



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

ALIRP Annual Report

The Alabama Interfaith Refugee Partnership received Internal Revenue Service approval for 501C3 tax-exempt status on October 16, 2019. Since that time, the 11-member board has worked hard to develop and approve policies and procedures, maintain a website and other social-media platforms, recruit and orient volunteers to ALIRP Care Teams, and implement our three-part mission of supporting refugees and asylum-seekers locally and globally through advocacy, education, and direct assistance.

Through compiling this report, we, the Board of Directors, are thrilled to reflect on all that we accomplished together with our wonderful volunteers, community sponsors, grant funders, ALIRP Partners, and all our wonderful staff who go beyond the call of duty year after year. We envision a world where all refugees and asylum seekers find safety and live with dignity.

Our activities and efforts seek to:

1. Educate the community and elected officials about the current refugee crisis and the process of refugee resettlement;
2. Advocate for policies that address the root causes of the refugee crisis, and that increase U.S. support for refugees; and
3. Provide direct support for refugees and asylum seekers in the United States and in the Birmingham community.

We started the year with Lynda Wilson, ALIRP Founding President and Director serving as our volunteer Executive Director alongside two AmeriCorps Vista Service Members, Taryn Johnson and Jay Townsend that we hired in 2022 as our primary staff support. As Taryn and Jay ended their terms, we welcomed two new Vista Service Members, Juanita 'Ani' Villa and Maria 'Ana' Garcia. Lynda Wilson continued to serve as the Executive Director through 2023. So many of our accomplishments as an organization are owed to the deep ethic that Lynda and the AmeriCorps Vista Service Members share around service to their community and seeking to strengthen our infrastructure so we can implement programs that fulfill our mission.

Mid-year, we hired a part-time Case Manager, Matt Buttler. As the ALIRP Case Manager, Matt's weekly tasks include interviewing potential new Partners, assessing initial and ongoing needs of new Partners, and working to address all Partner needs by engaging our amazing AmeriCorps VISTAs, volunteers, and community organizations and resources. As Matt puts it, 'the focus and ultimate goal of all of my work is to equip Partners with the tools they need and empower them to build a safe, sustainable life for themselves and their families.'

This document is organized into the following sections: Executive Summary; ALIRP Board of Directors, which lists the board members from 2023; and ALIRP Financials, which provides a summary of the financial report for 2023.

Executive Summary

The 2023 calendar year brought so much progress in our goals for direct assistance. Our programs and policies help support families who are waiting on their asylum claims to be granted. ALIRP started the year serving 32 partner families (104 individuals) and we ended the year with 37 partner families (146 individuals). Although we introduced several new partners to our roster, we also saw some families move into more 'inactive' status, meaning that they were more self-sufficient and required less case management. Some reasons for their progress include the following milestones in the partner's journey to become a resident of Alabama and citizen of the US: 1 partner was granted asylum; 10 partners received their work permits, and at least 2 partners found jobs shortly thereafter; and, 2 partners received their driver's license and we were able to provide cars to those drivers that were donated to ALIRP by some of our amazing volunteers and 'Friends of ALIRP.' Being able to earn a wage and engage with their community allows for our partners to build up their families and gain a greater sense of belonging.

For the 2023 calendar year, the organization's beginning and end balance was hugely impactful to help ALIRP meet their goals in direct support, education, and advocacy for refugees and asylum-seekers in Central Alabama.

- The beginning balance was \$87,465 and the net balance, at the end of the year, was \$129,849. Expenses related to Direct Support (\$57,565) make up the majority of our money going out while Administrative expenses were second (\$36,000).
- Our programs of Direct Support help ALIRP partners and their families meet their needs while they await for their asylum claims or their work permits to be approved. As an organization, we exceeded our fundraising and grant-writing goals for the year. ALIRP set out to earn \$134,500 through donations, fundraising, and grant-writing; and, we ended the year with \$146,615 raised.
 - One third (33%) of the money raised was from individual donations.
 - More than half (56%) was provided through grants from foundations, including Canterbury United Methodist Church Outreach Committee, Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham, Independent Presbyterian Church Foundation, National Christian Foundation Alabama, Robert R. Meyer Foundation, Saint Luke's Episcopal Church, Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church, and the Susan Mott Webb Charitable Trust.
 - Around 10% of funding came from organizational sponsors. Organizational sponsors are organizations that provide an annual donation of \$500 or more to ALIRP and include Baptist Church of the Covenant, Birmingham Islamic Society, Canterbury United Methodist Church Outreach Committee, First Church Birmingham, Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church, Temple Beth-El, Temple Emanu-El, Trinity United Methodist Church, and the Unitarian Universalist Church of Birmingham.
 - See link for a complete list of supporters: <https://www.alirp.org/our-supporters.html>.

