




WOMEN
for a Healthy
ENVIRONMENT

Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Report



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Our year in review

Dear Reader,

What a year! Looking back on everything we've accomplished together, we're filled with such gratitude and pride. And honestly, we feel a little bit of awe. Women for a Healthy Environment had such humble beginnings – just a group of women who wanted to make the places we live, learn, and grow healthier for everyone. And thanks to you, that mission is thriving.

This year, we continued to meet families in the places that matter most – their homes, schools, and early learning centers – helping them make significant, lasting changes to protect their health. Over 1,300 people attended our educational sessions, and we provided direct support to families navigating asthma, lead exposure, and poor indoor air quality. We tested 46 schools for lead and radon, renovated 15 homes within our Healthy Homes Asthma Program, and made sure 37 early learning centers were certified as Eco-Healthy to create safer spaces for growing minds and bodies.

But our work goes beyond that. We're advocating for systemic change so that no caregiver has to worry about the air their child breathes or the water they drink. This year, we worked alongside community leaders, health experts, and policymakers to push for stronger protections, and we brought the latest science to the table with research that's helping drive action.





None of this happens without you. You continue to forge our path with your generosity, your belief in our mission, and your faith in our abilities – it’s what keeps us moving forward.

Whether you donated, volunteered, shared our work, or simply cheered us on, you are part of this impact. Because of you, WHE received national recognition, including the EPA Safer Choice Partner of the Year Award and the PA Governor’s Award for Environmental Excellence, underwent a branding refresh, launched our new website, and published our first strategic plan in five years.

But we’re not stopping there! We’ve got big plans for the next fiscal year, and beyond. Fueled by countless conversations with our community partners, our program recipients, and staff, we intend to deepen our impact where it matters most. Thank you for being part of this journey with us. We can’t wait to see what we’ll accomplish together.

With gratitude and hope,

Michelle Naccarati-Chapkis
Executive Director

Ann McGuinn
FY24 Board Chair

Tracey Conti, MD
FY25 Board Chair



Our mission

At the core of Women for a Healthy Environment is the belief that a healthy environment is a fundamental right for all. We use a scientific approach to drive equitable solutions, focusing on advocacy and community engagement to address environmental challenges and create lasting, positive change.

Our values

1. Commitment
2. Accountability
3. Inclusiveness
4. Integrity
5. Vigilance

Our programs



Healthy Homes

Every family deserves a safe place to call home. We help parents and caregivers protect their children from hidden dangers like lead, mold, and polluted air – because no one should have to choose between shelter and health. Through home visits, resources, and education, we make healthier home living possible.

Healthy Early Learning

Little lungs, little hands, big futures. We help early childhood centers create toxin-free spaces where young children can learn, play, and grow without the shadow of environmental harm. Every child deserves a healthy start.

Healthy Schools

A young person's potential should never be limited by the air they breathe or the water they drink. We work alongside schools to clear classrooms of toxins, improve indoor air, and create spaces where students and teachers can thrive. Learning should happen in a safe and healthy environment.

Environmental Health Policy

The air we breathe, the water we drink, the places we call home – these should be safe for everyone, regardless of your zip code. We fight for policies that protect families and communities, ensuring that health is a right, not a privilege. When we raise our voices together, change happens.



Our impact

\$18,016

Average cost per home renovation

15

Homes renovated within the Healthy Homes Asthma Program

315

Resources distributed to the community that improves environmental health

3,500

Total community members served

37

Early learning centers that received Eco-Healthy Certification

55

Healthy Homes Assessments completed



Breathing clean: Jamie

For Jamie, keeping her home safe and healthy for her 14-year-old son has always been a priority. But when his asthma started causing him to miss school, she knew something in their home might be making things worse.

