

Setting the  
**Standard.**



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# Annual Report 2023





# 2023 was a year filled with new possibilities for growth and impact

in every direction of our mission. It was a time of transition and a year for new vision, with a refreshed brand and website capturing our promise to serve the nonprofit community by setting exceptional standards for ourselves and the organizations we support. **Over the 2023 year, the Nonprofits First team set our sights higher than ever, embracing every possibility to widen the power and scope of our Community Circle.**

## Evolving, Building and Expanding

Our board and staff continue to listen closely to the needs of our local leaders and organizations so we may empower them with tools and solutions to meet community challenges. Many of the impact points in this update represent the evolution of our own leadership, strategy and programs in order to build-out and expand our support to more nonprofit causes than ever before. Building on that momentum, Nonprofits First Board of Directors and staff laid out a solid three-year path forward with the implementation of our new 2023-2025 Strategic Plan, with updated mission, vision and core values messaging out a renewed commitment to our Community Circle.

## Serving Every Cause

Part of our expansion efforts uphold our core value to serve all the causes that improve life here in Palm Beach County. The team at Nonprofits First is dedicated to understanding and addressing the specific needs of the many diverse missions we serve, including cultural arts, the natural environment, animal welfare, and advocacy. We acknowledge their impact and are actively pursuing expansion of these dynamic missions into our Community Circle.

**From our board of directors and staff, we are honored to serve and strengthen your mission. Our success is only measured by the profound success we see in you, our incredible Community Circle.**

We are exceedingly thankful for every partner and volunteer who also supports Nonprofits First as a charitable organization, furthering our work with their time, expertise and financial giving. Thank you for Embracing Possibility with us.



Trudy Crowetz, CEO

## Embracing Possibility:

Turning Opportunities into Outcomes

**Standout successes from 2023 illustrate our dynamic, energized direction.**

**Meet the Funders Impact Panel.** One of many to come, Nonprofits First and Community Foundation of Palm Beach and Martin Counties partnered to provide this event which offers nonprofit causes and local funders the ability to collaborate and align efforts to address our greatest community concerns together.

**Power Panel: Schemers, Fraud, and the Exploitation of Pandemic Funding and Other Nonprofit Concerns.** Prominent local officials and community leaders led this timely, informative discussion which elevated the level of education and engagement of our local nonprofits, delivering powerful knowledge and tools with which to lead.

**7th Annual Hats Off Nonprofit Awards and farewell tribute to Jessica Cecere.** Our 2023 event spectacularly sold out in celebration of our beloved retiring CEO, Jessica Cecere. Not a seat was left open as more than 680 members of the nonprofit community came together to acknowledge the greatest accomplishments of the leaders and organizations making positive change in Palm Beach County and beyond. Nonprofits First was thrilled to expand the awards to acknowledge the incredible importance and contribution of the cultural arts to our community.



## WE BELIEVE IN:

### The Community Circle

We serve every cause, supporting and connecting missions to foster the greater good and wellbeing of all.

### Setting the Standard

Nonprofits First Accreditation is the professional measure for organizational health, performance, and sustainability.

### Bold Leadership

We provide the training for change, equipping leaders to advance their missions through knowledge, strength and innovation.



## Embracing Potential:

You Spoke. We Listened.

**Over a three-year period of time, Nonprofits First conducted research through surveys and focus groups to gain an honest perspective on our service delivery.** The data we gained now informs how we measure our own ongoing standards of performance. What were the biggest takeaways from our research efforts?

*The majority of respondents ranked Nonprofits First programs like Membership, Education, Accreditation, Management Support Services, and Professional Development as Excellent and Good, with positive increases from 2020 to 2023.*

**The highest ranked organizational needs in 2023** were attracting and maintaining funders and donors, strengthening leadership and management practices, and hiring talent or volunteers. This is a shift from 2020, where the greatest need expressed was in branding or marketing, demonstrating impact, and empowering leaders.

**Organizations realized positive increases through our capacity building programs:** Leadership and Management produced the most impact with 69% reporting improvements, followed by Board Governance (61%), and Empowering Leaders (60%).

