



# TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Safe Passage  
Camino Seguro



# DEAR FRIENDS AND BELOVED PARTNERS,

Last year can be recalled as a year of organizational strengthening and fruitful transitions for Safe Passage, a period that allowed us to reflect deeply on what we have accomplished and where we are headed together.

We witnessed the evolution of our organization and our educational model as our students have begun to aspire for more than we once even hoped.

We have advanced in our mission to provide transformative education and comprehensive wellness services, found opportunities to ensure more funds are directed to student outcomes, and strengthened our identity, living into the values that define us.

Last year was full of challenges for our community but also of insight, growth, and shared learning. During this time, we made changes that allowed us to live more deeply into the mission, vision, and values that have accompanied us from the beginning. These changes were not easy, but we knew they were necessary to be an organization more aligned with the needs of the present and with the hope of a fairer and more transformative future for our community.

---

**This process reminds us of the importance of evolving, embracing change, and allowing ourselves to be a stronger, more flexible organization committed to every student, every family, and every member of our community.**

This strength and nimbleness will support us to navigate these challenging political times with intention, impact, and care. Some examples of the steps that we took together in 2024:

- **Operational efficiencies to ensure more funds get directly to students and teachers.**
- **Building support and fundraising towards raises for Guatemalan staff to value and retain our most important asset—the talented frontline staff who drive our impact.**
- **Revision of our Mission, Vision, and Values with clear actions towards living those values daily.**
- **Local leadership—shifted to a shared leadership model that recognizes Pablo Callejas as Associate Director and Patty Barneond as Head of School and builds shared power and decision-making, transparency, and shared vision within our GT Leadership.**
- **Shifting from charity and towards systemic change; recognizing our students as young leaders who will make their community, country, and world a better place.**

All of these shifts ultimately center our students and community at the heart of our decision-making, budgeting, and future. This journey of transition has been and continues to be, a journey of growth and evolution, but above all, the hope for a more inclusive, just, and equitable future for our community.

Thank you for walking alongside us, for being a valued part of this reflection, and for contributing to making Safe Passage a place full of opportunities for everyone.

With deep gratitude,

**Erin and Pablo**

**FROM LEFT** Front Row from Left, Karla, Pablo, Maria Jose, Back Row from Left, Maria Jose, Narda, Emna, Erin, Patty, Elizabeth, and Mario.



UPDATED

# MISSION, VISION, VALUES

As part of Safe Passage's 25th anniversary we undertook a thoughtful and collaborative process to update our Mission, Vision, and Values statements. This renewal marks a significant milestone in our evolution as an organization.

Over the years, Safe Passage has grown and changed in many ways. It was time for our mission, vision, and values to reflect who we are today: a responsive, Guatemalan-led, diverse, and united team committed to providing quality education and holistic support to our students and their families.

Led by the Board of Directors and the Leadership Team, this process included voices from across the organization. Together, we reflected on our purpose, the impact of our work, and the shared values that guide us. Through this inclusive approach, we developed renewed Mission, Vision, and Values statements that better capture the heart of Camino Seguro.

These new guiding statements provide clarity on where we are headed and inspire alignment across all areas of our work. They strengthen our identity, deepen our sense of belonging, and reinforce our shared commitment to fostering positive and lasting change in the lives of our students, their families, their community, and Guatemala.

**As we move forward, we are committed to living out this renewed mission every day—with purpose, hope, and the collective determination to build a brighter future together.**



## MISSION

Through quality education and comprehensive wellness services, Safe Passage offers a transformative experience for our students within a loving and supportive environment. Our educational community co-creates learning experiences that support students in developing the character, knowledge, and skills to reach their maximum potential. This cultivates positive and lasting change for themselves, for their families and community, and for Guatemala.

## VISION

Our vision is to catalyze a positive, transformative, and lasting impact by educating and inspiring youth leaders to build an equitable, strong, and just society.

## UPDATED MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

**VALUES** May our values be known, felt, and lived daily.

**Love:** We are an educational community built on kindness, empathy, compassion and mutual support among and between our members.

**Responsibility:** We meet our obligations, minding our behavior and the way we express ourselves, accepting the consequences of our actions, and thereby promoting trust, accountability, and excellence.

**Collaboration:** We work to build cooperation, alignment, and shared learning, recognizing that together we are stronger.