She first learned about WHE's Healthy Homes Asthma Program through community outreach. After signing up, she received a home assessment, lead and air quality testing, and a personalized plan to make her home healthier. After sitting down with WHE's Amanda Jimcosky, trained contractors arrived and worked for a full week to make key improvements, including installing a humidifier, improving ventilation, and providing an asthma-friendly home kit with cleaning supplies and air quality tools.

"I'm very protective of my home... But the team worked with me, respected my space, and made sure I felt comfortable..."

At first, Jamie wasn't sure about having so many people in her space. "I'm very protective of my home," she shared. "But the team worked with me, respected my space, and made sure I felt comfortable throughout the process."

The results were undeniable. Her son's asthma flare-ups became less frequent, and Jamie noticed she wasn't coughing as much either. But the biggest eye-opener was learning about lead exposure.

“I had heard of lead, but I had no idea it could affect kids that much,” she admitted. “When the workers explained it – and showed me that it could be in my water, in my home – it really changed how I saw things.”

Now, Jamie encourages other families to seek out programs like WHE’s, even if they don’t realize they need them.

“Try to get help, reach out to these programs, because there’s a lot we don’t know about,” she said. “Sometimes, all it takes is one person to help you connect. We don’t even realize there are programs for asthma, but they’re out there – and they make a difference.”

For Jamie, WHE’s impact is simple: “Respectful, generous, very helpful, and very concerned.” And for her son, that impact has meant breathing easier, missing less school, and feeling healthier every day.

Jamie, thank you for letting us be part of your journey. Your strength and advocacy for your son inspires us, and we’re grateful to support families like yours.



Scan to learn more about our
Healthy Homes Asthma Program



Bridging generations: JADA House International

When you walk through the doors of JADA House International, you don't just enter a nonprofit – you enter a home. There are fresh flowers on the tables, warm food on the stove, and a sense of belonging that wraps around you like a hug. At the heart of it all is Founder & Executive Director, Ms. Terri Shields, a woman whose vision and deep love for her community have transformed what started as small gatherings in her home into a vital pillar of support for the Hazelwood community and beyond.

But JADA House International wasn't built overnight.

"This organization is all about legacy – what you leave behind, and how your community remembers you."

In 2012, Ms. Terri faced what she calls her "third chance at life." After surviving lupus, congestive heart failure, and a long stay in the ICU, she knew she had to give back. She started inviting people into her home – not for formal programs or structured services, but simply to share meals, talk, and lift one another up through life's challenges. What began as a few friends and neighbors coming together quickly grew into something much bigger.

Ms. Terri explains, "The word 'JADA' comes from the initials of my first and oldest grandchildren. This organization is all about legacy – what you leave behind, and how your community remembers you."



With no official funding in the early days, Ms. Terri poured her own money into the work, making sure no one left her home hungry – physically or emotionally. When local funders couldn't support her because she wasn't a registered nonprofit, she didn't stop. She built her vision step by step, earning JADA House International its 501(c)(3) status in 2017 and turning it into a trusted hub for Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) families in Pittsburgh.

One of JADA House International's cornerstone programs is its Kinship Program, which supports grandparents who find themselves unexpectedly raising their grandchildren. These caregivers face unique challenges – many step into their role suddenly, with little preparation or resources. JADA House International offers them more than just guidance; it offers them community.



Every week, kinship caregivers gather around the table, sharing wisdom, struggles, and laughter. Ms. Terri and her team provide not only a space to connect but practical tools, from workshops on financial planning to strategies for communicating with teenagers in a digital world.

Each session starts with a meal – a simple but powerful act of nourishment – and an opening question designed to spark memories and reflections.

“We listen first. That’s the most important thing.” says Mercedes L. Williams, JADA House International’s Director of Programs. “We hear their challenges, and from there, we figure out how to support them.”

This philosophy of deep listening and responsive action is what makes JADA House International so effective. It’s also what makes WHE’s partnership with the Kinship Program so meaningful and important.

