

OUTSIDE THE LENS

IMPACT REPORT

2023





*"I got to be a leader and I helped my peers and classmates.
I brought attention to social issues that I care about
through my project of making short films."*

Angel
Former OTL Intern
Victoria Community School

LETTER FROM SARAH



**SARAH
BECKMAN**

Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Across San Diego County we're witnessing the power of youth voices to transform communities—from fighting hunger to challenging systemic injustice. At Outside The Lens, we're not just encouraging young people to speak up—we're creating vibrant, safe spaces for their unique perspectives to shine, and forging connections that turn inspired ideas into action.

As I reflect on 2023, I am deeply moved by the groundbreaking creativity of young people and filled with appreciation for the opportunity to lead our organization during this exciting time.

A few key accomplishments from last year:

- Empowered more than 2,400 youth through media arts skill-building, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and self-discovery.
- Established the "Wonder Lab," OTL's 7,000+ sq. ft. East Village headquarters, inspiring innovation and collaboration.
- Delivered hands-on instruction to 12 San Diego Juvenile Court and Community Schools (JCCS), cultivating media literacy and creative pathways for teens.
- Expanded the Media Makers program, growing to 35 young adults and introducing animation to the curriculum.
- Hosted OTL's inaugural Open House, engaging folks of all ages with interactive media arts experiences.
- Achieved key financial milestones: surpassed \$2M+ annual revenue, completed our first audit, and upgraded accounting systems from cash to accrual.

This fall, we launched our strategic plan, "Building a Vibrant Future." This endeavor marks a bold new chapter in our story and embodies our commitment to creativity, equity, and an unwavering belief in the next generation.

This report helps demonstrate the power of collaboration and creativity. There is an urgent need to provide the next generation with the skills and resources to become powerful changemakers and we are deeply grateful for your commitment to our mission.

Thank you!

Sarah E. Beckman
Executive Director





OUR MISSION

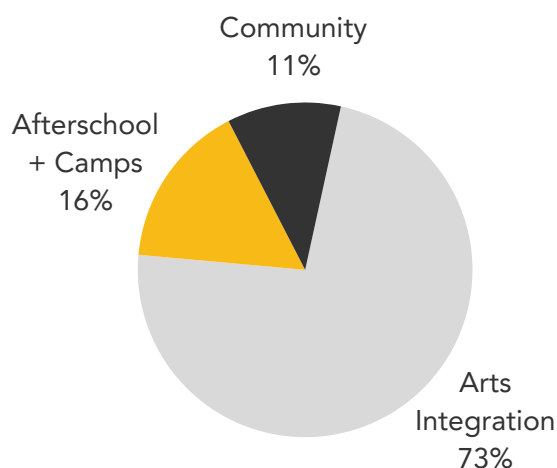
Igniting confidence in young people to pursue creative pathways and drive social change through the transformative power of media arts.

LEARNING IN + OUT OF THE CLASSROOM

Arts Integration uses media arts, like photography and film, to teach core subjects, enhancing student engagement through creative, hands-on learning. OTL also provides out-of-school learning opportunities and, through a special Initiative worked with military-connected families in the community.

***** *"OTL significantly enriched my students' experience. The program not only provided tools like cameras, iPads, and software, but also opportunities for self-discovery. Through confidence-building projects and exhibitions that enhanced their oracy skills, students gained valuable experience that will positively impact future career opportunities."*

- Aimee (classroom teacher)



2,439

Students reached



OUTSIDE THE LENS

IGNITES CONFIDENCE

...to
stand
up



Kaedyn, a 23-year-old participant in the **Media Makers program**, used digital animation to explore experiences of misunderstanding and empathy. Her animated video, *Hijab*, tells a poignant story about the impact of bullying and the importance of being an upstander. This impactful film won Best in Show at the San Diego County fair, shining a light on challenges faced by those who are different and inspiring viewers to support one another.

Students at **Lindsay Community School** accessed the healing power of media arts exploring personal and family narratives, touching on challenging themes like immigration, homelessness, teen parenting, and mental health. Through visual essays, they processed personal and community challenges, undertaking a journey of personal healing and creating compelling art pieces that spark community conversations.