**Honesty:** Truth, transparency, and sincerity guide our daily behavior as an organization with integrity.

**Belonging:** We cultivate a culture where cooperation, inclusion, and shared leadership provide a sense of identity that facilitates listening to and valuing the diverse voices of our community.

**Respect:** We recognize and value the dignity, rights, and differences of each member of our educational community regardless of their position, origin, gender or any other characteristic, promoting equity, fairness, and kindness.



### OUR PROGRAM

Safe Passage currently serves 550 students in our programs.

Students are enrolled in our Early Childhood Programs to 9th grade and Oportunidades—our educational reinforcement and job training program for high school students.

### IMPACT FAST FACT

According to the internationally calibrated BAT-7 standardized test, **the academic skills of our 7th and 9th grade students grew by over 100%** between February and August 2024.



# PROGRAMMATIC HIGHLIGHTS



## Constructing New Possibilities

**Construction on our long-awaited middle school began!** This was made possible through the efforts of many and generous support from individuals and grants. The school will serve 120 seventh to ninth-graders and feature dedicated spaces for art, music, technology, and sports. It will also house our Oportunidades and Proximo Paso programs, serving a total of more than 200 students.

**In Guatemala, only 40% of students graduate from middle school.** Our middle school is an exciting step in ensuring our students' academic and personal growth.

Facing a **30% teacher vacancy rate** in 2024, Safe Passage knew that we must advance our compensation strategy. Our teachers are the heart of our work and impact, but similar to many NGOs, our salaries have lagged behind.

In 2024, the board committed to initial bonuses and salary increases, with plans for further improvements in 2025. A generous anonymous donor has made raises possible in 2025. This marks the beginning of a **comprehensive compensation structure to ensure our dedicated teachers and frontline staff are fairly valued** as the backbone of our mission.



## Investing in Our Teachers



## Technology in the Classroom

**We increased student access to technology from 1 computer for every 18 students in 2023 to 1 computer for every 2.5 students by the start of school in 2025.** Increasing meaningful access to technology in each classroom gives our students powerful tools to prepare them academically and technologically for their futures. In a community where most families don't have access to smartphones and almost none have computers in the home, relevant access and training in technology are vital.



## PROGRAMMATIC HIGHLIGHTS



### Bridging the Learning Gap

Throughout the 2024 school year, strategic investments and partnerships were vital in addressing learning gaps and accelerating student progress. **We expanded access to high-impact tutoring, enhanced digital learning infrastructure, and implemented data-driven platforms tailored to individual student needs, such as Progentis and Explorax.** Teachers implemented targeted interventions, expanded tutoring programs, and increased access to digital tools. Emphasis was placed on foundational skills in literacy and math while also nurturing students' social-emotional well-being. These efforts were complemented by professional development for educators. As a result, through our educational model, we saw measurable gains in student achievement and engagement, setting a strong foundation for future success.

In 2024, our Oportunidades program took decisive steps to expand and enhance our programs serving young people ages 14 to 21 through academic support, vocational guidance, leadership training, and career and job readiness. Presently, 22 Safe Passage affiliates are pursuing university degrees, and many others are engaged in hands-on learning focused on problem-solving, computational thinking, and English skills. With new strategic partnerships and plans for additional coaching, services, and scholarships, we are supporting the dreams and pathways that our students are leading forth.

**Read from our special 2024 Oportunidades & Proximo Pasos Report, authored by Evaluator Marcia Bernbaum.**



### Pathways Through Oportunidades



### Voices with Rythm

In 2024, a group of students discovered rap as a powerful tool for self-expression. With guidance from Guatemalan and Mexican hip-hop artists Rebecca Lane and Audry Funk, they explored rhyme, rhythm, and structure, **then performed their own verses at the "Somos Ciudad" event organized by USAID.**

**Through music, they raised their voices against discrimination, spoke of the Guatemala they dream about, and experienced the power of being seen, heard, and celebrated.**



## PROGRAMMATIC HIGHLIGHTS



### Redesigned Visitor Program

Last year posed new challenges with an increase in violence in the vicinity of our work. We took a pause, halting support team and volunteer visits, to take stock of what needed to be addressed to prioritize the safety of our staff, families, and visitors. This decision allowed us to redesign our model, aligning it with a new security system, operational capacity, and academic goals.

**Today, we are excited to welcome visitors again—under a renewed approach that is more intentional, safer, and transformative for our students. We are excited to open our doors again.**

**Family Day 2024 marked the official start of our 25th anniversary celebrations.** In a moving event filled with gratitude, members of our community shared what Safe Passage has meant in their lives.

