Common Bond New Mexico Foundation

Annual Report 2023

COMMON BOND
NEW MEXICO

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May 7, 2024

1 Message from the President

The mission of the Common Bond New Mexico Foundation is:

> Our mission is to invest in and uplift the LGBTQ+ communities of New Mexico, united by our common bond, through programs and partnerships that serve persons belonging to gender and sexual minorities throughout our state.

In 2023 Common Bond pursued this mission through two programs:

> **U-21**, a weekly program that provides a safe, sober, and affirming environment for the LGBTQ youth of Albuquerque.
>
> **HIV Emergency Project**, which provides "last-resort" financial assistance to low-income New Mexicans living with HIV/AIDS.

During 2023, Common Bond faced a lot of change. Between Board Members phasing in and out, youth graduating the program, and new faces starting, a lot of people got fresh starts all around. I'm happy to see the programs we have flourishing.

The U-21 Youth Program grew like a weed this year and we got to meet handfuls of new faces, as well as see some old ones come back as facilitators. Our team is operating at peak standard and they work together with an efficiency that cannot be topped.

The Emergency Project keeps hitting milestones year after year. Our volunteers are facing some turnover this next year, so they're working tirelessly to ensure that hand-off is as effortless as possible. I have full faith in them.

2023 was yet another record year for Common Bond, and I'm so incredibly proud of the work that the Board, facilitators, and volunteers put in to make it all happen. This work couldn't happen without all of them!

Thank you,

Elizabeth Ames, President

Common Bond New Mexico Foundation

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2 Officers and Board of Directors

The bylaws of Common Bond state, "The Board will consist of three to thirteen Directors elected at each annual meeting by a majority of the Board."[1] There are currently six board members as listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Current Board Members and Officers of Common Bond as of January 2024

Name	Position
Elizabeth Ames	Board Member, President
Anami Dass	Board Member, Treasurer
Matt Shubert	Board Member, Secretary
Selena Richardson	Board Member, Webmaster
Dylan Lutey	Board Member
Wyatt Day	Board Member

Our board members may be contacted at commonbondnewmexico@gmail.com or 505-636-0845.

[1] Common Bond New Mexico Foundation bylaws approved December 13, 2018, §IV.1

Financial Statement for 2023

Revenue:		
	Direct Public Support	$80,471
	Indirect Public Support	$1,536
	Investments	$51
	Grants	$5,000
	Interest Income	$593
	Total Income:	**$168,122**
Expenses:		
	Insurance	$2,247
	Program Expenses[2]	$122,792
	Business Expenses	$82
	Charitable Donations	$850
	Facilities/Business/Misc.	$1,269
	Total Expenses:	**$127,240**
	Net Gain in 2022:	**$40,882**

[2] Program Expenses include all costs associated with Common Bond's programs such as providing financial assistance to people with HIV/AIDS through the Emergency Project ($96,202) and facilitating social activities and direct assistance for our youth in the U-21 program ($12,010).

3 Annual Review of Programs

3.1 U-21 Youth Support Group

The youth program ebbs and flows with the different times of year; when school starts and stops, spring and fall break, testing times. Our numbers vary based on these times, but the one thing the program can always count on is the youth to come back. After COVID-19, the youth flocked to the program and have stayed ever since. Different generations of different faces have come and we've welcomed them with open doors.

We've started doing more weekend activities more often. The youth seem to quite enjoy roller skating. We're taking them to the park as well, and are starting to go to movies more frequently, too. The book club really took off. We have the Rainbow Library now, as well, where the kids can check out a book from us that's LGBTQ+ related and keep it for as long as they need. After a few months, a facilitator will check in to see if they still need it, but if they're still working on it, they can hang on to the book. They're still getting a free book once a month that's on a pre-chosen theme, and the kids get to pick from one of three or four books in the Discord server via vote. We distributed approximately 200 books to U-21 youth in 2023.

Our facilitators are our lifeblood, and they have stayed steady. We're always looking for more to help keep it to where we can sub in so people can take a much needed and deserved break, but we have a good crew of faithful and trustworthy people. We couldn't do this without them.

This program brings so much joy to so many of our youth. It's such a fantastic space, well worth the time and effort we all put into it. Pride is coming up, and that's where we get a good amount of our recruiting done via postcards and schedules handed out. The youth have an amazing time and the facilitators do too.

3.2 HIV Emergency Project

For 35 years, the Emergency Project has played a unique role within the state's HIV healthcare network. The New Mexico Department of Health estimates that 4,107 people in the state are infected with HIV. We help meet the basic living needs of some of the most vulnerable people within that population.

