

# 2024

# Annual REPORT



**TENANT RESOURCE CENTER**

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🌐 **www.TenantResourceCenter.org**

📍 **2510 Winnebago Street  
Madison, WI 53704**

## Message from the Board of Directors

Dear members,

**“TRC defends housing as a human right and strengthens housing stability in our communities by preventing evictions and educating and empowering individuals and families.”**

I'm proud to present these words to you: TRC's new proposed mission statement, which will be presented for a vote by membership at the 2025 Annual Meeting. In 2024, a dedicated group of board members and TRC staff of all levels reviewed TRC's goals and values and created this updated mission statement. This proposed mission statement more accurately reflects the work that TRC has done and will continue to do. As part of this process, TRC also identified six core values of the organization:

**Empowerment • Collaboration • Accountability • Accessibility • Equity • Anti-Racism**

These core values will guide strategic planning, programming, and decision-making for the TRC in the years to come.

This annual report details another amazing year for TRC. We began 2024 with the grand opening of our new main office and closed out the year with a record number of households served. Two numbers continue to amaze me:

- TRC staff appeared at 4,444 hearings and trials in 2024. And once again, TRC contacted every single household with an eviction filed against them in Dane County.
- 83% of the households that received services from TRC or one of our legal partners—whether mediation, legal representation, financial assistance, housing counseling, or other support—had their eviction case dismissed.

These numbers are astounding and show that, as the housing crisis continues to worsen, there is a desperate need within our communities for the type of services that TRC provides. Our success this year is, of course, only possible because of the hard work of TRC's staff, volunteers, and other supporting members, and the support of our funders and individual donors.

2025 will be a year of change for TRC: the winddown and transition of our rental assistance program; the reorganization of our eviction defense and diversion program with the support of a new grant from HUD; and the diversification of our funding sources. Regardless of the changes we see in 2025, TRC will continue to defend housing as a human right and strengthen housing stability in our communities by preventing evictions and educating and empowering individuals and families.

Thank you all for your support of TRC's vision of Housing Justice for All.

In solidarity,  
Mary Pfothenauer, President, Board of Directors

# Board of Directors, Staff, and Volunteers

## Leadership

## Board of Directors and Volunteers

## Staff

Hannah Renfro  
*Executive Director*  
Chrisbelly Antimo,  
*Associate Director*  
Matt Kozlowski,  
*Finance and Operations  
Director*  
Cayana Amaguana  
Cachiguango,  
*Eviction Diversion & Defense  
Partnership Program  
Manager*  
Jeff LeMessurier,  
*Housing Counseling Services  
Program Manager*  
Megan Spielbauer  
Sandate,  
*Finance Manager*

Board of Directors  
Mary Pfothenauer,  
*President*  
Enzo Ciarletta,  
*Vice President*  
David Hollander, *Treasurer*  
Sofia Ascorbe, *Secretary*  
Laura Dixon-Kruijf  
Mary Murray  
Kira Mochal  
Sophie Crispin

Volunteers  
Mary Anglim  
Howard Bellman  
Joseph Bowling  
John Cook  
Ivy Fan  
Paul Matthews  
Bob Minberg  
Wenda Minberg  
Jim Murray  
Jason Murcko  
Justin Rabensdorf  
Charlie Ross  
Joan Schilling  
Katie Suoja  
Sophia Qian Walton

Dontaeva Acklin  
Claire Allen  
Andrea Fernandez Antelo  
Bryan Antimo  
Sam Buskey  
Miranda Clemence  
Diego Colorado  
Phoebe Copa  
Judith Cosme Cruz  
Angel Davis  
Kat Garcia  
Oscar Guzman  
Vesna Džamonja  
Paul Hermann  
Meera Labine  
Ximena Linares Rodriguez  
Amy Lindley  
Rose Manjon  
Lilia Paz  
Parker Schorr  
Mya Simms  
Jude Stallworth  
Coleman Ubl  
Levi Waniorek

## Eviction Diversion & Defense Partnership

The EDDP team proactively engages with every tenant household facing eviction to ensure they have the support, information, and guidance needed to participate effectively in their eviction court hearing. EDDP staff attend every eviction hearing and trial in Dane County to answer questions, provide services, and offer resources. The team also coordinates applications for housing-related financial assistance, including rent, utility payments, and security deposits (referred to as “rental assistance”) to eligible tenant households. Additionally, TRC partners with legal service organizations and attorneys to provide attorney representation at no cost to tenants.