**It was a moment to reflect on collective achievements,** highlight inspiring stories, and strengthen the relationships we've built over these 25 years. We celebrated with words, music, small gifts, and the joy of being together on this journey.



### 25 Years Together

In December, Iris Ramírez became the first Safe Passage alumni to graduate from medical school. Her journey—from our classrooms to support and scholarship from our health partner Shared Beat to practicing at a hospital in Guatemala City—is a powerful example of what's possible when talent and perseverance meet opportunity.

**Iris's story affirms the possibilities that are attainable through education, wrap-around support, mentorship, and a wide community that cares.**



### A Dream into Practice

# OUR WORK BY THE NUMBERS



## DEMOGRAPHICS

**519**  
students  
and affiliates served

**350**  
families served  
throughout the year

## EDUCATION

**18 graduates**  
from the *Oportunidades*  
program in 2024

**34** affiliates from  
*Oportunidades* passed  
the school year

**19 alumni**  
enrolled in university  
programs such  
as architecture,  
psychology,  
technology, and law

**18 students**  
participated in the  
vacation program  
(*Vacacionistas*)

**7 graduates**  
from 2024 **obtained**  
**employment** at their  
internship centers



**17**  
expeditions  
carried out at the school

**91%**  
of our youngest students  
aged 3-6 scored  
**"outstanding"**  
on the EAD-3, which  
measures four key  
areas of development:  
gross motor skills, fine  
motor adaptive skills,  
auditory and language  
abilities, and personal  
and social skills. These  
are foundational skills  
to their educational  
success

**100%** of 5-year-olds  
measured **"very high"** in  
**pre-reading skills**

Students' **reading skills**  
in the 1st-5th grades  
**more than doubled**  
**between February and**  
**August 2024**

**5th-grade**  
**verbal skills**  
jumped up from  
**29% to 68%**  
(February to August)



## INTEGRATED HEALTH SERVICES

**4,813**  
patients treated in  
Clinic and Isolation

**72,419**  
calls made or received  
from families

**197,445**  
messages sent or  
received from families

**48 families**  
served in the "Nurturing  
with Love" Program

**2,321**  
psychometric/  
psychological tests  
administered

**2 student**  
**pregnancies**  
**in 2024 compared**  
**to 16-18 per year**  
**15 years ago, thanks**  
**to ongoing sexual**  
**reproductive health**  
**education and**  
**the impact of our**  
**educational model**  
shifting the way  
our students think  
about their future and  
their goals





# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

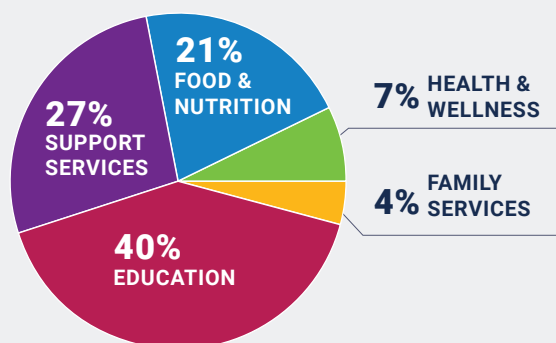
In 2024, we made significant financial shifts to better align our spending with our organizational values.

This included reducing costs associated with material waste and intentionally redirecting spending, where possible, to be spent in Guatemala, supporting local economies, strong programs, and student outcomes. We also redesigned our budgeting process to be more inclusive and transparent, fostering greater ownership and stewardship across the organization.

**Most notably, by reaching our capital fundraising goal for the middle school, we were able to break ground on this much-needed facility,** an important step forward in strengthening our operations and long-term sustainability.

**\*Data reflects figures from January 1 - December 31, 2024**

## 2024 PROGRAM EXPENSE DISTRIBUTION



**Total Expenses: \$ 1,772,412**

\*\$805,556 in Capital Expenses for Middle School released in 2024.



## 3-YEAR EXPENSE DISTRIBUTION COMPARISON

	2022	2023	2024
Program	66%	64%	74%
Fundraising	22%	22%	15%
Administration	12%	14%	11%

## 3-YEAR REVENUE & EXPENSE COMPARISON

	2022	2023	2024
Revenue	\$2,526,133	\$2,982,578	\$2,838,093
Expense	\$2,586,906	\$2,890,502	\$2,797,571

\*Source: IRS Form 990 and reflected as a percentage of total expenses.