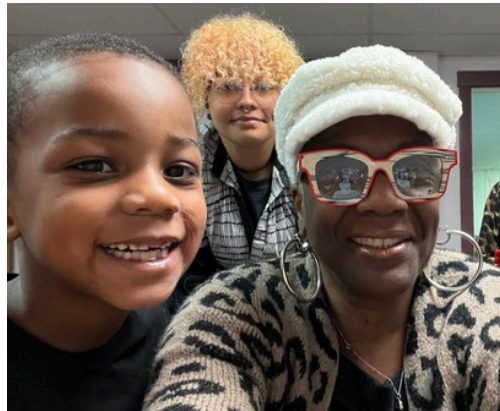
WHE is proud to work alongside JADA House International, bringing environmental health education directly to kinship caregivers. These families often live in communities where lead exposure, indoor air quality, and safe drinking water are major concerns. The grandparents in the Kinship Program are caring for young, growing children – children whose developing bodies are especially vulnerable to environmental toxins.

“They’re [JADA House International] about love, nourishment, and empowerment, values WHE whole-heartedly stands by” says Michelle Naccarati-Chapkis, WHE Executive Director. “We’re so grateful they’ve opened their organization and community members up to our staff and allow us to provide the knowledge and tools they need to build healthier, safer homes.”

Ms. Terri’s dream is bigger than Hazelwood. She sees JADA House International as a model for other communities, a blueprint for how love and care can transform neighborhoods, one meal and one conversation at a time.

“We’re not just a resource center – we’re a home,” she says. “People come here because they trust us. And if we don’t have the solution, we’ll find it. If we can’t help directly, we’ll connect you to someone who can. We want to be the place people know they can turn to, no matter what they’re facing.”

From those early meals in Ms. Terri’s dining room to a thriving nonprofit in the heart of Hazelwood, JADA House International has never lost its foundation of community, compassion, and unwavering support.



As they continue to grow, so does their impact – and WHE is honored to stand beside them in this work.

Because when we listen, when we love, that’s when real change happens.

Thank you, JADA House International, for your commitment to generational healing. We are honored to stand beside you in creating healthier homes and stronger families.

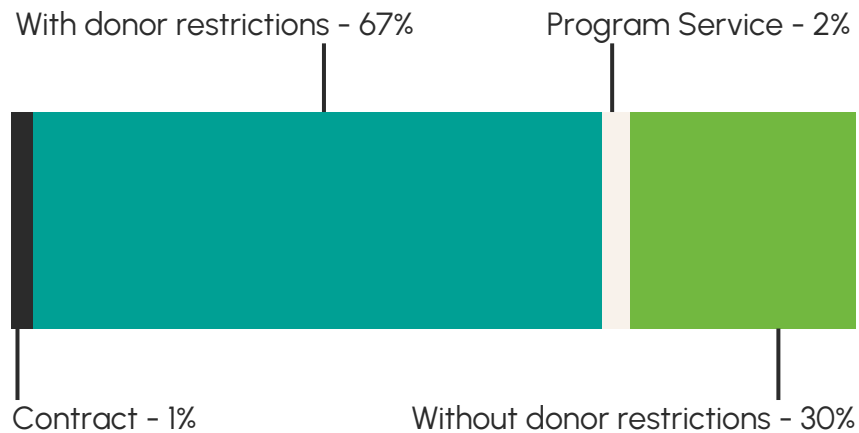


Scan to support
JADA House International

Our revenue

Contributed Revenue (without donor restrictions)	\$692,231
Contributed Revenue (with donor restrictions)	\$1,543,317
Program Services	\$56,799
Contract	\$19,888
Miscellaneous (not depicted)	\$1,622

