



# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

## Who we are



*Wheels' volunteers turn out in force to distribute 72 bikes at Centro Hispano*

Serving Madison and Dane County since 1992, Wheels for Winners is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that supports bicycling through an earn-a-bike program and related activities. Working with community organizations and schools, we provide refurbished bicycles to youth and adults who perform community service to earn their bikes. Our all-volunteer organization believes that equitable access to a bicycle is an important component of a

strong, vibrant, healthy community. Our efforts encourage volunteerism, recycle unused bicycles, and support cycling as part of a healthy lifestyle.

## By the numbers

### Bikes received and refurbished

- ❖ 830 bikes donated
- ❖ 371 donated bikes refurbished

### Bikes, helmets and locks distributed

- ❖ 398 refurbished bikes given to earners for community service
- ❖ 92 refurbished bikes provided to community groups and events
- ❖ 299 unrestored bikes donated (241 to Working Bikes and 58 to Free Bikes For Kids)
- ❖ 349 helmets and 286 locks were distributed as part of our bike safety program

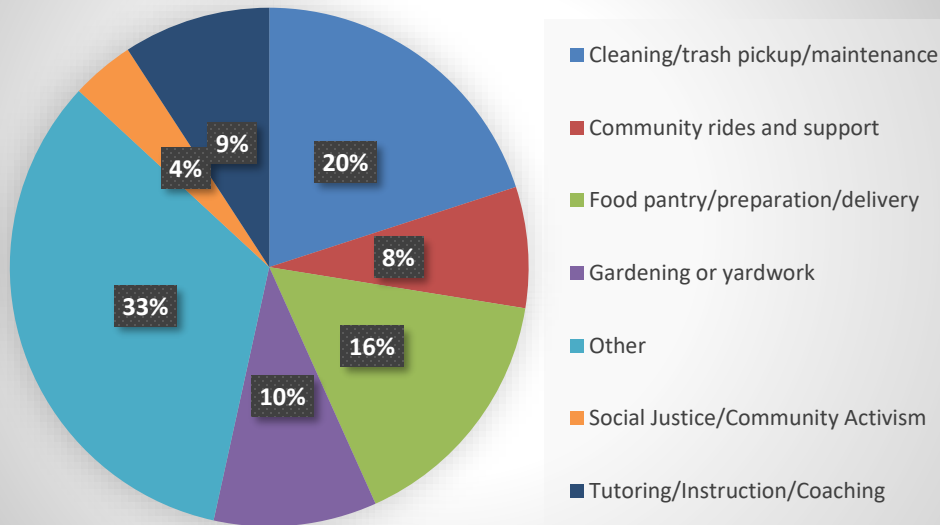


*Jamie Campbell, a 2023 Community Shares of Wisconsin "Backyard Hero" award winner, fits a helmet on a bike recipient.*

## Our bike earners serve the community

The core component of our program involves earning a bike by performing community service. Of the 305 people who earned bikes, nearly 70 percent (205) identified as a member of a community of color. This year we had about 10 percent more youth earners (109) than we had in 2022. The following pie chart provides a breakdown of the type of service performed. The category labeled "Other" includes hosting a meal for newly arrived immigrants.

## Types of community service (by percent)



## Keeping bikes rolling

In addition to distributing refurbished bikes, our volunteer mechanics participated at 30 community and other events held from April to November, where we repaired 336 bikes. For years, we have repaired bikes at the Bayview Foundation Community Center and Lussier Family Heritage Center Lussier and this year, we followed suit by repairing 54 bikes at Bayview and 61 bikes at Lussier. To better support these partners we provided in-service training sessions for staff to learn basic bicycle maintenance, Seven Lussier staff sharpened their skills to keep their bike fleet of 60+ bikes running during the summer. Similarly, three Bayview staff were better equipped to keep their kids' bikes running all summer long.

## Meeting community needs

Whether it's breathing new life into established partnerships or finding ways to address emerging needs, we remain diligent in our commitment to serve our community.

For more than a decade, we have supported the work of Centro Hispano through bike distributions and repair events. In 2023, we came through again to share a record number of bikes for kids to receive as part of the El Día de Los Tres Reyes (Three Kings Day) celebration. From our early involvement in this event over 10 years ago, we have nearly tripled the bikes we now contribute.

We also increased our participation in the repair events held at the Centro Hispano's farmer's market. This year we attended 5 events where we fixed nearly 20 bikes.



*Nivali Mariam has been active wrencher at repair events including those at Centro Hispano's farmer's market.*



A number of our volunteers have actively sustained our relationship with Centro Hispano, Nivali Mariam, a diligent mechanic and a thoughtful board member, has been a crucial force in increasing access to cycling within the Latinx community. In addition to translating our materials into Spanish, Nivali has worked to bring in a steady stream of new Spanish speaking earners to our shop. These earners have gained community service hours by coordinating community bike rides. Nivali was also recognized as a 2023 Backyard Hero, an award sponsored by Community Shares of Wisconsin.

We reinvigorated our relationship with O’Keeffe Middle School. SBA (School Based Alternative) is a program within MMSD that provides students with emotional/behavioral differences, highly individualized

programming based on their strengths. Wheels for Winners is teaching mechanic skills to interested students to help foster: attention/focus, problem solving, fine motor skills, following instructions, and communication skills. Students are working on their own bikes as well as offering free repair services to students and staff.



*An O’Keeffe student with his completed bike*



*Open Doors for Refugees brought us three generations from a Syrian family to get bikes from Wheels*

As is true of many others in this country who witnessed our worldwide refugee crisis, Madison area groups have opened their arms to resettle Ukrainians, Afghans, Syrians, Ethiopian and others displaced by war and other calamities. This year Wheels for Winners worked with [Open Doors for Refugees](#), [Jewish Social Services Refugee and Immigration Services](#), [Stoughton Resettlement Project](#), and the International Crane Foundation to provide 60 bikes to help in these resettlement efforts.

Immigrant families face many challenges when they come to a new land and we are proud to be able to assist. Many not-for-profit organizations have provided countless volunteer hours to make them feel at home. Myron, a 12 year from the Ukraine, had this to say about the bikes he, his mother and grandmother received,

“My bike helps me to get to sport practices. I also enjoy riding with my family and friends, and just relaxing outside on my bike. Thank you very much for this gift!”

(The bikes provided to Myron and his family members give them freedom and independence, while his mother and grandmother work long hours and strive to improve they’re in fluency in English.)



OPEN DOORS FOR REFUGEES PICNIC SPOTLIGHT



**WHEELS FOR WINNERS**



Open Doors picnic where we celebrated with program participants while repairing several bikes.

## A very special "Thank You" to our supporters



**Kiwaniis**



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The Lori and David Nicholas Family Foundation



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