



Bringing the Power of Education to Single Parents



**PROJECT  
SELF-SUFFICIENCY**  
OF NORTHERN COLORADO

**ANNUAL REPORT 2024**



# A Note from the CEO and Board President

Dear Friends,

This past year, Project Self-Sufficiency reached an exciting milestone: we served 140 single-parent families—a goal we've been working toward with care and intention. By streamlining our application and onboarding processes, we've eliminated our waitlist and are now able to welcome new participants more quickly. That means single parents can begin building momentum right from the start.

Much of our recent growth has been in Weld County, where our team has been hard at work, building relationships and expanding our presence. Thanks to partnerships with UNC and Employment Services of Weld County, we're now holding regular office hours at both locations. In addition, more single parents living in Weld County are referred to us from our community partners. Because of these efforts, the number of participants residing in Weld County grew by 70% in 2024.

This year also marked our first full year operating under our new service delivery model. Each Advisor now focuses on one of the four stages of our Selfpower Model, which allows them to support additional participants more efficiently. We've also invested in new training for our team, helping Advisors build technical skills that deepen their impact and improve the overall experience for the families we serve.

At the heart of our mission is the belief that single parents can achieve incredible things—for themselves and for their children. Earning a degree, launching a new career, and raising a family on your own requires courage, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to a better future. We see those qualities every day in our participants, and their stories continue to inspire and energize our work. In the pages that follow, you'll meet Courtney and Lijo, two single parents whose journeys capture the spirit of determination and transformation we're proud to support.

At Project Self-Sufficiency, we believe in the power of education to change lives. By removing barriers and offering strong, consistent support, we help single parents tap into their potential and create brighter futures for their families.

Thank you for being part of this work. We're so glad to have you with us.

With gratitude,



Tracy Mead  
Chief Executive



Carol Barnes  
Officer Board President



Tracy Mead, CEO



Carol Barnes, President



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# SelfPower Model

The **Selfpower** Model engages families in four stages of growth by providing intensive, personalized intervention through a one-on-one relationship with highly skilled advisors.

1

## Discover

*Stabilize, explore career options, lay foundation*

Key resources and basic needs met for a healthy foundation in order to reach career goals and recognize **SelfPower**.

2

## Strengthen

*Engage, learn, apply skills, balance family life*

Accomplish educational goals to cultivate **SelfPower** as certificates, degrees, and internships are completed while maintaining a healthy family life.

3

## Actualize

*Initiate job search, career prep, begin family transition to a new life*


**SelfPower** is fully realized, families are grounded in their new future, and the rewarding job search is on, charting new territory in career field.

4

## Launch

*Graduate **SelfPowered** and employed in chosen career path*

Full transition to **SelfPower**. Long-term careers begin, better income and stability become the new normal. This is the payoff for the grit and determination it takes to commit to full transformation through education.



Our mission is to empower low-income single parents to build a bright future for themselves and their children. Our advisors use best practices in post-secondary education, employment training, and wraparound supports to help single parents map a pathway out of poverty.

Participants can spend up to eight years in our program, from intake to degree completion and employment in their chosen career field. During this time, advisors provide intensive, personalized support to help participants achieve economic independence while building and maintaining strong, healthy families.

Lifting single-parent families out of poverty takes time, resources, and commitment. In alignment with our mission, we do not charge for our services. Project Self-Sufficiency is entirely funded by the generous members of our community who contribute their time, talent, and treasure.

**Thank you for transforming the lives of single-parent families in Northern Colorado!**

# Meet Weld County Single Parent, Courtney



**“Now I can picture my future, and it is beautiful!”**  
**– Courtney**

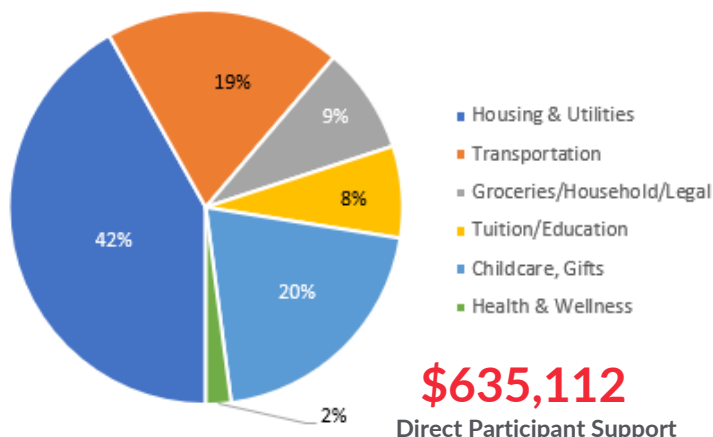
I grew up in generational poverty and couldn't see a way out. By the time I dropped out of high school, I was homeless and battling addiction. I had no positive relationships and no future. Then I had my daughter. Just like my parents had lived with my grandparents, I was now living with my dad—repeating the cycle.