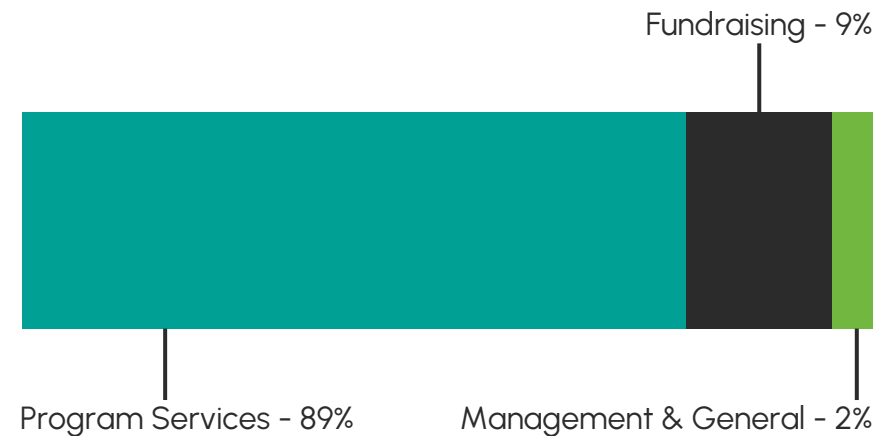
Total revenue **\$2,313,687**



Our expenses

Program Services	\$1,603,597
Fundraising	\$167,726
Management & General	\$38,468

Total expenses **\$1,809,791**



We are proud that **89%** of our total spending went directly to program services, far exceeding best practices.

Changing systems, protecting health

At Women for a Healthy Environment, we know that true environmental justice means changing the systems that shape our daily lives. Our **Environmental Health Policy** work ensures that our community is protected not only through local interventions, but through strong, science-based policies that create healthier conditions at scale.

In FY24, we pushed for major change at both the state and federal level. We submitted formal comments to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency urging stronger regulations on PFAS in drinking water and health-protective revisions to the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements. We also advocated for increased investment in HUD's Healthy Homes Program and the EPA's Healthy Schools initiatives, ensuring that these federal efforts reflect the needs of communities on the ground.

In Pennsylvania, we supported policies that strengthen community health from all angles: backing the State Plan Amendment to recognize Community Health Workers, and championing a filter-first approach to lead in school drinking water, an essential step toward safe, accessible hydration for every child.





Throughout the year, we coordinated statewide coalitions and policy campaigns – most notably hosting a bipartisan press conference in Harrisburg to support radon testing in schools. We also partnered with firefighter associations to address PFAS contamination in firefighting foam and shared educational materials statewide.

WHE’s voice is backed by science. In FY24, we released four major reports:

- **“Three Rivers, Fifteen PFAS”** examined how wastewater is polluting Pittsburgh’s rivers with harmful chemicals
- **“Indoor Air Quality in Childcare”** showed how air filters drastically reduce pollution in early learning centers
- **“Shade Structures & Outdoor Play”** demonstrated how cooling interventions support safe outdoor activity during hotter summers
- **“Measuring Up”** provided report cards on 36 Allegheny County water systems, spotlighting inequities in transparency, affordability, and quality

This work is making waves. WHE presented at national conferences including the National Society of Toxicology, US Water Alliance, Health Without Harm CleanMed, and more. Locally, we continue to lead conversations around environmental health equity at universities, legislative convenings, and community summits.

Because protecting public health means more than reacting to problems – it means rewriting the rules to prevent them in the first place.



Scan to read the full reports



Building a legacy: Ann McGuinn

When Ann McGuinn moved to Pittsburgh in 1981, the city was reeling from the collapse of the steel industry. Unemployment was high, families were leaving in droves, and the future felt uncertain. But where some saw a city in decline, Ann saw something else—a community that needed people willing to step up. That’s exactly what she did.

Her journey into philanthropy started over dinner, sitting next to a man from The Heinz Endowments. That conversation led to another, which led to her first experience in Pittsburgh fundraising—supporting the Pittsburgh Symphony. One opportunity opened the door to another, and soon Ann found herself deeply embedded in Pittsburgh’s nonprofit world, raising money, building relationships, and making things happen.

