



inspiration
corporation

IMPACT REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2023 **July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023**

A Letter From Our CEO

Here at Inspiration Corporation, we measure the impact of our work in more than numbers. While we are proud of the accomplishments the data in this report represents, we are equally invested in offering a depth of service. For us, real results are created from the relationships we form and the individual stories of every participant.

During the pandemic we produced tens of thousands of meals, far more than ever before in our history, but we were not always able to connect with most of the people we served. Our aim has always been to do more than just deliver a tasty lunch. Our work is rooted in building trust over time as a scaffold to other supportive, wraparound services.

As we shifted back to in-person restaurant style breakfasts served by volunteers this year, not only were we at or over capacity most days, we were also able to increase engagement opportunities. We provided resources and essential services, enrolled people in public benefits, and helped them secure more stable housing.

This past year, we invested in building stronger program models. A rigorous assessment of our social enterprise restaurant and food service training program resulted in a higher level of collaboration and identified new strategies to ensure greater success for our students and staff.

We focused on providing participants in our housing program with greater opportunity and choice by shifting away from Transitional Housing to a Rapid Rehousing model. We advocated to help keep people in housing and we offered Aftercare services to make sure people exiting our programs continued to feel supported during a critical time.

All of our work is possible because of the impressive relationships built with participants. But we could not do it without our committed supporters. Thank you for your belief in our work and for all you do!



Shannon K. Stewart
Executive Director and CEO



Table of **CONTENTS**

- 4** Our Mission
Learn What Inspires Our Work
- 5** Housing
Connecting People to Housing Across the City
- 6** Food Service Training and Employment
Building Careers in the Culinary Industry
- 7** Meals and Homeless Engagement
Providing Access to Basic Necessities



OUR MISSION IN ACTION



MISSION STATEMENT

In an atmosphere of dignity and respect, Inspiration Corporation connects people and creates opportunity through access to social services, job training, housing, and food.

WHO WE HELP

We work with hundreds of resilient Chicagoans who face systemic disparities rooted in social, racial and economic inequities, that result in homelessness, hunger, and social isolation.

Each year, we help individuals and families experiencing homelessness and poverty overcome barriers and achieve their goals, by connecting them to:

ECONOMIC SECURITY



HOUSING STABILITY



MEALS & SUPPORT



Inspiration Corporation meets people where they are in life, helping them identify their goals and access the support they need to achieve them.

HOUSING PROGRAM

During fiscal year 2023, our Housing Program streamlined its program model to offer a range of options to ensure that individuals and families had a safe place to call home.



FY 2023 Highlights

Inspiration Corporation provided 288 adults and children experiencing homelessness with access to housing and ongoing rental support, as well as a dedicated case manager who worked to help them remain stably housed and pursue their personal goals. By providing permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing and low-income tax credit funded units, we are able to pair participants with the appropriate housing option best aligned with the level of support for the types of barriers they face.

As pandemic era protections were removed, our team worked tirelessly to advocate for participants to ensure they were able to maintain their housing. We also helped them secure the essential services and resources they needed in the face of rising consumer costs and diminishing public benefits.

**Impact Report
Snapshot:**

131
Households served

281
Individuals served

94%
Of those leaving moved
to permanent housing

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE RESTAURANT FOOD SERVICE TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM



FY 2023 Highlights

At Inspiration Kitchens, a capacity-building consultancy assessed our current training, operations, and key performance indicators. Several strengths of our programs were highlighted, including recruitment, placement and job retention, and opportunities to engage participants with restaurant operations in more robust ways were identified.

The average starting wage for first time placements was \$17.61, more than a dollar over minimum wage. In addition to the restaurant being open to the public two days a week, we focused on growth in our catering operations which is beneficial to our students as they gain hands-on larger scale production experience in a professional setting. Our Lori and Ron Jericho Memorial Scholarships assisted individuals in pursuing educational goals to advance their careers in a variety of other fields.