...to be
seen

...to
change
the
world



As part of OTL's Whale Tail program at Ibarra Elementary School, which integrates media arts with environmental science, Henry created a public service announcement (PSA) to share his learnings with his school community. His message was clear: we all have a responsibility to take better care of the environment. Through this project, Henry learned that his voice can make a difference.

We foster growth and development
across these key impact areas:



OUTSIDE THE LENS AMPLIFIES YOUTH VOICES

OTL's commitment to storytelling continued to flourish, with over **30 'design jams'** and showcases held across the county. These collaborative exhibition events brought together students of all ages, empowering them to share their unique voices with friends, family members, and educators, highlighting the transformative impact of media arts and community connection.



30
Design Jams

***** *"I have never had my work displayed. This (exhibition) gave me the opportunity to share my art, and see how people were moved by it. We were all able to share different perspectives. Art itself is a conversation, capable of changing the world."*

Student, San Pasqual Academy (Juvenile Court and Community Schools)

37

Sites across SD County



**Creative
Confidence**



**Economic
Mobility**



**Social
Impact**



TEEN MEDIA ARTS

Leadership
Through the
Lens and
Youth Council

In partnership with the University of California San Diego (UCSD) Extension, OTL's **Leadership Through the Lens (LTTL)** pre-college credit program equips students with essential technical and media literacy skills for 21st-century success. Connecting professionals with young people, LTTL leverages media arts and leadership theories to promote social-emotional learning and job readiness, culminating in student-led social change projects. OTL's **Youth Advisory Council** provides students with artist-educator mentors and peer leadership opportunities with stipends to support their leadership growth and development.

OTL's **Youth Council** collaborated with Malashock Dance and renowned dance photographer Doug McMinimy for a workshop and exhibition, teaching teens to capture the beauty of movement through the lens. The project culminated in an exhibition at Liberty Station, celebrating both the dancers and the young creators.

32

Student Internships



Outside the Lens supported 32 internships and Youth Advisory Council positions, allowing students to take leadership roles and develop valuable leadership and technical skills. 31 of the 32 students received stipends for their work.



MEDIA MAKERS

Media Makers empowers young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) through media arts. Participants learn photography, filmmaking, and digital storytelling, building confidence, creativity, and a sense of purpose. The program fosters inclusion, self-expression, and helps individuals connect with their communities while exploring media arts as a tool for self-advocacy and social change.



Student Retention Rate

1:5

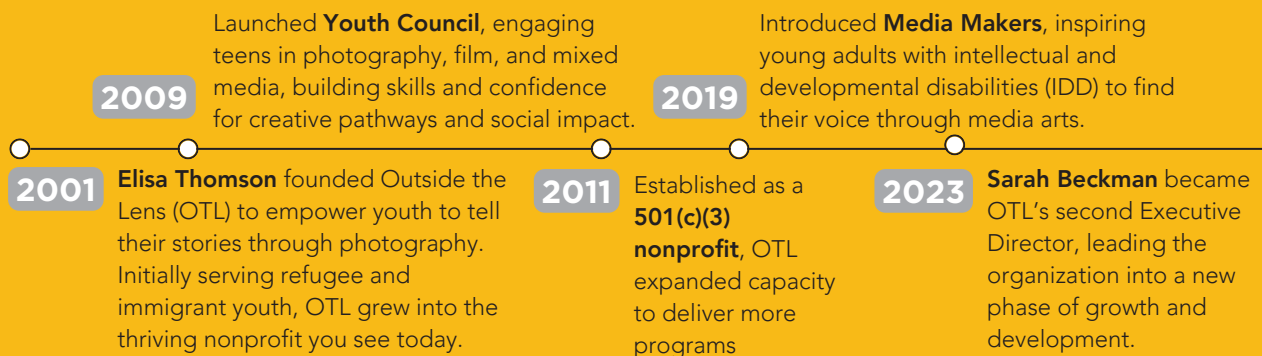
Staff to Student Ratio

640

Hours of Engagement per Student

MOMENTS THAT MATTER

Key milestones in the legacy of Outside the Lens



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ivy Gordon
Board Chair

Dr. Bibhu Mohanty
Board Treasurer

Caroline Harwood Nordquist
Board Secretary

Maite Benito Agahnia
Board Member and Co-Founder

Shelley Pierce
Board Member and Co-Founder



OUR SUPPORTERS

Outside the Lens is grateful for all who support our mission each year. Together, we are cultivating confidence, creativity, and connection in the next generation of changemakers.

