the community, we can't name them all. Here are a few of our most impactful partners from 2021:

Mamma Lucia
Community Services Foundation
Excel Beyond the Bell
Rockville Housing Enterprises
Interfaith Works
Gaithersburg Middle School
The Language Key
The Food Project
City Weeds
Enterprise Community Foundation
Lunch and Learn
A Wider Circle
Charity Connect
CIH Properties

Leveling The Playing Field
Robert Joseph Group
Friendship Circle
Montgomery County Recreation
Project Change
Linkages To Learning
Costco
4MyCity
Food Rescue US
Imperfect Foods
Capital Area Food Bank
The Equity Center
Greater Expectations
St. Francis Neighborhood Center



PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

This year So What Else joined forces with 4MyCity, a local non-profit whose mission is to disrupt the food waste system in order to feed those in need, creating a more sustainable planet.

“

This partnership is how we are going to solve hunger in the DMV. ”-

Dave Silbert, Founder-So What Else

In 2021, 4MyCity supplied So What Else with over 4 million pounds of rescued food to redistribute to families in need across the Baltimore-Washington Metro Region.

The partnership grew as the team won a special grant from the West Baltimore Renaissance Foundation to continue food rescue, hunger relief, youth programming and composting initiatives in Baltimore City. We are excited to see what 2022 brings!



FUNDRAISERS

12K

**TRUMAN CHARITIES
FUNDRAISER PARTY**

75K

**MAMMA LUCIA
GOLF TOURNAMENT**

65K

CHEF FUNDRAISING EVENT

365K

ANNUAL GALA



SINCE 1992

FINANCIALS

At So What Else, each year becomes more impactful than the one before. 2021 was no exception, with recordbreaking numbers of people served, So What Else commensurately broke it's fundraising records!



**AMOUNT RAISED
IN 2021**

\$1,793,190

Raised through donations,
fundraisers and grants

**AMOUNT INVESTED
IN 2021**

\$1,579,000

Invested in hunger relief, out-
of-school time programs and
volunteerism

ALLOCATION OF EXPENSES

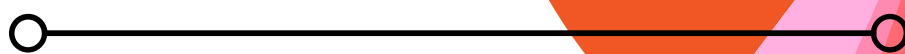
84%
PROGRAM EXPENSES



3.8%
ADMINISTRATIVE



1.2%
PAYROLL TAXES



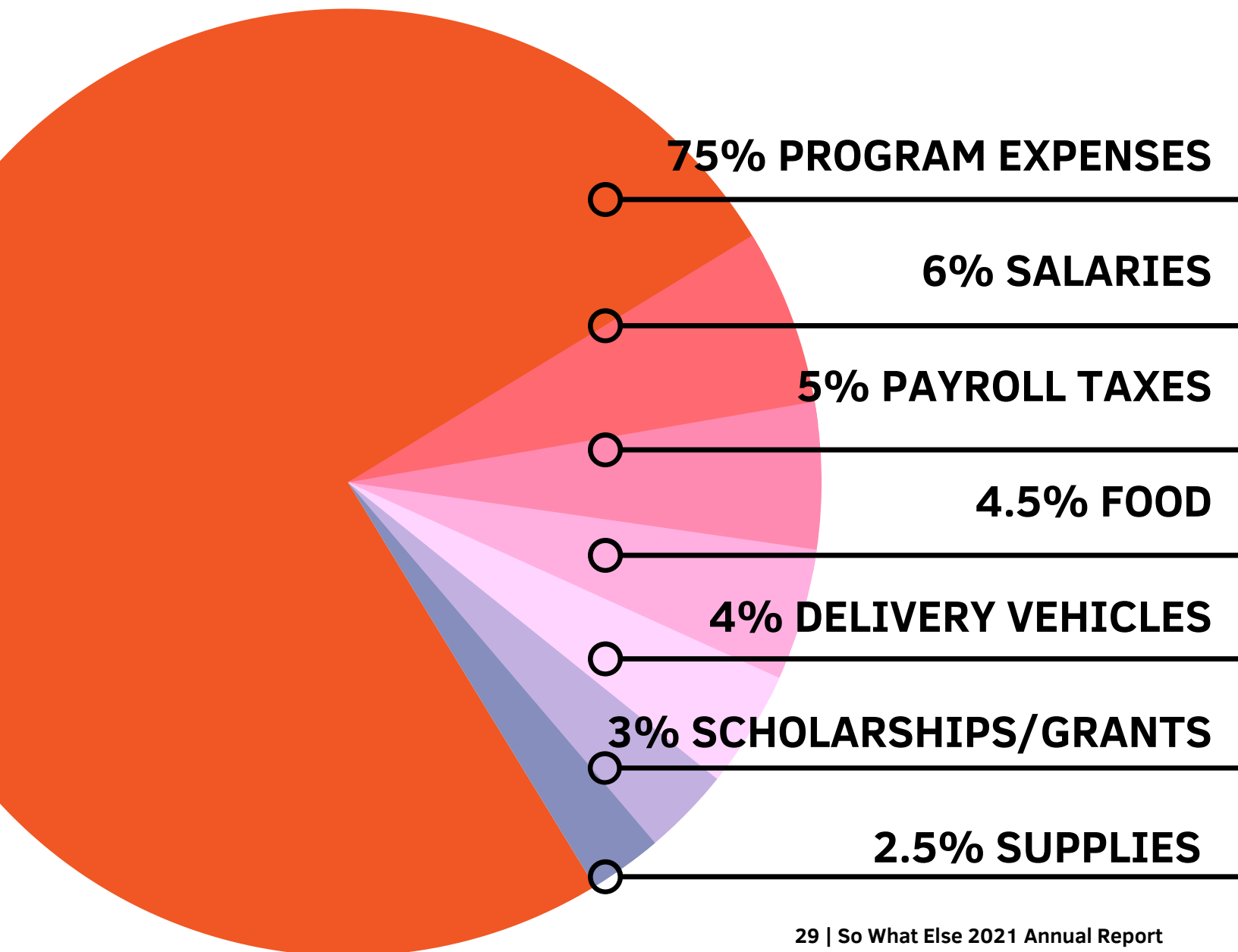
11%
FUNDRAISING



[SEE THE FULL FINANCIAL REPORT HERE*](#)

ALLOCATION OF EXPENSES

In 2022, So What Else invested 1,343,103 directly into programs that improve the lives of children, families and the community at large



BREAKDOWN OF FUNDS BY LOCATION

655K

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

613K

WASHINGTON DC

251K

BALTIMORE CITY

16K

FREDERICK COUNTY

16K

PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY

11K

HOWARD COUNTY

9K

ALEXANDRIA, VA

**SINCE 2009,
SO WHAT ELSE
HAS FUNDED OVER
7 MILLION DOLLARS
WORTH OF FOOD ACCESS AND
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMS FOR
79,200 PEOPLE
LIVING IN OUR COMMUNITY**



SO WHAT ELSE

CAN WE DO TO HELP?

GET INVOLVED



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