

# Street Lab Annual Report 2020-2021





## Dreams for our streets

For the past two years we've maintained an all-out sprint during the pandemic, using pop-up to make the city better, fairer, and more beautiful today, right now.

When lockdown began in March 2020, we immediately began an overhaul, staying focused on what was around the bend, such that, on the day restrictions were lifted, we were back on the street with new offerings, designed and built from the ground up.

In 2021, we created a record-breaking 281 pop-ups that transformed streets into places for play, learning, creativity, and community across all five boroughs. Open-air reading rooms at NYCHA Public Housing, colorful play areas on Open Streets, outdoor learning hubs for NYC students, repurposed outdoor restaurant sheds showcasing musicians and visual artists, and all of our original programs back in full force. As of today, that adds up to 1,164 pop-ups at 280 different sites in 103 neighborhoods over the past decade.

Each time we pack up at the end of a day, the installations fold up, materials stow away, music fades, and the street is returned for another use. But we believe something important lingers in the minds of New Yorkers—a vision of what our city can be when a vibrant, shared street life brings out the best in all of us.

2022 will be our biggest year ever, and we're excited to see you on the street.

In this moment of uncertainty, Street Lab programs:

### **Empower people**

People participating in our programs are given opportunities to express themselves while becoming artists, readers, and learners on a kind of stage, and feel proud.

### **Transform space**

Programs expand what people think is possible, and spaces are made more welcoming to all, especially to children, women, and families.

### **Build community**

People walk away feeling good about themselves and their community and more connected to the city-at-large.

*“When I saw what you created on our street, it was exactly what I dreamed of, but never imagined possible. Somehow you created the dream in my head of what the city can be.”*

— David Estrada, Sunset Park Fifth Ave BID, 2021



# About Street Lab

Street Lab is a nonprofit that creates and shares programs for public space across New York City—pop-up reading rooms, drawing stations, and more. Since 2011, Street Lab has deployed its programs no less than 1000 times in over 250 locations, engaging more than 45,000 New Yorkers. We envision a city filled with public spaces that inspire, where all residents have places to gather and ways to connect right in the heart of their neighborhoods, and we use a pop-up approach to make that vision a reality. We also send [programming kits](#) around the world so that other cities can copy our model.

## Our Partners

Everywhere we go is by request from neighborhood groups or city agencies. Our extensive network of host partners includes business improvement district groups, development corporations, civic associations, youth development organizations, community centers, and more.



## Our Programs

Our programs are free, designed for all ages, and use high quality materials. Alongside our established programs, we are constantly experimenting with new ideas for our streets. Every year we work with artists, designers, and cultural institutions to co-design innovative new activities to bring to NYC neighborhoods.



