



TOGETHER RISING

ANNUAL REPORT

2024



A Note of Gratitude and Farewell

After 12 beautiful years of turning heartbreak into action – and supporting families, individuals and organizations with \$55,118,582.16 – **the Together Rising Board of Directors has unanimously determined it is time to sunset the organization.**

This huge decision has been painstakingly made with steady and grateful hearts, knowing, yes, it's time. Because it is as important to know when to end a beautiful thing as it is to know when to begin a beautiful thing.

And it has been beautiful. **Because of your love, trust, and generosity, together we've provided 11,713 grants to people who needed a loving hand in moments of crisis.** We've kept the lights on, kept food on the table, paid the utility bills, provided the tuition, covered the medical bills.

Over time, we became a bridge, not only between you and individuals, but between you and trusted boots-on-the-ground organizations who are leading through some of the most vital work of our lifetime. **Together, we have provided critical funding to 298 incredible organizations** – providing food for refugees across the world, urgent relief in natural disasters, shelter for queer and unhoused youth, reunification for families torn apart at the border, wraparound support for teen parents in addiction recovery, and on and on and on.

None of this happens without YOU. We will be forever grateful for how you have shown up for us so we could show up for the world. The sunset of Together Rising does not mean the end of heartbreak or the end of action – we will all keep showing up in new and different ways to heal our hearts and heal the world.

With love, fury, and relentless hope,

Together Rising

**As our final act, we invested directly in three organizations:
Al Otro Lado, Out Youth, and Holler Health Justice**

Al Otro Lado (AOL) is one of three incredible organizations Together Rising is honored to amplify as we sunset our organization. Over the years, AOL has become one of our most trusted boots-on-the-ground partners, doing the seemingly impossible as they work to reunify families devastated by cruel separation policies.

Al Otro Lado is a binational nonprofit providing legal and humanitarian aid on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. They work to reunify families separated under policies of both the Trump and Biden administrations.

As Together Rising sunsets as an organization, we are proud to invest an additional \$750,000 in Al Otro Lado to support their critical work, which brings our total lifetime investment in AOL to \$3,916,520.69.



Photo Credit: Al Otro Lado

Out Youth’s commitment to creating safety and acceptance for queer youth has lasted decades, and we are thrilled to include them as one of our final grantees. As Together Rising sunsets as an organization, we are grateful to provide an additional \$750,000 in Out Youth to support their critical work.

As parts of the world become harder and less safe for those in the LGBTQIA+ community, we must bolster the places of refuge that exist and we are so grateful for the work of our long-term and queer-led partner Out Youth.

Based in Austin, Out Youth serves Central Texas LGBTQIA+ youth and their allies. For more than 30 years, Out Youth has carved out a unique model of services – including support groups, counseling, and drop-ins – to ensure these promising young people have the opportunity to develop into happy, healthy, successful adults.



Photo Credit: Gayatri Malhotra

Holler Health Justice (HHJ) believes that those directly impacted by an issue are best positioned to design and lead solutions, and their leadership reflects just that – with a majority identifying either as people of color, LGBTQIA+, or from low-income backgrounds. As Together Rising sunsets as an organization, we are delighted to invest an additional \$750,000 in Holler Health Justice to support their critical work.

Securing safe, accessible abortion and reproductive justice for all is not possible without partners like HHJ leading the way. As increased legislation restricts access to abortion care and reproductive healthcare – especially for the most marginalized, low-income, and rural communities – it is more important than ever to invest in this work.

We supported refugee communities devastated by violence and displacement.

Throughout 2024, Together Rising invested \$883,256.48 to support refugee communities throughout the world.

As the humanitarian crisis in Gaza reached new levels of death, destruction, and violence, Together Rising turned again to support two trusted organizations: the Middle East Children's Alliance (MECA) and American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA). With investments totaling \$663,256.48, these two organizations were able to expand their efforts of providing hot meals and fresh produce, water, medical supplies, medicine, and trauma-informed psychosocial support for children and adults. Despite the very real danger these partners face directly, MECA and ANERA remain committed because they know the people they serve are in desperate need of relief.



Photo courtesy of ANERA



Photo courtesy of ShelterBox

Sudan is currently facing a humanitarian crisis of epic proportions. This past year, as conflict between rival military factions in Sudan erupted, more than 8.7 million people have fled their homes, including 4.6 million children. What resulted is one of the largest displacement crises in the world. Together Rising invested \$100,000 towards our trusted partner ShelterBox and their critical work. ShelterBox is on the ground working to support at least 6,500 newly arrived displaced families (approximately 32,500 people) in Chad with emergency shelter and basic household items.

Together Rising invested \$100,000 in the ongoing work of Action Against Hunger (AAH) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). A region known for its instability, the people of the DRC experienced a spike in violence in the latter months of 2023, as the country anticipated national elections in December. For over 20 years, AAH has been working in the DRC, adapting its programs to the context of crises (armed conflicts, population displacements, epidemics) and the needs of the population (access to water and food, access to hygiene). AAH implements emergency and development programs aimed at detecting, treating, and curing acute malnutrition, promoting nutritional security among the most vulnerable populations (especially children under 5 and pregnant and breastfeeding people), and improving access to basic services.



Photo courtesy of Action Against Hunger

We invested directly in grants to individuals and families.

In 2024, Together Rising distributed \$362,457.30 in grants directly to individuals and families. Virtually all of these grants were directed to families and individuals who applied for support, including help with a range of basic necessities such as housing, food, electricity, unexpected medical bills, transportation, and mental health support such as therapy.

For example, Together Rising provided a grant to Philece. Philece (pictured right) is an educator and mom of five. She was facing eviction after a new job left her with unpaid maternity leave, and even though she was paying the balance down each month, they weren't stopping the process of eviction. We were able to cover five months of rent and give this family some much needed respite from a series of hard circumstances.



Another individual grant went to Jessica, (pictured left) who was diagnosed with invasive ductal carcinoma in March 2022. A mom of three, Jessica's youngest was barely 5 months old at the time of her diagnosis. Over the next few months the Walshes pursued treatments of all kinds; later that year, a scan showed the cancer had progressed. Then, early in 2023, they learned that it had metastasized and was now stage 4.

Times were tough — and a family member suggested they apply for a Together Rising grant. Instead of worrying about medical bills and mortgage statements, they've been able to focus on healing and nurturing their young family.

We continued to reunite parents and children separated at the border.

In addition to our final grant to AOL, Together Rising sent a total of \$656,306.37 in grants to continue to support and reunify families who were separated at the U.S. border under the federal government's "zero-tolerance policy."

To hold true to our 2018 promise of reunifying all separated families, we fundraised to mount one last push to help separated families obtain some measure of justice. We did so alongside five trusted partner organizations: AOL, Kids in Need of Defense (KIND), the National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild (NIP), Justice In Motion (JIM), and Together & Free. These organizations have been working to reunify separated families for years and, with sufficient funding, they will be able to accompany these families through the final phase of their long legal journey to permanent immigration status in the United States.