## Health & Housing

TRC, UW Health, and UW Medicine started the Health & Housing program in 2018 to provide housing stability services to improve the health outcomes of patients living with HIV. Medical case managers at the UW Health HIV clinics refer clients to TRC’s housing case managers. TRC assists these clients with finding, securing, and maintaining housing by providing comprehensive services throughout the rental process, such as assisting clients with job and housing applications; providing financial assistance and transportation; educating clients about their rental rights and responsibilities; and scheduling regular check-ins with clients and their landlords.

## Housing Counseling Services

Our Housing Counseling Services team works with tenants and landlords to answer questions about their rental rights and responsibilities and provides trainings to internal staff and volunteers, tenants, landlords, and service providers (e.g. case managers, staff at nonprofit partner agencies). When a tenant’s housing stability is significantly at risk and other extenuating circumstances are present, a housing counselor may refer the matter to an EDDP partner attorney for eviction diversion assistance. In addition, our mediation team helps to resolve disputes between landlords and tenants in court or before an eviction is filed.

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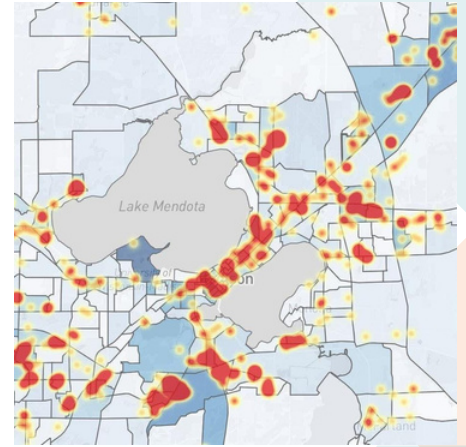
These program teams are, in turn, supported by our **Administrative and Financial** team, which acts as the backbone for TRC’s programs and operations. The team administers all rental assistance and ensures that rental assistance is paid in compliance with landlord-tenant laws, federal rules and regulations, and contract requirements. They also support the programmatic teams by maintaining detailed eviction court data and using the data to prepare reports on program operations. They also manage TRC’s internal workflow systems, website, and other written materials to provide current information to staff, clients, and funders. TRC staff on all teams participate in outreach and trainings across Dane County for tenants, landlords, social service providers, and community members.

# Tenant Resource Center in Eviction Court

**Our goal is to ensure no one in Dane County faces eviction alone.** Although we cannot change all of the systems that lead to housing insecurity, TRC can be a hub for information, resources, and support. When a tenant is facing eviction, we provide housing counseling, mediation, court navigation, rental assistance, and referrals to free legal representation. We also collect, analyze, and report on eviction court data. This data is important both for shaping our services to the needs of the community and keeping the community and policymakers informed about evictions in our community.

We contact every household with an eviction filing in Dane County to inform them about their hearing, how to appear, and resources available. In 2024, we provided services at 4,444 eviction hearings and trials. These services included mediation, legal representation, rental assistance, housing counseling, and other support services from TRC staff. We mediated 260 tenant-landlord disputes at court appearances, and 464 households were represented by an EDDP legal partner.

As the result of TRC's and our partners' services, 83% of households facing eviction had their cases dismissed.



## 4,444

hearings and trials  
in which TRC staff  
provided services

## 260

landlord-tenant  
disputes mediated by  
TRC staff and  
volunteers

## 464

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EDDP legal partner

**“AS THE RESULT OF TRC’S AND OUR PARTNERS’ SERVICES,  
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DISMISSED.”**

# Empowering Communities

**TRC volunteers** play an indispensable role in empowering the community with information on their rental rights and responsibilities. Volunteer mediators helped resolve eviction disputes, leading to 95% of those cases being dismissed. In 2024, we recruited and trained 3 new housing counseling volunteers—our first cohort since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The time they generously donate means that we can return phone calls much more quickly, which is especially important with the growing need for services: Tenant Resource Center’s staff and volunteers responded to 15,200 calls and emails in 2024, an increase of over 3,000 from the previous year.