## Our Gear

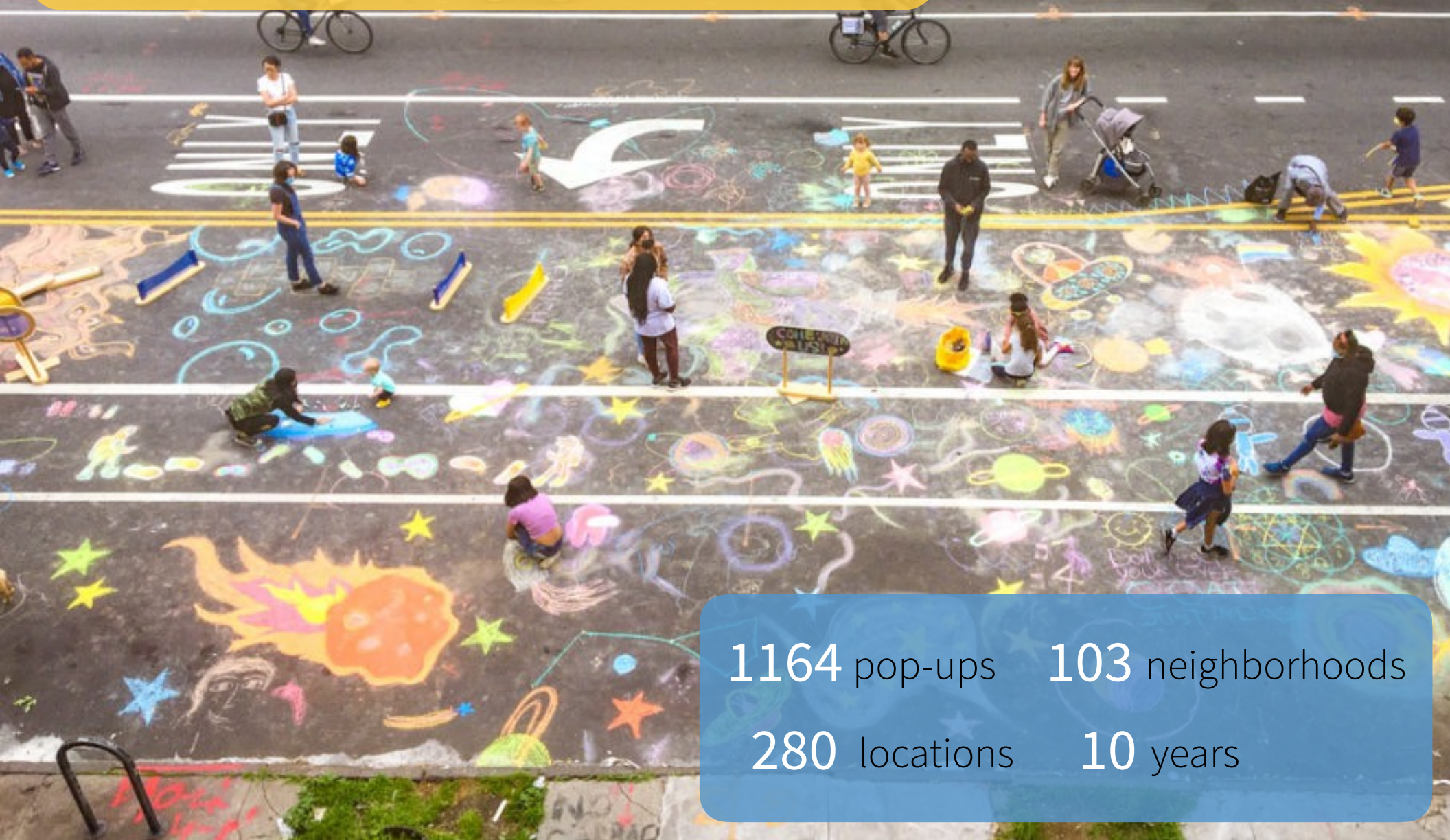
Our award-winning gear is portable, practical, durable, and eye-catching. Our unique benches, tables, and program carts provide a place for people to gather, and transform space. Each year we collaborate with emerging designers on new designs to enliven our streets.





*“It is pure magic to watch Street Lab transform a city street into a place for play... In just minutes, a gray stretch of asphalt becomes a colorful, happy place for families and children to stretch out and explore.”*

— Carey King, Director of Uptown Grand Central



1164 pop-ups    103 neighborhoods  
280 locations    10 years



# 2020

As soon as restrictions lifted we were the first out on the streets - activating newly created Open Streets and creating safe environments for people to gather safely, play together, and be creative.

We designed and launched three new programs to strengthen our offerings:

- PLAY NYC - a no-touch obstacle course for Open Streets so kids could play without fear;
- Street Marker, which lets New Yorkers collaborate on large chalk murals on the street, all while staying six feet apart; and
- Homework Hubs - an effort to re-purpose outdoor restaurant seating for NYC students to gather and do schoolwork together.

# 2021

With the help of a growing team, we met increased demand for public space programming with a record-breaking 281 pop-ups that transformed streets into places for play, learning, creativity, and community across all five boroughs. In collaboration with the Department of Transportation we worked specifically in neighborhoods hardest-hit by COVID, helping communities imagine better public spaces for their neighborhoods through pilot events.