At 21, I earned my high school diploma and began studying for a cosmetology license. I needed to do something, and it seemed doable. But I soon realized it wasn't the right path. My grandfather told me I didn't stand a chance, and I believed it. I lacked confidence and direction—but I knew I didn't want my past to define my future.

Joining a single moms group at my church changed everything. That's where I heard about Project Self-Sufficiency. Though afraid to step outside my comfort zone, I applied in fall 2023. I started with Atlanta in the Discover Stage and now work with Mistie in the Strengthen Stage. I'm completing prerequisites for the Radiologic Technologist Certificate at Aims Community College. Mistie came with me to my first advising appointment—I was nervous and confused, but she guided me.

Project Self-Sufficiency has given me not just a career path, but the confidence to pursue it. I've received critical support—financial aid, community connections, and resources I never knew existed. They've helped me with a laptop, glasses, car repairs, grocery cards, and holiday gifts for my daughter. I've joined a student parent group at Aims, and my daughter and I attend a music program at Union Colony Music School. Mistie taught me how to budget, and now I've paid off all my debt and no longer pay late fees. This stability lets me focus on my studies and give my daughter the attention she needs.

I've come so far. Once I graduate in 2028, I envision a career in radiology and a home of our own. I want to share my story and help other single parents realize they're stronger than they know. You don't have to do it alone. Find your team. You can do this!



## 2024 Impact Highlights

141 single parents with 247 children served  
41 new single parent families onboarded  
105 individuals participated in 2 Help Sessions  
71 families received **\$140,379** to stabilize housing  
6 families received cars valued at **\$41,625**  
68 families received **\$86,738** for transportation needs  
17 families received **\$58,393** for childcare  
56 single parents received **\$208,945** in scholarship awards



# Meet Larimer County Single Parent, Lijo



**“Now my children see a more resilient, determined, and hopeful version of their father.” – Lijo**

I was walking a tightrope before I found Project Self-Sufficiency. As a first-generation immigrant, new to Northern Colorado and without friends or family, I felt completely alone. Following a painful divorce, I became a single father—juggling joint custody, my children’s education, and the heartbreak of setting aside my dream of completing college. Fear, isolation, and self-doubt convinced me that building a better life for my children was out of reach.

But that began to change in July 2022, when I joined Project Self-Sufficiency. In a place where I had no one, Robin, my Advisor, became more than a guide—she became like a sister. Her steady encouragement helped me find solutions, restore my confidence, and begin again. I looked forward to our monthly meetings; they became a space of refuge and renewal.

With her support, I dared to reclaim my long-abandoned dream: to become an artist and an art teacher. I enrolled in the Bachelor of Fine Arts and Art Education program at CSU. Through Project Self-Sufficiency, I discovered resources I hadn’t even known existed. Scholarships and aid allowed me to focus on school and my children. When my unreliable car threatened to derail everything, I received a donated vehicle—an extraordinary gift that changed everything.

Even more powerful was meeting the donor, Mary Carraher, the organization’s former Executive Director. She became a strong advocate, helping me rediscover my sense of worth.

In Fall 2024, I graduated summa cum laude with a BFA in Art Education. I carried the banner for my department at graduation; a moment of pride shared with Robin and her son—it felt like family.

Now, I will be teaching art in this very community, showing children the power of imagination, empathy, and self-expression. My dream is not just to educate, but to raise a generation of kind, creative leaders. I want that same possibility for my own children—to grow up in a world where compassion is a strength, and dreams are possible.

I reclaimed my dream. You can too. We’re not meant to do this alone. Begin where you are. Ask for help. Trust in the power of community.