**15,200**

calls and emails  
answered by TRC staff  
and volunteers

**6,058**

in-person visits to Tenant  
Resource Center’s four  
office locations

**34**

Health & Housing clients  
received holistic, client-  
centered support

**Our Housing Counseling and EDDP teams** also supported 6,058 in-person visitors to our offices in 2024. This is 1,185 more visitors than in 2023. We answered questions covering every step of the landlord-tenant relationship: rental applications, non-renewals, evictions, and everything in between. We also helped households complete rental assistance applications, navigate eviction court, obtain referrals to other organizations, and complete Coordinated Entry Eviction Prevention Screening (a tool used by Dane County to help connect households to potential financial assistance from multiple organizations).

**TRC’s Health & Housing case managers** collaborated extensively with medical case managers in 2024 to provide wraparound, client-centered support to 34 clients referred from UW Health HIV clinics, supporting them with maintaining stable housing and prioritizing their health and well-being.

# Importance of Collaboration

Partnering with other community organizations helps us provide more effective support to those experiencing housing insecurity. By sharing resources, knowledge, and connections, we can better meet the intersecting needs of individuals and families. These collaborations allow us to meet community needs more efficiently and help advance housing justice. Below are a few highlights from 2024.



## Community Shares Collaboration Award

TRC and Legal Action of Wisconsin won the 2024 Community Shares Collaboration Award for our eviction prevention work. The award recognized the tremendous community impact that is possible with meaningful collaborations. Through our EDDP team, who connects with every household with an eviction filing in Dane County, TRC can refer tenants to Legal Action attorneys when they are experiencing complex needs, including financial insecurity, a potential loss of subsidized housing, and other circumstances that increase the likelihood of long-term housing insecurity.

## Madison Area Partners and Allies (MAPA)

We continue to partner with Madison Area Partners and Allies (MAPA), a group TRC helped create for community members to connect with nonprofit and government organizations providing essential social services. MAPA events are held monthly and are targeted to the Spanish-speaking immigrant community. The purpose is to create easily accessible events that allow multiple organizations across Dane County assist individuals with multiple areas of need.

## Community Resource Fair

Finally, we were proud to host our first annual Community Resource Fair in July 2024, bringing together over 30 local organizations at TRC's main office to offer vital resources, services, and information to the community. The event featured free food, drinks, and fun activities for kids. It was a powerful opportunity for individuals to connect with multiple organizations in one place.



# *Financial Support Services*

## **Rental Assistance**

In 2024, we provided over \$10,000,000 in rental assistance to 1,370 households facing housing insecurity. The vast majority of those funds were disbursed from through Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) funding through our EDDP program. The remainder was distributed through other, much smaller funding sources supporting tenants through our EDDP, Housing Counseling, and Health & Housing programs.

The average income of the households who received rental assistance was below 20% of the area median income. Over half (57%) of the households were led by people identifying as female, 55% by people identifying as Black or African American, and 14.5% by people identifying as Hispanic or Latinx.

The average Dane County household receiving rental assistance had at least one child in the home. It is important to bear in mind that this figure only represents households who were in eviction court or at imminent risk of eviction and who received rental assistance from TRC. The data on children experiencing housing insecurity is significantly underreported due to several factors. Primarily, eviction court filings only list adults, and there is no comprehensive system to track other forms of housing instability, such as unsafe living conditions, the constant fear of eviction, or experiences of discrimination and harassment. What is clear is that a large number of children in our communities face ongoing housing instability. National and local research show that single Black mother-led households are the most vulnerable to eviction and housing insecurity. Our rental assistance programs alone reveal that 906 children lived in a Dane County household facing an eviction filing in 2024.

Our rental assistance also supported individuals living with HIV and experiencing housing insecurity. This is an important feature of the wraparound services provided by our Health & Housing program, which support an individual's long-term health and well-being.

## **Looking Ahead for TRC**

In 2025, TRC will be winding down the widescale Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program. TRC has distributed over \$40 million in rental assistance through this and other COVID-related federal programs since 2020. Those funds expire in 2025. TRC will continue operating our EDDP with City of Madison, Dane County, and private funding, and with a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development's Eviction Protection Grant Program. We will administer a new, dramatically smaller rental assistance program in 2026.