We continued to expand our programming, launching Street Lab Teens—a paid apprenticeship program for New York City public high schoolers—and WRITE—an outdoor writing room for New Yorkers to write together.

Open-air reading rooms at NYCHA Public Housing, colorful play areas on Open Streets, outdoor learning hubs for NYC students, repurposed outdoor restaurant sheds showcasing musicians and visual artists re-emerging from lockdown, and all of our original programs back out in full force—this is some of what we did to reimagine our streets in 2021.



## Building community in every city

Every year we fabricate our programming kits and send them to groups looking to improve public spaces in their community.

2020

Lake Central School Corp, IN  
New Castle, AUSTRALIA  
Fresh Air Fund, New York, NY

2021

St. Peter's Church in Chelsea, New York, NY  
Uptown Grand Central East Harlem, New York, NY  
New York Public Library, New York, NY  
New York State Parks, Williamsburg in Brooklyn, NY  
West Palm Beach Public Library, FL  
Thomas County School District, GA  
South Georgia Regional Library, GA  
Beaufort County Library, SC  
Coventry Library, RI  
City of Cambridge, MA  
Frederick, MD  
San Francisco United School District Libraries, CA  
Sacramento Public Library, CA  
Oceanside Public Library, CA  
Berlin-Peck Memorial Library, CT  
Cote Saint-Luc Public Library, CANADA





## Fostering Creativity and Collaboration

In Fall 2020 we launched Street Marker which allows communities to create striking patterns for colorful communal murals, COVID distancing and more. Unique chalk tools designed in collaboration with Cornell School of Architecture students enable participants to easily draw large circles, spirals, and other patterns—engaging people no matter their artistic knowledge.

In Fall 2021, in support of the city's recovery efforts, Street Lab created open-air street venues for sharing the work of NYC artists who were recipients of City Artist Corps Grants (CAC) and had not yet been able to exhibit their work. CAC is a \$25 million recovery initiative for NYC-based artists disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Street Lab connected with over 40 musicians, filmmakers, textile artists, painters, and illustrators - helping them engage the public while fulfilling their grant requirements.

We continued to deepen our programming through artist collaborations, adding bookmaking workshops, collaging activities, and live music to our deployments, and resuming our Artist in Residence program in 2021.



*"I learned a lot about the city, about Street Lab, and about my own practice—what works and doesn't work for me while drawing on location. This program also gave me the opportunity meet a lot of new people across all ages and have some really meaningful conversations with children and parents."*

— Sanika Phawde, 2021 Street Lab Artist in Residence



# Making Space for Play

We launched PLAY NYC in July 2020 on the day lockdown restrictions were lifted - transforming a street in Red Hook Brooklyn into a community play space.

Designed in response to the pandemic, PLAY NYC enables hands-free play for children on closed-off streets or other public spaces in high-need neighborhoods. PLAY includes an obstacle course with colorful barriers, hurdles, and balance beams that can be rearranged and combined with chalk drawings for custom challenges.

In 2021, Queens-based artist Lexy Ho-Tai created a series of plush textile sculptures that can be added to the course or worn by participants - inviting participants to play imaginatively with their bodies and their minds.



In the second half of 2021 our **100 Activations for NYC** initiative added 100 new deployments of our programs to support newly-created Open Streets and other public spaces in 33 of the neighborhoods hit hardest by COVID across all five boroughs.







## Elevating Voices

In May 2021, we launched Street Lab Teens, a paid summer apprenticeship program for NYC public high schoolers to get involved in shaping public space alongside Street Lab staff and partners. Our inaugural cohort of eight teens came from eight different New York City high schools and supported over 27 deployments of our Street Marker program in four boroughs. Together our teens collectively put in 200+ hours of service stewarding city streets as sites of community and creativity.

