



access
PSYCHOLOGY
FOUNDATION

20
24



ANNUAL REPORT

A Message from Our **Board Chair & Founder**



Your support continues to drive meaningful, measurable change. In Access Psychology Foundation's (APF) second year, we made a deep impact and, though still a very young organization, we are already seeing the ripple effect of our cumulative work together.

With your help, we are once again illustrating the power of evidence-based interventions and what's possible when a community of dedicated supporters steps up to help more people access care. It's no small thing we are accomplishing together! By supporting and training diverse postdoctoral fellows, and bringing Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) into schools and community-based organizations, APF is actively building a more equitable and responsive system of care.

The stories and testimonials you'll read in the following pages reflect the dedication of our staff, the commitment of our fellows, and most of all, your belief in this work. Thank you for your support.

Alec Miller

Alec L. Miller, PsyD
Chair, Board of Directors

A Message from Our **Executive Director**



It's incredible how quickly we've begun to collect powerful stories about how Access Psychology Foundation's (APF) work is changing lives.

Our postdoctoral fellows describe the joy of seeing clients making meaningful progress week by week – and how much it means to train in a setting that combines the highest standards of clinical practice with a deep commitment to representation, community, and equity.

School staff tell us they feel more confident and effective after participating in our Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) training, and that they take pride in watching students use these skills to improve outcomes at school and at home. Those students are proud, too – of their ability to make better choices, avoid harmful situations, and manage their emotions with tools they've learned.

The full impact of our work will unfold over many years – but as you'll read in this report, profound changes are already taking place every day.

Thank you for being such an integral part of the journey.

Looking forward,

Damian Travier

Damian Travier
Executive Director



History and Vision

APF was established in 2022 by Dr. Alec Miller and Dr. Lata McGinn, co-founders of Cognitive & Behavioral Consultants (CBC), a collective of professionals providing excellent evidence-based clinical care to residents and organizations in Westchester and Manhattan since 2004. While the lack of access to mental health care in our

most vulnerable communities had long been a pressing concern, the pandemic marked a turning point in the crisis. Together, Drs. Miller and McGinn recruited a dedicated board and advisory group, established the foundation, and have since built a strong infrastructure, demonstrating the success of a truly transformative model. Their vision is a future where equitable access to proven, successful mental health services and training is a reality for all communities.

APF's Mission

To change and save lives by increasing access to proven, successful mental health interventions. We do this in two ways:

- 1. Partnering with schools and organizations that serve underserved communities and diverse students.** We provide no- or low-cost training for staff to help their students build resilience and to provide more intensive interventions to help students in need.
- 2. Training a network of diverse therapists.** We provide scholarships for year-long fellowship and internship programs for psychology and social work graduate students and other aspiring therapists from historically underrepresented populations.

292 THERAPY SESSIONS MADE
AFFORDABLE & ACCESSIBLE



Children, adults, families, and students who often face barriers to care received deeply discounted therapy services from our partners at Cognitive & Behavioral Consultants (CBC) in 2024, with out-of-pocket costs as low as \$20 per session. These treatments empower people to manage their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors, enabling them to lead more stable, fulfilling lives, even in the face of stress or adversity.

THE FUTURE OF THERAPY LOOKS LIKE THIS

Meet Three Postdoctoral Fellows Shaping the Future of Mental Health Care



Jake Samuels, Karissa Lim, and Mayra Reyes Ruiz each received Postdoctoral Fellows Scholarships of \$15,000 from Access Psychology Foundation (APF), funds designated to help aspiring therapists “stay the course” and achieve full licensure as psychologists.

Throughout the 2024-2025 year, they worked at CBC, where they received world-class training and support from some of the most esteemed clinicians in the field, and provided excellent care to children and families from diverse backgrounds and with a wide range of therapeutic needs.



Jake Samuels: Making a Difference Every Day, Not Just in the Long Term

The funding from APF is what brought Jake Samuels to CBC. He wanted to work with diverse clientele and feels strongly about APF’s multifaceted approach to increasing access to care, especially through schools.

Reflecting on the year, he shares how deeply moved he was by the powerful testimonials about APF’s impact and his clinical colleagues’ sincere devotion to their work. He also enjoyed serving as a mentor in the summer internship program and participating in community events, noting that these opportunities are a unique benefit of the APF Fellowship.