During 2023:
●We continued our assistance benefit of $300 per referred client.
● We provided "last resort" financial assistance to 395 clients– 46 more than in 2022.
● We disbursed $111,838 -- $14,641 more than in 2022.

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The Emergency Project helps prevent homelessness for low-income New Mexicans living with HIV/AIDS. Ours is "last resort" financial assistance with the flexibility to meet a wide range of needs – some of which (like auto repairs) are essential but cannot be paid by government or other sources of support. Our rush payments are primarily for rent, utilities, and medical bills. We also assist with health insurance, medicines, and other necessities of life. Very few of our clients can pay for eyeglasses through any other sources. Due to inflation, again last year the single most important need was help for gas and electricity bills.

Our assistance checks go out within 24 hours; often on the same day the request is received.

Many government-funded agencies are slow to make decisions -- or there are seasonal caps on funds that are available. The Emergency Project steps in when no other assistance program can quickly relieve the stress on people dealing with the multiple issues of HIV/AIDS infection.

We respond to case manager requests from the New Mexico Department of Health's five HIV Service Provider organizations: University of New Mexico Truman Health Services, Southwest Care Center, First Nations Community HealthSource, Alianza of New Mexico, and Community Collaborative Care. Providing our services through these agencies helps assure that their clients remain in treatment thereby reducing spread of the HIV virus in our state.

During 2023, we mailed 488 assistance checks (323 of them for utilities) to help 395 male, female and transgender clients who are White, Hispanic, Native American and Black. Ages ranged from 23 to 83.

The Emergency Project serves not only the metro areas of Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Las Cruces, but also 62 smaller New Mexico cities and rural communities. During 2023, we helped clients in Abiquiu, Acoma, Alamogordo, Alto, Anthony, Anton Chico, Aztec, Belen, Berino, Bernalillo, Bloomfield, Buena Vista, Carlsbad, Chaparral, Chimayo, Church Rock, Clovis, Cochiti Lake, Cochiti Pueblo, Columbus, Cuba, Deming, Edgewood, El Prado, Elephant Butte, Farmington, Flora Vista, Fruitland, Galisteo, Gallup, Grants, Hatch, Ilfeld, Laguna, Lamy, Los Lunas, Mentmore, Mesilla Park, Mesquite, Moriarty, Nogal, Ojo Caliente, Portales, Questa, Raton, Ranchos de Taos, Rio Rancho, Roswell, Ruidoso, Sandia Park, Silver City, Sunland Park, Thoreau, Tijeras, Tohatchi, Truth or Consequences, Tucumcari, Vanderwagon and Waterflow.

The Emergency Project was established during the original AIDS crisis, when people were dying at shocking rates. Thirty-five years ago, clients were primarily gay and bisexual men living in Albuquerque and Santa Fe. Over the years our client base has evolved along with the changing face of HIV. We have never discriminated on the basis of race, gender or sexual orientation.

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These are examples of the financial challenges experienced by our clients during 2023:

● 73-year-old widowed Rio Rancho woman had to purchase medical equipment not covered by insurance. This leaves her short to pay her rent.
●70-year-old man was faced with the rising cost of propane gas plus the unexpected funeral expenses for his partner.

● 47-year-old disabled man has limited SSDI income. He was recently hospitalized and had a lot of medical expenses. He just moved and needed assistance with his gas bill.

● 44-year-old woman was recently ill and out of work for several weeks. Her employer does not provide sick leave, so she had no income. She fell behind on her electric bill and was at risk of disconnection.

● 35-year-old man is a caregiver for his mother which decreases the number of hours he is able to work. He needed financial assistance with a high electricity bill.

As an additional service for referred clients, Common Bond board member Dylan Lutey, an estate planning attorney with Hedrich Law, P.A. in Albuquerque, offers pro bono legal services: New Mexico Power of Attorney and Advance Medical Directive.

The Emergency Project operates in a low-key, direct, individual manner with a minimum of bureaucratic detail. For its first 20 years, equal rights activist Liz Canfield managed the project as a volunteer from her home. A new volunteer, Steve Ridlon, became Director in October 2008. Because he donates the cost of the Project's operating expenses, 100% of private donations and grant funds are disbursed to people in critical financial need.

During 2023, the Emergency Project received $78,322 in funding and donations from the New Mexico Department of Health, Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, UNM Truman Health Services' HIV Glow Walk, The Wilde Bunch, and 10 private individuals.

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