Gifts acknowledged from 01/01/23 - 12/31/23

Anonymous
Maite Benito Agahnia
Boys & Girls Foundation
California Arts Council
California Coastal Commission: Whale Tail
California Department of Social Services: Stop the Hate
California Humanities
Margaret Chin
City of Chula Vista
City of San Diego
Karen Coutts
Terri Egan
Escondido Community Foundation
Amy Flicker
Ivy Gordon
Caroline Nordquist
Frank Humphries
Lisa Kendall La Torre
Bridget Lambert
Gail Mackler
Brian Matthews
Mid-America Arts Alliance
Bibhu Mohanty
National Endowment for the Arts
NTC Foundation
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)
Shelley Pierce
Price Philanthropies
Prebys Foundation
San Diego County Employees' Charitable Organization (CECO)
San Diego County District Attorney
The San Diego Foundation
Joana Sosa
State of California Public Utilities Commission: Digital Divide
Elisa and Kelly Thomson
James Tomcik

FINANCIALS

Fiscal year ending December 31, 2023

Funding Sources

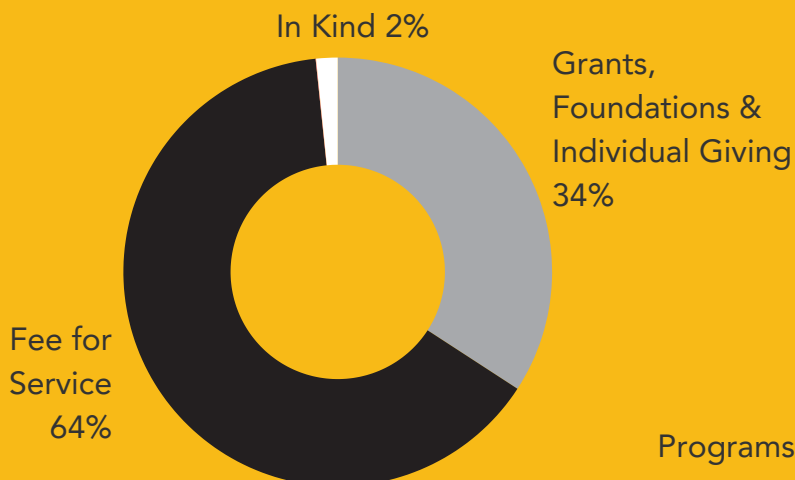
Fee for Service (School and Partner Contributions)	\$1,597,977
Grants, Foundations & Individual Giving	\$851,058
In-Kind Contributions	\$40,172
Other Income	\$919
Total Revenue	\$2,490,126

Expenses

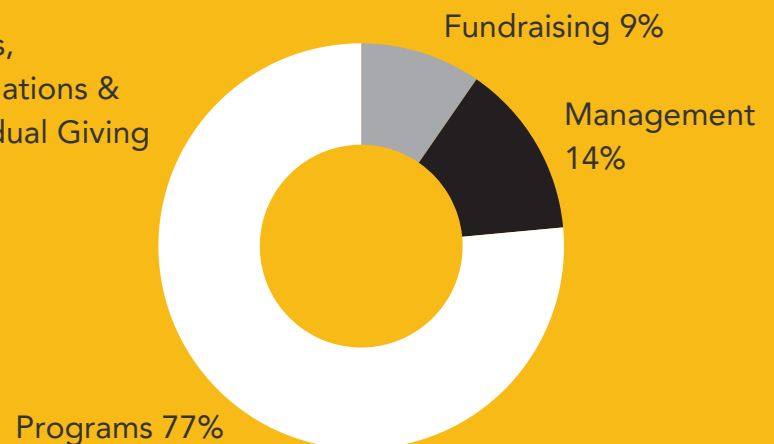
Program Services	\$1,701,358
Management and General	\$309,301
Fundraising	\$214,189
Total Expenses	\$2,224,848

Change in Net Assets	\$265,278
Net Assets at Beginning of the Year	\$1,165,924
Net Assets at Year End	\$1,431,202

FUNDING SOURCES



EXPENSES





OUTSIDETHELENS



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OTL is a private, nonprofit 501(c) (3) organization: IRS Tax I.D. #26-4832772