When asked about the difference he hopes to make in his career, Jake says there’s no single goal post for long term success. “It’s something I try to see in my work every day.” And he does. *Reflecting on a day with back-to-back sessions, Jake recalls a child with autism — who doesn’t typically express emotion — greeting him with a big smile when he entered the waiting room, and realized this visible happiness was becoming a welcome pattern. The next session was with a family. The parents joked about bringing Jake along on vacation—a sign of the strong rapport he had developed and the progress they had come to trust and believe in.* “Success is less about what’s three to five years out and more about whether I am seeing an impact day to day and week to week. That’s what keeps me going.”

Jake feels strongly that mental health is a pervasive problem that doesn’t discriminate based

Continued

on race, culture, or socioeconomic status. The best care can't be limited to those with means, and a predominately white mental health workforce is not the best way to serve the needs of all communities.

"Representation is important. To be effective as clinicians, we need to be able to make connections and build rapport. I've seen in my own clinical work with Black and brown patients that my identity will help some of them let down their guard more quickly, as they assume we may have some shared experiences and I may get what they're going through. Of course, race isn't the only way to connect, but having ***diverse clinicians that reflect the diversity of those who need mental health services is essential.***"



Karissa Lim: Learning from the Best of the Best

Karissa knew from the start that she wanted to work with high-risk children who need deeply skilled therapists and she was determined to become one of those therapists herself. "Alec and Lata are among the best in the field, and working with them is the best way to be fully immersed in CBT, DBT, and other evidence-based treatments."

For Karissa, choosing this fellowship wasn't just about clinical training, but it was also about values. "The fact that Access Psychology Foundation exists in partnership with Cognitive & Behavioral Consultants proves that they don't just talk about DEI... they put it into practice. They care about equity in mental health. They care about bringing more people like me into the field and training more therapists of color to serve communities of color."

Many of the children and families Karissa works with have tried therapy before — sometimes multiple times — and arrive saying they're at the end of their rope. Some are dealing with suicidal ideation; others have made suicide attempts. Helping them finally access tools that actually work is very rewarding.

For the first time in her career, Karissa is working with Asian and immigrant clients — some of whom say she's the first Asian therapist they've ever seen and that her shared identity is part of why they chose to work with her. She says it's deeply meaningful to witness and share in those cultural shifts and to see generational cycles change. Karissa also notes that she's driving change just by being in the room, as only 2% of psychologists are Asian. She feels her very existence as an Asian psychologist helps push back against barriers, trauma, and oppression. ***"I am breathing, therefore I am dismantling."***

As a trained school psychologist, Karissa also knows how hard it is for many families to access one-on-one care in a broken healthcare system. She believes APF's school-based DBT training is one of the most effective ways to expand access to mental health care, especially for those who need it most



Mayra: Not Just Mental Illness, but Mental Health

For Mayra, one of the most rewarding parts of her work is seeing real change take root in a child's life. Many of the young people she works with come in struggling, not attending school regularly, facing family conflict, and feeling ashamed, hopeless, or stuck.

Progress is often slow and incremental, but over time the shift becomes clear. Students start attending school more regularly, their grades improve, they go on field trips, reconnect with friends and family, reengage with hobbies, and begin to think about their future — including applying to college. These actions reflect renewed confidence and a willingness to show up and try. That's the part Mayra finds most meaningful: being part of mental health and seeing how positive changes touch every part of a person's life.

Much of her work centers on helping young people develop flexible thinking and stronger interpersonal skills: learning to see other perspectives, reduce conflict, repair relationships, feel heard, and establish healthy boundaries. With these tools, events that once felt overwhelming — like the end of a friendship or a breakup — become more manageable. Mayra believes these skills will help them build healthier, more fulfilling lives and relationships for years to come.