*“Street Lab Teens has a positive effect on the community because it brought families together and a community together as well. I think that it was great that we were able to do something like this even with a pandemic. Seeing people together was something that definitely helped me.”*

— Anaya, Street Lab Teen 2021



In 2021, we also formally launched WRITE NYC - a public writing room for the streets. Designed for people of all ages and artistic abilities, WRITE includes typewriters and calligraphy brushes; postcards, envelopes and stationery; and activities conceived by writers and writing organizations. We're making space for New Yorkers to share their thoughts and reflections.





# Spotlight on Partnerships

Fall 2020



## Draw Now! ¡Dibuja Ahora! with The Drawing Center

A bilingual workshop inviting people to respond to COVID through drawing, co-created with the center to highlight their exhibition 100 Drawings from Now.



## Art Lab at the Queens Museum

A weekly open-air art studio supporting families in line for the La Jornada & Together We Can food pantry hosted by the Queens Museum. Launched in fall 2020 and continued into spring 2021.

Winter/Spring 2021



## Chelsea Symphony on the Street

Developing a series of outdoor concerts and educational activities at Chelsea Market highlighting the local Chelsea Symphony Orchestra.



## Street Marker on Avenue B

Celebrating Lower East Side History Month in collaboration with FAB NYC and the Loisada OSCC with interactive chalk prompts highlighting community and film photos calling to the area's long legacy of street photography and urban play.

Summer 2021



## HYPOTHEKids in Harlem

Co-created a weekly science and math learning hub with afterschool activities, puzzle stations, and learning experiences for students of all ages.



## Piloting Open Streets in Jamaica, Queens

Partnered with local artist Shanice Figeroux and Dunton Community Garden to bring a series of weekend full-block programming events featuring Street Lab Teens leading Street Marker, BUILD, PLAY, and youth DJs from the neighborhood.



# By The Numbers

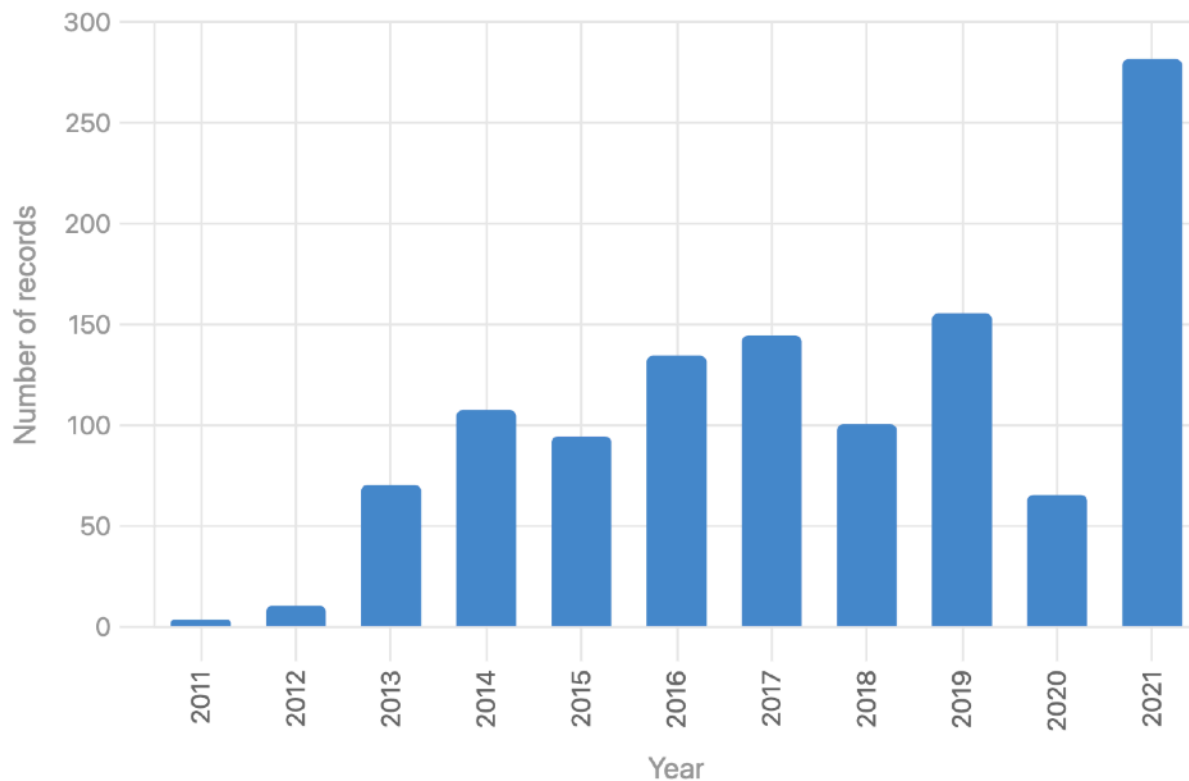
During this period we popped up more than ever before and most of our work took place on closed streets. In partnership with the NYC Department of Transportation, we also deployed our programs in new public spaces so communities could envision what public space could mean. As part of this work we identified local groups, created events, coordinated day of activities, and provided outreach, permits, gear, and promotion for the events.