Safe Passage is a U.S.-registered 501(c)(3) organization. Camino Seguro is a Guatemala-registered non-governmental association. View our Financial Statement and IRS 990, audited annually by PGM Accounting of Biddeford, Maine by visiting [www.safepassage.org/financials](http://www.safepassage.org/financials).



# OUR GLOBAL COMMUNITY

Safe Passage is grateful to our incredible partners who continue to take part in living out our mission and to those who joined us for the first time in 2024 with commitments to breaking the cycle of poverty and creating transformational change in Guatemala.

## 2024 SUPPORTER SNAPSHOT

Safe Passage's global support community is represented by the following countries: Australia, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Guatemala, Iceland, Spain, The Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

**688** visitors  
from January–November

**20+** Partners  
(health services, educational training, in-kind services, etc.)

**6,000+**  
Individuals fueled our work with generous gifts

**7** grants through Private Foundations totaled \$380,176

**386**  
New donors

## CORPORATE PARTNERS

**10** partners

In 2024 we launched a comprehensive Corporate Partnership program. [Learn more about this program on our website.](#)

## 2024 MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

### PRESIDENT

Jessica Britt Boston, MA

### VICE PRESIDENT

Santiago Bolaños Torrebiarte Guatemala & México City

### SECRETARY

Alyson Welch Plainfield, VT

### TREASURER

Matthew Bucher Hamel, Minnesota



## CO-CHAIR MODEL FOR 2025

### CO-CHAIR

**Santiago Bolaños Torrebiarte** Guatemala & Mexico City

### CO-CHAIR

**Sofía Arimany** Guatemala & New York, NY

### VICE PRESIDENT

**Ana Cristina Rozas-Bostrán** Guatemala

### SECRETARY

**Alyson Welch** Plainfield, VT

### TREASURER

**Matthew Bucher** Hamel, MN

**Camila Leal Witt** New York, NY & Guatemala

### Carla Campbell

Philadelphia, PA

### Christian von Oppen

Berlin, Germany

### Emily Dollar Shiprock, NM

### Esther Brol Guatemala

### Jeff Katz Cambridge, MA

### Marcos Zedan New York, NY

### Matthew Verghese

San Francisco, CA

### René J. Nazario Atlanta, GA

### Sara Bellenda

London, United Kingdom

### Kolia John O'Connor

New York, NY

### Esther Brol Guatemala

### Jeff Katz Cambridge, MA

### Christian von Oppen

Berlin, Germany

### Juan Francisco Roldan

Guatemala & Vienna, Austria

### Camila Leal Witt

New York, NY & Guatemala

### Ana Cristina Rozas-Bostrán

Guatemala

### Matthew Verghese

San Francisco, CA

### Carla Campbell

Philadelphia, PA

### Emily Dollar Shiprock, NM

### René J. Nazario

Atlanta, GA

### Sofía Arimany Guatemala

& New York, NY

### Sandra Bellenda

London, England

### Marcos Zedan

New York, NY





# WAYS TO GIVE

## BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR

Education takes sustained support and your ongoing gift helps us to plan for the future of our programs.

Just sign up once and your gifts, made on a recurring basis of your choosing, help us maintain stability and more accurately budget.

## PLANNED GIVING

Visit our Planned Giving Page: [www.safepassage.org/legacy/](http://www.safepassage.org/legacy/) to learn more about how you can become a Safe Passage Visionary.

## VISIT OUR PROGRAM

[www.safepassage.org/visit/](http://www.safepassage.org/visit/) to schedule an in-person visit with us to see our program in action.

## GIVE FROM A DAF (DONOR ADVISED FUND)

If you have a giving account with Fidelity, Schwab, or another fund manager, it's easier than ever to change lives! Put your DAF to work by making a one-time or recurring gift now.

## TELL A FRIEND

Share this report and our stories with someone you love.



**United States (Admin)**  
PO Box 791899  
Baltimore, MD 21279-1899

P (207) 846-1188  
E [info@safepassage.org](mailto:info@safepassage.org)

**Guatemala (Program)**  
6a. Avenida 11-95 Zona 7, Colonia  
Landivar, Ciudad de Guatemala

(502) 2440-4388  
[infofguate@safepassage.org](mailto:infofguate@safepassage.org)

# THANK YOU