In making this transition, we will be relying on a strategic plan that will be completed in 2025. That plan will not only help us navigate an enormous shift in funding but will create long-term sustainable practices that align with our mission and core values.

# TRC in the Community

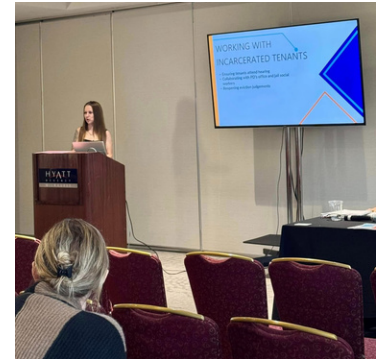
Accessibility is one of our core values, and it guides our decision-making on when and how we are in the community. This includes everything from our hours of operation to staffing decisions and how we allocate resources.

Language access is integral to our services. Over 30% of our staff are bilingual, and we offer all of our services and resources in English and Spanish. When we were selected for an Adams Collaborate award to display TRC billboards across Madison, we worked with Adams to design half of the billboards in Spanish. This targeted outreach ensures that essential housing stability support is available and accessible to more people in our communities.

We started off 2024 operating in our new office on Winnebago Street. In choosing our location, accessibility was one of our highest priorities. It is on the bus line, part of a rental community, and has generous parking. It is much larger than TRC's previous office, allowing for more privacy, space for trainings, and a dedicated room for tenants to attend virtual eviction hearings. From March 1 through the end of 2024, 273 tenants attended their virtual eviction hearing in our main office. For these households, we helped to reduce technology and language barriers to eviction prevention services by providing access to computers, assistance with the online hearings, and support in English and Spanish.

We also began offering services in Sun Prairie at Sunshine Place, with office hours three days a week. With this addition, we now provide services at 4 different locations in Dane County: our main office, Sunshine Place, Madison College Goodman South, and UW Madison.

We participate in the community on a regular basis through outreach activities. We participated in 174 outreach events in 2024, 32 of which were led by bilingual staff. In addition, TRC staff participated in 34 City of Madison Neighborhood Resource Team meetings in 2024.



# Supporting Staff and DEI Committee

## Tenant Resource Center Staff Support

Tenant Resource Center's dedicated staff make this work possible. We strive to be an organization where all employees feel welcome, included, and respected and where they have opportunities to grow. We pay sustainable wages to all staff; pay a bilingual pay differential for staff who speak Spanish and English to recognize the importance of that skill set; cover 100% of the premium cost for health, dental, and vision insurance; provide generous paid time off and paid holidays; invest in professional development; and maintain an emergency fund for staff who are facing a financial crisis.



## DEI Committee

In 2024, Tenant Resource Center formed a DEI committee to help foster a culture of equity, inclusion, and anti-racism, where all individuals are valued, respected, and empowered. The committee will work to identify workplace and service inequities, implement actionable strategies to uphold anti-discriminatory and equity-focused values, craft aligned policies, and share findings and solutions with transparency.



# Fundraising, Financials, and Use of Contributions

## Financials and Use of Contributions

TRC's program expense rate from 2023 (our most recent audited year) was 96.5%. This means that for every \$100 donated to TRC, \$96.50 goes to direct services in Dane County. This is more than a number. It's a reflection of our commitment to putting donations and funding directly toward housing justice.

96.5%

Additional financial information will accompany this report after the completion of TRC's 2024 financial audit.

## Fundraising

TRC is facing a significant shift in funding in 2025. To continue serving the community in a similar capacity, we have been focusing intense efforts on a fundraising strategy that diversifies our funding sources, solidifies relationships with existing donors, and expands our private donor base. With these efforts, we raised more money than ever before during The Big Share 2024, secured a United Way Impact Grant, and were awarded a \$950,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development's Eviction Protection Grant Program.



## Copies of This Report

Copies of this report are available on the Tenant Resource Center's website ([www.TenantResourceCenter.org](http://www.TenantResourceCenter.org)), by email request to [Executive@TenantResourceCenter.org](mailto:Executive@TenantResourceCenter.org), and by request at our main office:

2510 Winnebago Street  
Madison, WI 53704