## In 2020 we completed...

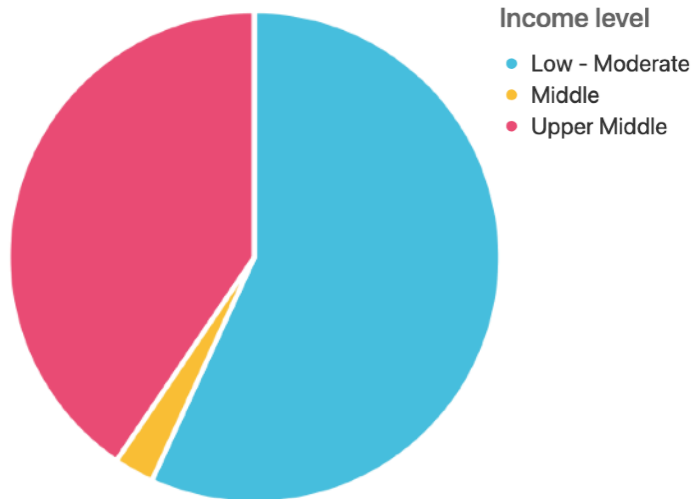
65 pop-ups in 15 locations with 14 residencies

## In 2021 we completed...

281 pop-ups 69 locations 48 residencies



**Number of Street Lab Deployments over Time:** In 2021 we nearly doubled our annual number of deployments in comparison with 2019 our most recent pre-pandemic year.



**Income Levels Served 2021-2022:** 60% of our work was in low to moderate income community board districts and we will increase this percentage in 2022.



Mayor Bill de Blasio highlighted our PLAY NYC program in a July 2020 press conference announcing the return of Play Streets.



Street Lab won a 2021 [Best of the City Award](#) from Time Out New York for our 100 Activations for NYC initiative.





# Looking Ahead

We're staying-the-course as we gear up for this year, driven by a vision of what our city can be when a vibrant, shared street life brings out the best in all of us.

In 2022 we look forward to developing more new activations on the street in support of small businesses, adding opportunities for Street Lab Teens to directly engage community leaders, and testing out new designs for intergenerational street furniture - all while making neighborhoods in all five boroughs brighter, livelier, and more connected.

See you on the street!