## 2024 Participants

- \$20,857** Average income at intake
- 95%** Mothers; **5%** Fathers
- 80%** Survivors of domestic violence and other crimes
- 66%** First-generation college students
- 39%** Racially/ethnically diverse
- 30%** Individuals with disabilities
- 30%** Experiencing homelessness at intake
- 1%** Veterans

## 2024 Accomplishments

- \$37,047** Participant’s average wage increase from intake to program graduation
- 29** Participants completed degrees and certifications
- 11** program graduates employed in their career field

# 2024 Financials

**Net Assets on December 31, 2024: \$3,471,174**

## 2024 Revenue, Support, and Gains

Fundraising and Contributions	\$ 1,070,276
Value of Cars Provided to Families	\$ 22,226
In-kind Donations	\$ 33,390
Grants	\$ 569,163
Special Event Revenue	\$ 58,238
Other Revenue	\$ 287,404

<b>Total Revenue, Support, and Gains</b>	<b>\$2,040,697</b>
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## 2024 Expenses

Program Services	\$ 1,665,723
Management and General	\$ 241,985
Fundraising	\$ 160,656

<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$2,068,364</b>
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The 2024 Board of Directors and Leadership Team (pictured here), Carol Barnes, Lauren Larsen, Jodi Terwilliger-Stacey, Blake McBartlett, Amber King, Amanda Ericson, Lyndsey Hertz, Christina Larson, Cecilia "CeCe" Majchrowski, Lori Mostrom, Tracy Mead, Peter Boyle, Cheryl Brown, and Chris Serafin. Not pictured: Liz Hogan, Austin Kelly, Phyllis Moore, Ann Bedient, Rachel LeValley, and Edith Matestic.





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## 2024 Post Secondary

### Credentials Earned

- Bachelor of Social Work (x3)
- BSBA Accounting
- BSBA Marketing
- BSBA Supply Chain Management
- BA Ethnic Studies with Minor in Indigenous Studies
- BFA Art Education
- BS Early Childhood Education
- AS Computer Science (transferred to BS Computer Science program)
- AS General (transferred to AAS Dental Hygiene program)
- AA General (transferred to BSW program) (x3)
- AAS Cybersecurity (transferred to BS Cybersecurity program)
- AAS Radiologic Technology (x2)
- AAS Allied Health
- AGS (transferred to BSN program)
- Practical Nursing Certificate
- Medical Assistant Certificate (x2)
- Nurse Aide Certificate (x2)
- Phlebotomy Certificate
- Addiction Counseling Certification
- Qualified Medication Administration Personnel (QMAP) Certification
- Business Certificate
- Networking Basics Certificate
- Network Technician Certificate
- Revit Certificate

### Looking Ahead

Shifts in policy and budget priorities at the Federal level and potential budget cuts at the state level have highlighted the ongoing necessity to be forward-thinking and proactive in procuring the resources needed to serve our families and maintain their stability as they work toward completing their education goals. In the coming year, we will communicate our needs and keep you abreast of any impacts on our important work. We will continue to strengthen relationships with our key partners - other nonprofits, communities of faith, and grantors. There is no question that we are stronger together. It is only through collaboration and unity that we can respond quickly to unpredictable and changing needs. In these challenging times, we invite you to stay engaged and stand with us in the year ahead. We must be ready to step in to help our single parents all the way to the finish line.

Special thanks to Sandberg Photography and ZebraJellyfish Photography for providing the images of Project Self-Sufficiency participants.



## Team Awesome



R1: Lyndsey Hertz, Cheryl Brown, Tracy Mead, Robin Adams, Angie Sloan. R2: Jodi Terwilliger-Stacey, Atalanta Chacon, Amber Larsen, Jan Barela-Smith. R3: Chrissa Percival, Mistie Trefry, Maria Montañez. Not Pictured: Camille Lane, Fenn Williams



## 2024 Human Relations Award

Project Self-Sufficiency was honored to receive the 2024 Human Relations Award in the Organization/Team Award category from the Fort Collins Human Relations Commission. For nearly four decades, we have provided essential resources, community connections, and pathways to self-sufficiency for single-parent families. This award reinforces our commitment to making Northern Colorado a place where every family can thrive. We don't do any of this alone; we share this recognition with our partners, donors, and the families we serve.

Help us bring the promise and the power of education to single parents and their children.

### Ways to Give



### Ways to Volunteer



### Stay Informed



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