



Empowering  
**EKO**  
Kids Organization



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# Annual Report

2023

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# From Our President

Dear friends and supporters,

I am delighted to present the Annual Report for 2023 from Empowering Kids Organization. As we reflect on the past year, we are proud to share with you the impactful milestones and achievements that your unwavering support has made possible.

## Program Implementation: Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders

In 2023, we successfully implemented ten programs, each designed with a commitment to empowering and transforming the lives of young individuals in our community. These programs have collectively touched the lives of over 120 students, providing them with invaluable opportunities for growth, learning, and personal development.

## Digital Transformation: Enhancing the Online Experience

Recognizing the importance of an effective online presence, we embarked on a journey to redesign our website. The result is a user-friendly platform that not only caters to the needs of our students but also provides a seamless experience for their families and our esteemed donors. This digital transformation ensures that our mission and impact are accessible to a wider audience.

## EKO's Inaugural Fundraising Event: A Night to Remember

One of the year's highlights was hosting EKO's first fundraising event, featuring the renowned Yale Whiffenpoofs. The event brought our community together for a night of celebration, music, and philanthropy at the Reed-Reeves Arboretum. The success of this event not only raised crucial funds but also strengthened the bonds within our community.

## Team Growth: Strengthening Our Capacity

To better serve our mission, we expanded our team by welcoming a dedicated Volunteer Coordinator and a skilled Fundraiser Developer. These key additions bring a wealth of expertise and passion to our organization, enhancing our ability to make a lasting impact.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to our mission of facilitating equal access to resources and opportunities for students and their families facing underprivileged circumstances by creating programs and strategies to empower them to thrive throughout their educational journey. Your support has been instrumental in making all of these achievements possible, and we invite you to join us in continuing this journey of positive change.

Thank you for being an essential part of EKO. Together, we are making a difference and building a brighter future for the communities we serve.

Dr. Patricia Fontan  
Board President



# Background & Mission

## Background

EKO was born in 2019 from the belief that education is a fundamental right. We recognize the complexity that low-income families face to access educational programs, particularly families with a language barrier or children with special needs.



## Mission

Our mission is to facilitate equal access to resources and opportunities for students and their families facing underprivileged circumstances by creating programs and strategies to empower them to thrive throughout their educational journey.

# The Year in Numbers



10

Programs



Empowering  
**EKO**  
Kids Organization

14

Institutional  
Partners

120+

students

# 2023 Highlights



1

## 10 Programs and 120+ Students

Ten empowering programs have been implemented in our community, positively impacting over 120 young individuals' lives and fostering growth, learning, and personal development.

2

## Strengthening Our Capacity

We strengthened our team with the addition of a Volunteer Coordinator and a Fundraiser Developer, boosting our organization's capabilities and impact.



# 2023 Highlights



## 3 New Website

A new user-friendly platform designed to meet the needs of our students, offering a seamless experience for their families and our esteemed donors.

## 4 First Fundraiser Event

This magical evening brought the community together for a night of music with renowned Yale Whiffenpoofs and philanthropy. The event raised essential funds and fostered stronger relationships within the community.



# Financial Highlights



## Income

**\$40,000**

Private Donations 13%    Summit Foundation Grant 17%



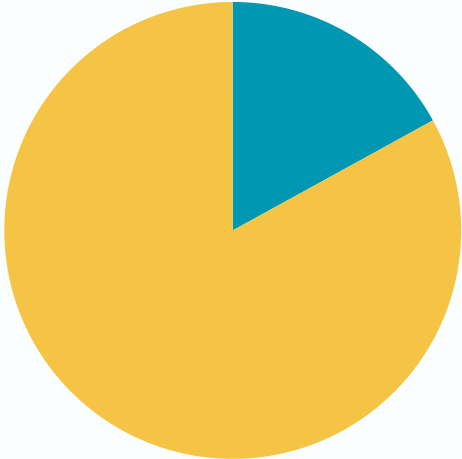
Reitman Foundation  
25%

Central Presbyterian Church  
45%

## Expenses

**\$28,000**

Administrative Expenses 17%



Program Expenses  
83%



# Our Programs

## James W. Northrop Program (spring and fall):

Since 2019, our program has grown from one to three teachers, serving both English learners and special needs students each season. In 2023, over 30 students with diverse needs from SHS were integrated. The fall curriculum included English Writing, Technology in the Classroom and Literacy classes, that targeted basic skills for newcomer students. Cultural activities featured visits to various local entities. Importantly, our program provided a safe space for students to learn, grow, forge friendships, and foster hope for their future.



# Our Programs

## Level Up Academic Summer Program

This year, EKO partnered with the Summit YMCA, conducting a remediation program for 20 students within the Y's facility to mitigate weather impacts. Mornings focused on academic practice, followed by afternoons at the Springfield Swimming Pool for a unique summer camp experience provided by the Y. EKO continued to offer essential academic support, fostering cultural immersion, exposure to positive role models, friendship building, and ensuring the students' happiness. Additionally, breakfast comprising cereal and fruit was provided every morning.



# Our Programs

## Spring and Fall Into Art

A 5-week, hands-on art program for middle school low-income students in partnership with the NJ Visual Arts Center. EKO assisted several students who attended this program with the application for scholarships to keep participating in art classes at NJVAC.



## Spring and Fall Improv(ing) Students

An 8-week improv comedy class for Summit High School students in partnership with Vivid Stage at the Oakes Center in Summit.



# Our Programs

## Soccer Clinics

An initiative to teach fundamental soccer skills to students enrolled in the Level Up program. The clinic aimed to impart technical expertise and cultivate teamwork abilities, fostering an environment of enjoyment and camaraderie. The program was overseen and guided by young athletes from the Summit community.



# Our Programs

## ESL for Parents

A weekly, one-hour conversational English program on Saturday mornings at The Connection in Summit, New Jersey. The program offered childcare for families that needed it. On average, ten parents attended the program each week.

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## ESL for Young Adults

A Conversational English weekly class for students ages 16 to 21 at the Summit YMCA. This class provides much needed conversation time for English learners. Class focuses on everyday vocabulary.