**What we're working on now:** We're strengthening our work with cultural organizations, exploring collective resources and benefits, offering more free and low-cost workshops and trainings, and planning deeper dives into the issues that challenge our field.

*"Being part of Nonprofits First feels like a community, the offerings are abundant and strong, and the support received from staff is outstanding and appreciated."*  
**2023 Survey**

## Setting the Standard: Accreditation 2.0 = Attainable Success

Nonprofits First's trademarked program builds the foundation for long-term achievement and sustainability. Ever-evolving to serve you better, our new improved process ensures you reach and maintain

optimal business and program practices through a more streamlined, supportive system.

**Some organizations think Accreditation is out of reach, but Nonprofits First continues to make the process more affordable and attainable so every mission can perform at their highest level.** In 2023, we looked at opportunities to improve the Accreditation process and experience — optimizing workflow, volunteer engagement, and growth without compromising rigorous standards. The result is a simplified review and renewal process, easing time and effort to complete the program.



## Embracing Growth:

The Nonprofits First Community Circle

**Together we empower the nonprofit sector to solve the most important and urgent issues facing our communities.** At Nonprofits First, collaborative impact is achieved through our expanding Community Circle — diverse yet connected missions, leaders and partners working together to foster the greater good and wellbeing of all. Here are some of the new milestone initiatives we undertook to widen and strengthen our Community Circle.

### Nonprofit Summit and Funders Panel Establish New Collaborations for Change

80 nonprofit leaders attended Maximizing Our Impact Through Effective Collaboration, a new important event presented in partnership with Extraordinary Charities and held at the Keiser University Flagship Campus in January 2023. The day ended with an interactive funders panel discussion.

### 101 for the 501: Adding Bigger Tools to the Box

Nonprofits First provided two incredible new opportunities in 2023, giving participants exclusive access to an education and training program designed to take nonprofit causes to the next level of performance and impact from operations standards to social impact storytelling. More than 20 agencies participated in this important training program and received our exclusive 501(c)Pro Toolkit on-line self-evaluation.

### Acknowledging the Cultural Arts

Nonprofits First is proud and excited to serve every cause that makes Palm Beach County strong and special, and we celebrate the expansion of our Community Circle into the cultural arts. To recognize this commitment and partnership, the 2023 Hats Off Nonprofit Awards included long-awaited recognition for arts and culture organizations and leaders making incredible impact in our community.

*"Young Singers of the Palm Beaches is honored to be the very first recipient of the inaugural Arts and Culture Impact Award. We are thrilled that the Cultural Council is sponsoring this award, recognizing the remarkable influence arts has on individuals and our community."*

**Holly Stewart, Executive Director**

### 319 Nonprofit and Affiliate Members in 2023

Our members enjoy access to all the great benefits and resources we are proud to provide.

### 444 Rising Leaders Graduates since 2005

Many emerging professionals go on to serve in advanced leadership roles.

### 36 Advancing Leaders Graduates since 2021

Our new advanced program caters to the needs of executive-level leaders.

### 68 Professional Workshops and 1000 Participants in 2023

In-person and virtual presentations provide access to expertise at an affordable rate.

### 83 Participants in the 2023 Accreditation Program

These nonprofits meet up to 300 best practices and standards in management.

**The Elite 80**

Just 1% of the 8,000 nonprofit causes in Palm Beach County are Nonprofits First Accredited. These premiere organizations realize greater impact, form stronger partnerships and have access to additional funding opportunities.

## Embracing New Ways to Engage:

### Building Collaborative Community

**We lead alongside you — as supportive partners serving every nonprofit cause and professional.** Now more than ever, Nonprofits First is focused on our vision where all nonprofits achieve their highest level of desired impact. That means more than offering expertise and tools; it means building and supporting a deeply connected cause community.

#### Membership: A Growing Advantage

Nonprofit and Affiliate membership is gaining momentum as more organizations and leaders come together to increase community impact while enjoying the strength and support of the profession. Our Community Circle grew to include new membership from arts and culture, education, and environmental conservation missions.

Nonprofits First also strategically expanded our level of outreach and recruitment through participation with Inter-Agency Network, Association of Fundraising Professionals, Spirit of Giving, member site visits, and local municipalities.