Ann was there from the start. WHE began humbly – no offices, no big budget, just a passionate group of women determined to address the intersection of women’s health and the environment. Inspired by national conversations happening in Boston and beyond, Ann worked alongside other early advocates, pulling together leaders from the health and building industries, securing small grants, and slowly but steadily piecing together what would become a powerful force for change.

“There’s no miracle here,” she says. “It was someone else’s inspiration, and then it became our dedication.”

“There’s no miracle here. It was someone else’s inspiration, and then it became our dedication.”





She credits much of WHE's success to its leadership – visionaries like Michelle Naccarati-Chapkis, who built the organization from the ground up. “Every time we had a bump, we just kept going,” she reflects. “We have changed so much in the last few years. It really is amazing to see the growth and impact we’ve managed to achieve.”

For Ann, philanthropy isn't about prestige or obligation - it's about using the blessings she's had in life to lift others up. “I really care about people,” she says. “If I can improve their lives, their health – whatever it is – I want to use what I’ve been given to do that.”

Her giving is deeply personal. She sees need, she feels it in her heart, and she acts. “If something touches you – children, wellness, people starving in the world – can't just sit by,” she says. “The smallest gift can make the biggest impact.”

Her generosity extends beyond dollars and cents – it's in the time she spends, the people she connects, and the belief she instills in those doing the work.

She has been WHE's longest-standing advocate, not because she had to be, but because she knows what's at stake.

Today, Ann's greatest joy is her six granddaughters, ranging from two to twenty-three. She hopes they grow up knowing the same truth she's carried throughout her life: when you have the ability to make a difference, you don't just sit back – you do something.

Women for a Healthy Environment wouldn't be what it is today without Ann McGuinn's belief, leadership, and support. From its scrappy beginnings to its statewide impact, her legacy is woven into every home made healthier, every school and childcare center made safer, and every family given the tools to thrive.

And true to her nature, she doesn't take credit – she simply keeps giving.

We thank you, Ann, for your courage, your kindness, your heart, and your dedication to this community.

Our vision for the future

As we move into this next fiscal year, we are committed to deepening our impact and expanding our reach. With our newly launched **strategic plan**, we are focused on five goals to create healthier communities, drive environmental justice, and secure the future of our work.



Strengthen Our Organization for Long-Term Success



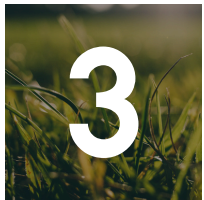
Build a Holistic, Community-Based Environmental Justice Model