Following is a list of ALIRP activities designed to help us meet our advocacy and education program goals. This list reflects the activities implemented by our committees, which are chaired by members of our Board of Directors and engage our volunteers, community partners, and program staff.

- Each year, ALIRP supports several student interns from surrounding universities to assist in various programs:
 - Lydia Estes (Birmingham Southern College, Fall Intern) provided an extensive review of existing resources and created a Partner Toolkit in English and Spanish that ALIRP shares with all partner families so they can readily access community resources allowing for partners to become self-sufficient and advocate for their own needs; the toolkit can be accessed at this link: <https://www.alirp.org/partner-toolkit.html>.
 - Rea Green (Birmingham Southern College, Spring Intern) developed a Spanish version of the ALIRP volunteer orientation based on interviews with several ALIRP Partner families to learn first-hand about the ways that volunteers assisted them and she piloted the materials with Spanish Majors at her school; the final version can be found at this link: <https://www.alirp.org/orientacioacuten-para-los-voluntarios.html>.
 - Margaret Treanor (Samford University, Spring Intern) worked to help plan and coordinate the Spring Book Club event with the Education and Advocacy committee. This book club event was held in May at Domestique Coffee Shop in Homewood. The event featured a discussion of the book titled, *Outcasts United*, and also included a Q & A discussion with the book's Birmingham-born author, Warren St. John.
- ALIRP participated in 23 community and special events, which is more than double the number of events from 2022 including:
 - 12 tabling events (e.g., Kindness Summit, Hoover-AHEAD, Ukrainian Freedom Festival),
 - 8 invited speaking events (e.g., presenting at a local churches or religious institutions, local community organizations, or regional schools and universities), and
 - 2 co-sponsored events (e.g., special speaker series or community program).
- Using the ALIRP Refugee SIM (simulation) developed in 2022, the Junior UN Assembly of Alabama invited ALIRP Board Members and Volunteers to run the simulation with over 160 students participating at the Birmingham Southern University campus in February.
- The Outreach Committee hosted the Annual ALIRP Stakeholder Meeting also in February.
- In July, Barbara Bonfield (ALIRP Volunteer Coordinator) worked with the Executive Director Lynda Wilson to host the Annual Volunteer Celebration. We featured several amazing volunteers and created a video to honor them, which can be found on our YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/@alabamainterfaithrefugeepa779).
- In 2022, Taryn Johnson (ALIRP Vista) published a series titled, *Navigating Barriers* on our Blog (<https://www.alirp.org/news--opinions-2/category/navigating-barriers-series>), which saw an increase in readership in 2023 and has become a wonderful tool for education and advocacy.
- In 2023, Board Member and Co-Chair, Jonathan Diaz created a new blog series on Climate Change and Climate Refugees, which can be accessed using this link: <https://www.alirp.org/news--opinions-2/category/climate>.
- Our social media presence grew over the year:
 - Although fewer people followed us on Facebook from the previous year (down by about 33%), over 1.4K people visited our Facebook page in the last year, which is up by 163.4% from the previous year.

- Instagram saw an increase in new followers (36 total new followers) and 934 people visited our Instagram profile, which is up 70% from the previous year.
- Instagram appears to appeal to a younger audience, mostly under 35, whereas most of our Facebook followers are 35 or older.
- The top five cities where our followers are located are all in Alabama: (1) Birmingham, (2) Hoover, (3) Homewood, (4) Vestavia Hills, and (5) Pelham.
- ALIRP held their 2nd Annual Global Gathering in November at Independent Presbyterian Church, was a huge success bringing together partner families, volunteers, local businesses, and several local Mexican and Ukrainian folk performers and artists.
- Thanks to all the attendees and the wonderful donations during the Fall Fundraising, “Global Gathering”, ALIRP more than doubled their donations from the previous year.
- ALIRP introduced several new t-shirt designs that emphasize the ‘Right to Safety’ on our ALIRP Bonfire Online Store (<https://www.bonfire.com/store/alirp/>), and earned a modest \$120 from the T-shirt sales; looking ahead, the ALIRP Communications Committee will make more of an effort to promote our online store as this is a great way to fundraise and spread our message.