A reportage drawing by our 2020 Artist in Residence Sanika Phawde of an Open Street on W120th Street in Harlem





# Our Staff & Board

Executive Director  
Leslie Davol

Director  
Sam Davol

Program & Operations Manager  
Wei Du

Program Designer  
Soledad Tejada

Program Staff  
Antara Morfe  
Christopher Colon

Elizabeth Reyes  
Glen Kelly  
Isis Rivas

Jara Montez  
John Rego

Kaila Martinez  
Kelley Malloy  
Leilani Girard

Linnea Soli  
Olivia DeSanto

Saulriishearow Alonzia  
Thalia Flores Perez  
Ester Schmulyan

## Board of Directors

Jane Sujen Bock  
Angella Brown

Willard Donham  
Jared Eigerman

Laura Fleder  
Kenneth Gordon

Judith Hilton  
Morgan A. Jones

Zara Mannan

## Advisory Panel

Stacy Abramson

Ariana Austin

Polly Carpenter

Aimee Good

Leigh Hurwitz

Gloria Lau

Tiffany Lin

Jennifer Polshek

Rachel Urkowitz





## Some of our Supporters



## Our Partners



We partnered with over 100 groups during 2020 and 2021 including neighborhood coalitions, arts organizations, creatives, student designers, undergraduate volunteers, business improvement district groups, government agencies, cultural institutions, educational nonprofits...



and more...!



Financial Information

	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL*
	2019	2020	2021
<b>SUPPORT &amp; REVENUE</b>			
Individuals	46,914	48,418	49,205
Corporations	14,700	72,730	36,500
Foundations	25,000	98,500	20,000
Government grants	44,591	57,331	169,982
Government contracts	0	20,000	0
Earned - Programming & Partnership fees	50,155	17,600	97,770
Earned - Kit revenue	26,594	74,651	210,283
Misc revenue	0	0	50
Subtotal Cash Revenue	<b>\$207,954</b>	<b>\$389,230</b>	<b>\$583,790</b>
In-Kind goods/services	55,535	91,856	64,250
Total Revenue	<b>\$263,489</b>	<b>\$481,086</b>	<b>\$648,040</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>			
<i>PROGRAM SERVICE - PROGRAMMING</i>			
Salaries, Wages & Taxes	116,700	111,720	158,387
Employee Insurance (e.g. Health etc.)	50	14,847	11,014
Contract Services	1,576	16,198	20,609
Materials & Supplies	4,833	2,653	8,939
Printing & copying	96	513	897
Occupancy (storage, parking, permits)	13,344	10,997	18,028
Moving (truck, gas, tolls, meters)	4,410	5,906	17,105
Transit local	741	111	2,409
Other program-related	1,532	1,273	3,853
Subtotal	143,282	164,217	241,241
<i>PROGRAM SERVICE - KITS FOR OTHERS</i>			
Salaries, Wages & Taxes	9,885	7,428	24,760
Employee Insurance (e.g. Health etc.)	218	539	994
Contract Services	15,210	50,809	116,078
Materials & Supplies	1,534	3,607	10,930
Occupancy (storage, parking, permits)	1,332	0	0
Moving & Shipping	2,001	6,686	14,014
Other program-related	445	1,572	1,262
Subtotal	30,624	70,641	168,039
Subtotal Program Services	173,907	234,858	409,281
<i>SUPPORT SERVICES - GENERAL &amp; MANAGEMENT</i>			
Salaries, Wages & Taxes	30,552	30,572	37,155
Employee Insurance (e.g. Health etc.)	436	7,734	13,963
Contract Services	2,829	16,591	3,203
Materials & Supplies	3,769	2,408	10,562
Office & org exepnse	1,821	1,462	1,854
Insurance (GL, D&O)	5,406	4,900	4,598
Occupancy (office)	0	0	5,949
Subtotal Support Services	44,812	63,667	77,284
Subtotal Cash Expenditures	<b>218,719</b>	<b>298,525</b>	<b>486,565</b>
Depreciation	2,078	2,223	2,223
In-Kind goods/services	55,535	91,856	64,250
Total Expenditures	<b>276,332</b>	<b>392,604</b>	<b>553,038</b>
Change in Net Assets	-12,843	88,482	95,002
Net Assets, End of Year	95,014	183,496	278,499

\*2021 not yet reviewed by accountant

March 8 2022