Lead the conversation on Environmental Health

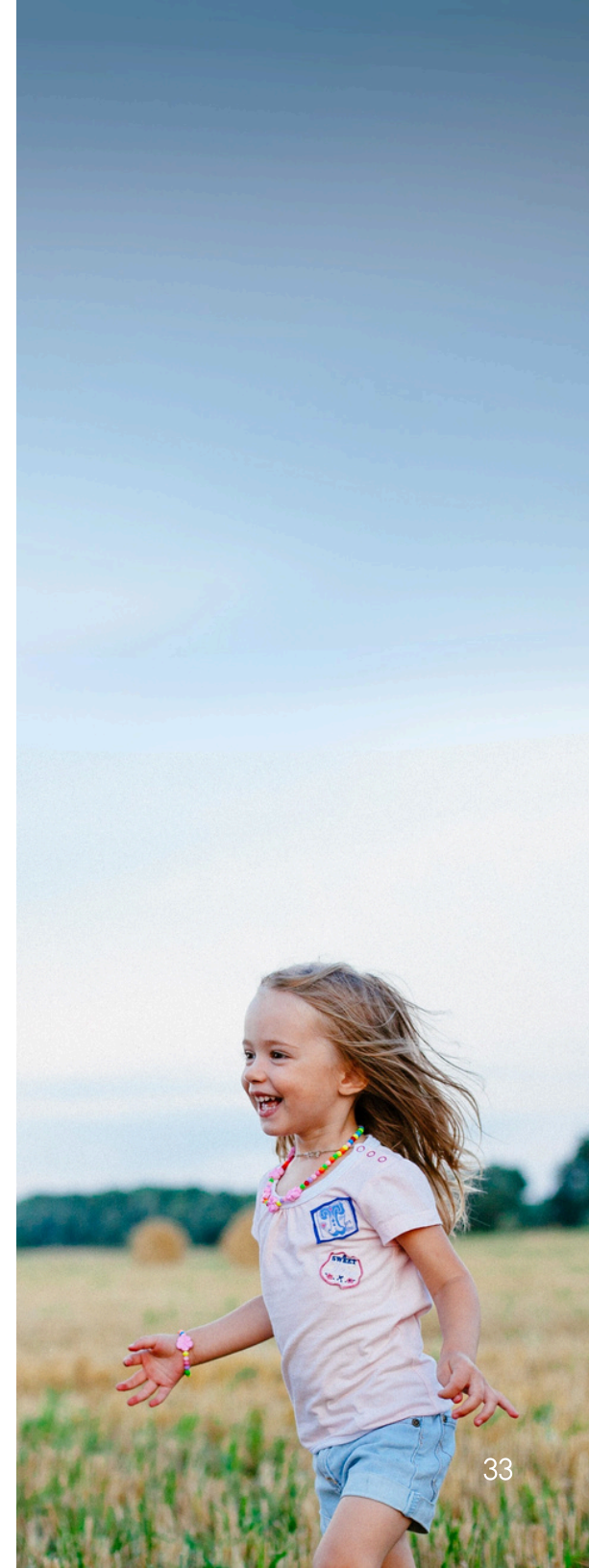


Expand WHE's Regional Reach



Grow and Diversify Funding for Sustainability

See how we'll achieve these goals at womenforahealthyenvironment.org



Our staff

Mounika Abbareddy
CDC Childhood Lead
Poisoning Prevention
Program Project
Coordinator

Pecola Abele, MPH
Director of Healthy
Learning

Kesa Ahomana, MSW
Director of Development

Maria Anderson
Director of Operations

Mike Davis
Community Program
Specialist

Lindsay Fraser, MPH
Director of Healthy Homes

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Samantha Hernandez, MPH
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Program Manager

Amanda Jimcosky, MPH
HUD Program Manager,
Healthy Homes Production
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Paige Kizior, M.ED
Healthy Learning Program
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Community Health Worker

Michelle Naccarati-Chapkis
Executive Director

Dolores Parker
Associate Director of
Communications

Germaine Gooden Patterson
Community Health Worker

Lorna Rosenberg
Healthy Buildings Program
Manager, Eastern PA



Our board

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Community Volunteer

Tracey Conti, MD, **Vice Chair**
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Buchanan

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Donna Evans Sebastian
Heinz Endowments

Peggy Slota, PhD
Georgetown University

Ways to give



Monthly Giving

Become a monthly donor and join our Health Guardians community



Planned Giving

Leave a lasting legacy. Include WHE in your will or estate plan, ensuring environmental health for generations



United Way

Give monthly through payroll deductions. Our United Way of Southwestern PA contributor choice number is: 12945754

For more information, email kesa@whepa.org
Kesa Ahomana, Director of Development





Thank you

Every home we made healthier, every school we made safer, and every family we empowered this year was because of you.

Your generosity fuels our mission, turning hope into action and challenges into opportunities. We are endlessly grateful for every individual donor who gave with heart and purpose – each and every one of you.

See below for our corporate and foundation donors. Together, we are creating a safer, healthier future for all.

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Blackbaud Giving Fund
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Community Foundation for
the Alleghenies
Fine Foundation
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Heinz Endowments
HR Rescue Resources, LLC
Jack Buncher Foundation

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McAuley Ministries
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Putting Down Roots
United Way
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Unitarian Church of
Pittsburgh



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