The Birmingham Migrant Transit Project

In early December 2022, ALIRP received a request from the Alabama Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) office to help migrants who are released from immigration detention facilities in Louisiana in order to prepare for the expected influx of migrants into the US once Title 42 is lifted. [Title 42](#) is the regulation that prevented many asylum seekers from entering the US during the COVID pandemic. ICE anticipated that increasing numbers of migrants would be processed through the nine immigration detention facilities in Louisiana. Given that most of these facilities are in rural areas, far from transportation hubs, ICE hoped to transport these migrants to cities like Birmingham so that they can arrange to travel to their sponsors by bus or plane.

As a part of our effort to offer direct assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers, including others who experience forced displacement, ALIRP agreed to organize and coordinate the Birmingham Migrant Transit Project to help migrants from Louisiana make arrangements to travel to their sponsors throughout the United States. In partnership with many other organizations in Birmingham, ALIRP agreed to receive 50 migrants transported to Birmingham from a detention facility in Louisiana on May 17, 24, and 31. ALIRP VISTA Service Members, Taryn Johnson and Jay Townsend did an amazing job coordinating the plans for this project. Migrants were transported to the Willow Woods Recreation Center in the Woodlawn area of Birmingham where ALIRP volunteers helped them to make travel arrangements, provided food and clothing, and transported them to the bus station or airport so that they could travel to meet their sponsors.

In May 2023, the Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice (ACIJ) agreed to coordinate the project, and ALIRP transferred remaining donations that had been collected for the project to ACIJ.

ALIRP Board of Directors

Each board director serves as a chair/co-chair of a committee that helps to meet the mission and vision of the organization. ALIRP has 7 committees. The Executive and Finance Committee is composed of the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Executive Director. The other committees include: Communications, Direct Support, Education and Advocacy, Fundraising, Outreach, and Volunteer Committee(s). Each committee chair is provided a modest budget to develop programs and coordinate events that help to leverage the work that they do.

List of Board Members for 2023

*Term Ended in 2023

- Meredith Gartin (President, 2022-2024)
- April Jackson-MacLennan* (Vice-President and Co-Chair of the Education/Advocacy Committee)
- Allison Cobb (Treasurer)
- Adam Oliver (Co-Chair of the Fundraising and Grant-writing Committee)
- Divya Annamalai (Secretary and Chair of Communications Committee)
- Donna Dahl* (Co-Chair of the Direct Support Committee)
- Jonathan Diaz (Co-Chair of the Direct Support Committee)
- Elishua Markham* (Co-Chair of the Fundraising and Grant-writing Committee)
- Rachel Hagues* (Chair of the Volunteer Committee)
- Danielle Gómez* (Chair of the Outreach Committee)
- Amy Cottrill (Co-Chair of the Education/Advocacy Committee), *resigned in January 2023*
- Jane Vines (Co-Chair of the Education/Advocacy Committee), *term began in February 2023*

In 2022, the Board of Directors voted to change terms to calendar years. Previously, the director terms would change in September, so this is a year of transition with some directors shifting in September and others in December. Starting in 2024, all directors will be on calendar year terms. In total, five directors' terms ended in 2023.

- **Elishua Markham** chose to renew her role on the Board as the Co-chair of Fundraising and Grant-writing, and she was unanimously elected to begin serving as the Vice President in September.
- Founding Board Member and former Vice-President, **April Jackson-MacLennan** stepped down from the board in September having served 2 full terms as the Education and Advocacy Committee Chair and 1 term as the Vice-President. Her contributions to the organization are tremendous from helping to shape our policies and procedures to speaking at our education and advocacy events. She remains an active supporter and 'Friend of ALIRP'.
- **Donna Dahl** served 4 years on the Board and was a trail-blazer in shaping our Care Team Model for ALIRP Direct Support and volunteer programming. A force that cannot be stopped, she

continues to volunteer with Direct Support and we are so grateful for her time, service, and boundless energy and lovely spirit.