**Impact Report
Snapshot:**

54

Students Enrolled in
Training Program

40

Food Service
Training graduates

93

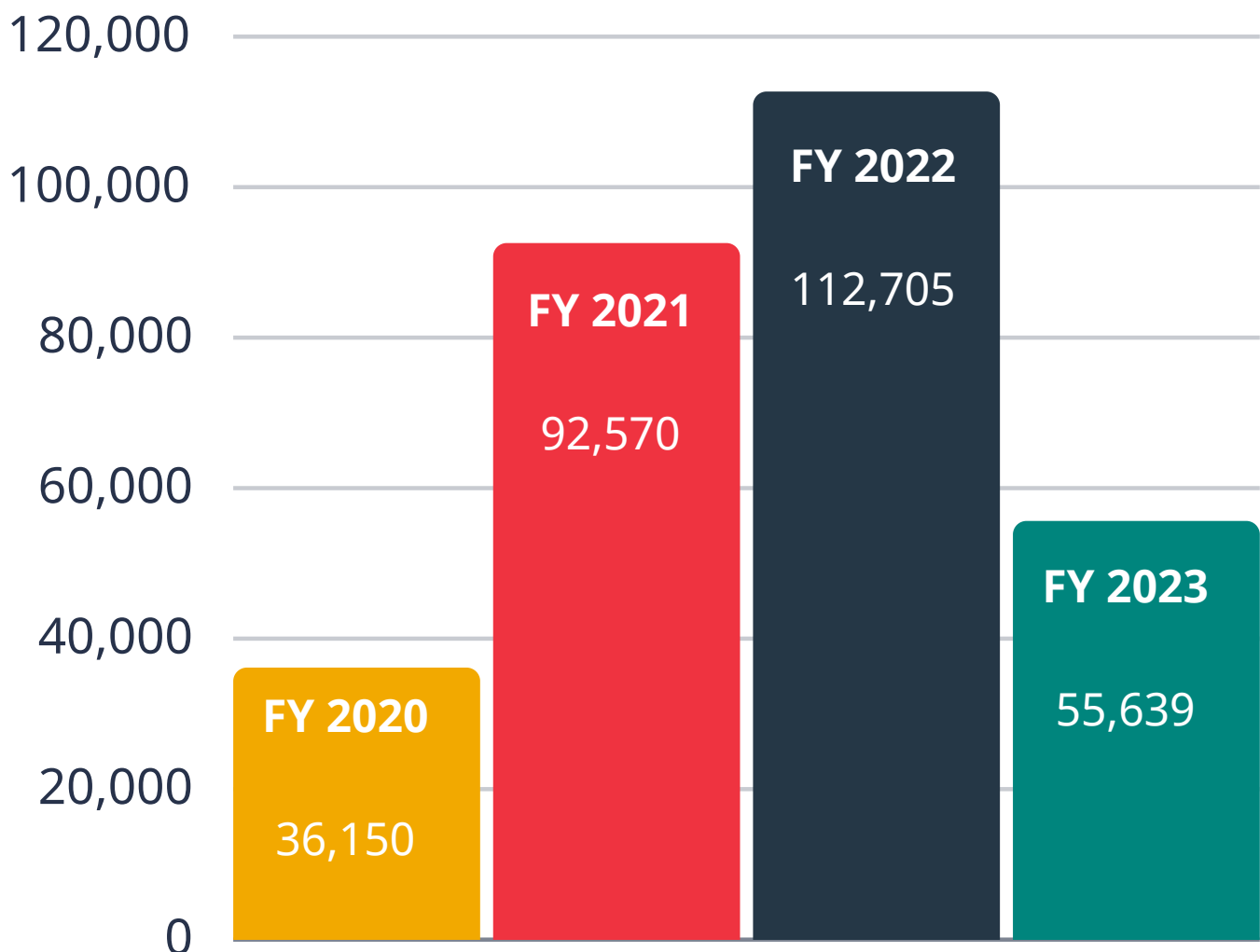
People supported in
workforce development

MEALS PRODUCTION

OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS

PANDEMIC ERA RESPONSE

During the pandemic, our meals production increased dramatically in response to the overwhelming need in our community. Both Inspiration Cafe and Inspiration Kitchens pivoted to produce an unprecedented number of meals. As funding receded in fiscal year 2023 and peer organizations resumed their programs, the goal of moving back to our proven model of offering seated restaurant style meals was rolled out slowly over the course of the year.



MEALS & HOMELESS ENGAGEMENT

In fiscal year 2023, Inspiration Cafe, in the Uptown community, returned to the restaurant-style meals service it has provided to individuals experiencing homelessness for decades.



FY 2023 Highlights

In fiscal year 2023, we began ramping back up to our proven model of in person meals while continuing to respond to the on-going demand for our to-go lunches. We served 55,089 meals, which included daily lunches for most of the year, as well as a gradual relaunch of our seated breakfasts. Our in-person seated meals have been at capacity, indicating the real need of individuals impacted by homelessness who come from across the city to utilize our services.

Our Homeless Engagement Program continued to provide resources, with over 500 drop-in case management sessions conducted during the year. These enhanced services helped individuals with access to things as simple as hygiene and personal care items to gaining greater stability by securing income, health care, and housing over time.

**Impact Report
Snapshot:**

55,089
Meals served

36
Participants Increased
Housing Stability

355
Participants in
Drop-In Support



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Our day-to-day work of creating opportunities and connecting people experiencing poverty and homelessness to the services and resources they need is not possible without a community of dedicated supporters! We are grateful for new and existing partnerships through giving and volunteer opportunities. If you are interested in getting more involved with our work, visit our website, follow us on social media, and reach out to us to learn more. Thank you for all you do!

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