#### MEMBERSHIP GROWTH CHART 2023:

**106 Affiliate Members**  
are expanding our resources  
in the fields of marketing and  
communications, human  
resources management,  
leadership development and  
coaching, fundraising and  
development, and financial  
management

**150 Nonprofit and  
Affiliate members**  
connected at three  
networking events

**213 Nonprofit Members**  
marks our highest involvement  
to date, representing a growing  
presence from organizations  
focused on children, families  
and education

#### Engagement that Gives Back

When you're a member, sponsor or donor of Nonprofits First, you receive many amenities and advantages, but you also give back to our mission to empower all the great causes we serve and support. Together in our Community Circle, we foster the greater good and well-being of all. Thank you for giving to Nonprofits First with your time, expertise and financial support.

*We look forward to revealing even more benefits and reasons to belong in the coming year.*

**New Tech Success**  
*New membership  
program management  
software instantly  
increased our ability to  
engage, manage and  
retain membership.*

## Embracing Leadership:

### Setting the Standard

**Nonprofits First leads by example.** With our bold claim to set the standard for nonprofit performance and impact, we hold ourselves accountable at the highest level so we may be worthy of guiding the sector. It's important to earn your trust by exhibiting the standards of which we speak and uphold. Nonprofits First continues to keep governance, stewardship and stability at the center of our strength, ensuring sustainability for ourselves and the great causes we serve and support.



**CEO Circles:  
Stronger  
Together**  
**"A game-  
changer for our  
organization."**

That's how Bailey  
Hughes, Executive  
Director of The  
Hands and Feet, describes

Nonprofits First CEO Circles. She credits the open, collaborative environment and expert guidance of colleagues surrounding her for the confidence to navigate leadership challenges with precision and innovation. "The insight gained through shared discussion and experiences transformed our approach to mission fulfillment and put success within reach." The Hands and Feet provides essential items to children and families with an open child welfare case so they know the support of a caring, loving community.

#### Celebrating Jessica Cecere

With equal parts celebration and sadness, the board and staff of Nonprofits First said goodbye to Jessica Cecere as its CEO of 10 years. Jessica took us to a place of bold leadership and growth, leaving us positioned for even higher impact, as our model for nonprofit best practices is the envy of the sector. We look forward to attaining the dreams Jessica still holds for us while one day exceeding her far-reaching vision. Jessica, we know you remain our greatest champion as we grow beyond Palm Beach County in service of community causes everywhere.



## Strong and Sound: The 2023 Fiscal Report

#### Revenue & Support: \$1,889,691

Government and Community Support: \$963,286  
Program Services: \$882,895  
Other: \$43,510

#### Expenses: \$1,816,395

Program Services: \$1,434,244 / 79%  
Business Development and Fundraising: \$241,784 / 13%  
General and Administrative: \$140,367 / 8%

#### Total Net Assets End of Year: \$556,079



# Board of Directors 2022-2023



A heartfelt thank you to our board members for their dedication, wisdom, and support. Their invaluable contributions shape the vision and future of our organization. It's their vision that illuminates the path forward, and their guidance that ensures Nonprofits First thrives in its endeavors to make a positive impact in the community.



Jennifer Sullivan  
*Board Chair*



Katia Saint-Preux  
*Board Vice Chair*



Teresa Miller  
*Board Secretary*



Henry Martin  
*Board Treasurer*

## Board Members



Gina Ardillo



Janice Brunson



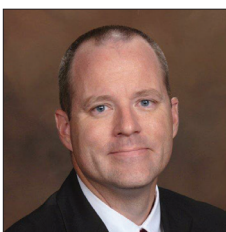
Peter Cruise



Philip DiComo



David Gobeo



Troy Harrington



Sergio Mariaca



Mark Montgomery



John Muller



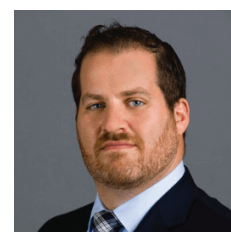
Melissa Nash



Alpesh Patel



Deana Pizzo



Kenneth Rehns