- **Rachel Hauges**, a Social Work Professor at Samford University, chose not to renew her board position after 1 term of service; yet, she remains a great tie to Samford University, continuing to find ways to collaborate and work with ALIRP through research, scholarship, and practice.
- **Danielle Gómez** chose to serve one term as the Outreach chair as she began to transition in her role with Inspiritus, a refugee resettlement agency in the southeast US, as their Refugee Mental Health Coordinator. We continue to see and work with Danielle through the Birmingham Immigrant Resource Network and through our own Direct Support programs at ALIRP.

List of Incoming Board Members for 2024

The Board held elections in late Fall and through December to fill the vacant positions. Elishua renewed her position and was elected to serve as the new Vice-President. All other board members listed below are new to the ALIRP Board of Directors.

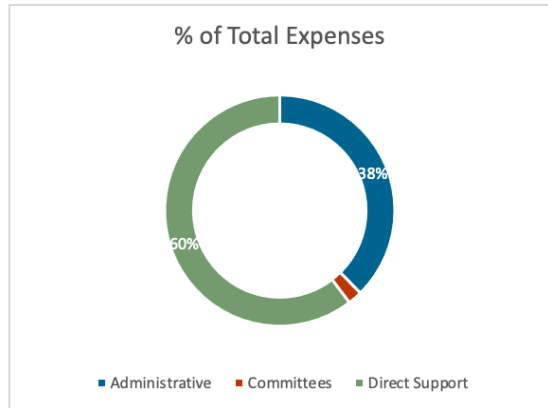
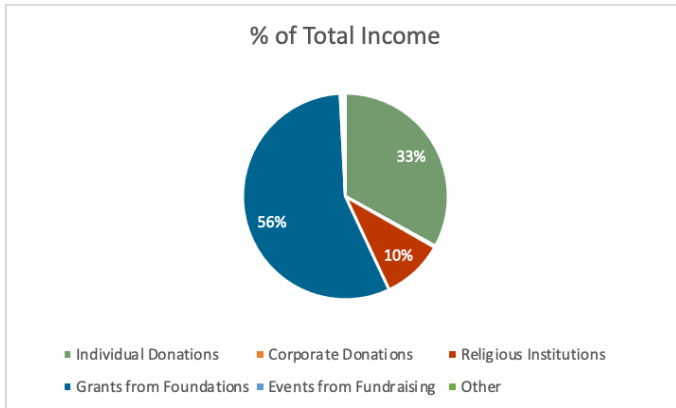
- Bola Fenny (Co-Chair of the Education/Advocacy Committee)
- Edna Vásquez (Co-Chair of the Direct Support Committee)
- Cindy Dawson (Chair of the Volunteer Committee)

The Chair of the Outreach Committee remains unfilled at the end of the 2023 Calendar Year.

ALIRP Financials

Account Balance	
Beginning Balance	\$ 87,465.14
2023 Net Income YTD	\$ 51,464.19
Ending Balance in December 2023	\$ 138,929.33
Less: Outstanding Commitments	\$ 6,735.00
Less: Transportation Fund	\$ 2,344.78
Less: Other Committed Funds	\$ -
Net Balance for the Year in Total	\$ 129,849.55

Chart showing percentage of Income and Expenses by Categories



Income	2023 YTD	% of Total Income	2023 Budgeted Amount	YTD Actual \$ vs. Budget	YTD Actual % vs. Budget
Individual Donations	\$ 48,371.06	33%	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 18,371.06	161%
Corporate Donations	\$ 350.00	0%	\$ 1,000.00	\$ (650.00)	35%
Religious Institutions	\$ 14,334.00	10%	\$ 68,000.00	\$ (53,666.00)	21%
Grants from Foundations	\$ 82,336.00	56%	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 47,336.00	235%
Events from Fundraising	\$ 526.37	0%	\$ 500.00	\$ 26.37	105%
Other	\$ 697.60	0%	\$ 0.01	\$ 697.59	69700%
	\$ 146,615.03	100%	\$ 134,500.01	\$ 12,115.02	109%
Expenses					
Administrative	\$ 35,926.79	38%	\$ 53,700.00	\$ (17,773.21)	67%
Committees	\$ 1,659.42	2%	\$ 45,000.00	\$ (2,840.58)	37%
Direct Support	\$ 57,564.63	60%	\$ 64,361.00	\$ (6,796.37)	89%
	\$ 95,150.84	100%	\$ 122,561.00	\$ (27,410.16)	78%