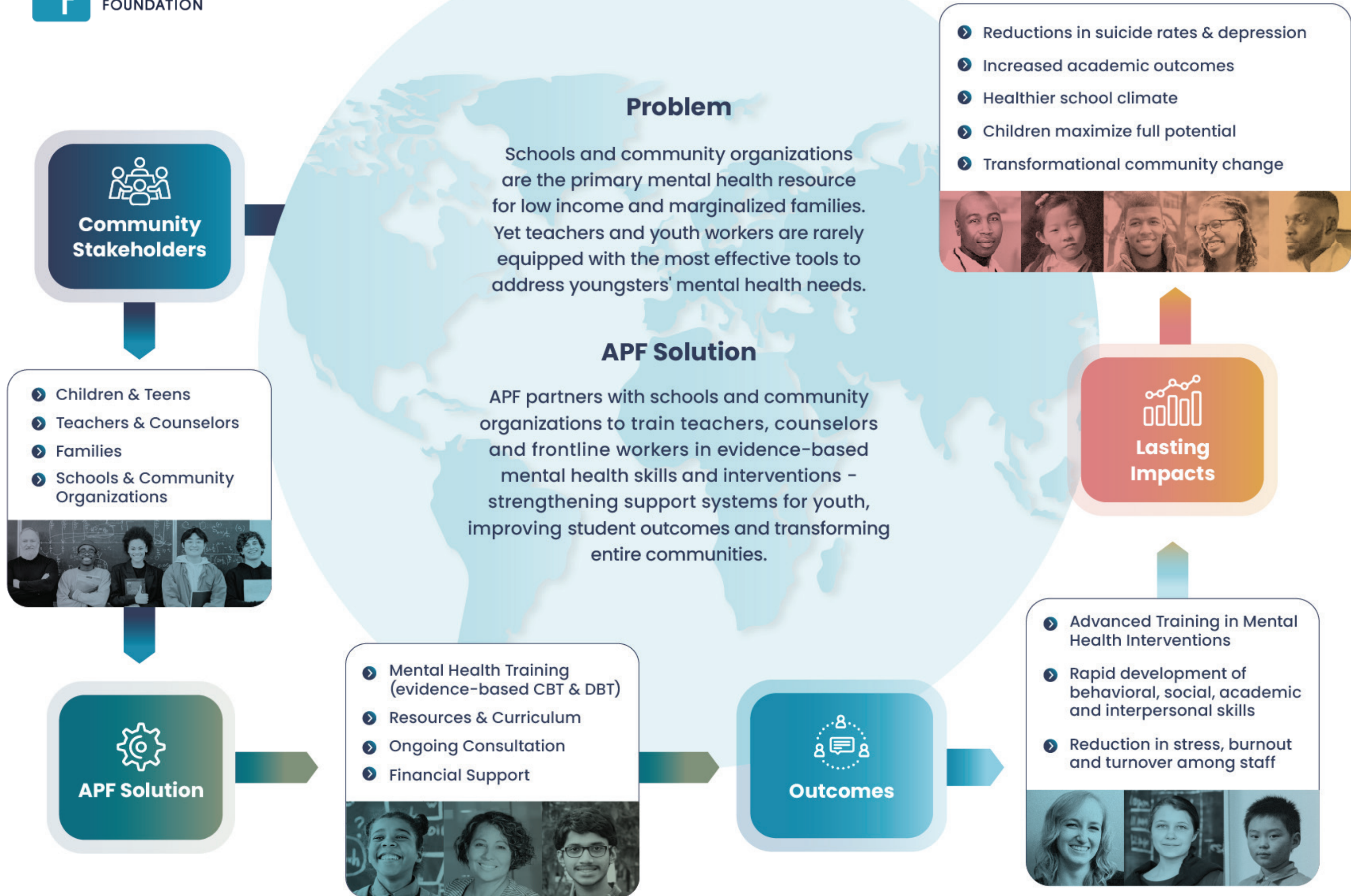
She shares that she has felt very supported during her postdoctoral year, not just in collaborative decision-making, but in helping her develop her own clinical judgment and style as she prepares to transition into independent practice.

Initially drawn to APF because of the focus on serving underrepresented communities, Mayra believes our efforts to diversify the mental health field are vital not only for representation but for fostering diversity of thought and approach among clinicians who train and work together. She's also grateful for APF's commitment to addressing the financial realities of clinical training.

To become licensed, psychologists must complete a rigorous post-doctoral (post-doc) year of supervised working hours while preparing for exams. APF partners with the highest quality post-doc programs and offers scholarships to students from diverse backgrounds that wish to ultimately practice in underserved areas. These scholarships defray the cost of living and attract students that might not otherwise afford to be able to live in the area surrounding the training facility. In this way, APF has a direct hand in expanding the reach of practitioners who can provide proven, quality treatments in underserved areas.

Did You Know?

THEORY OF CHANGE



APF in Schools: Equipping Educators, Empowering Kids

Schools and community organizations are overwhelmingly the primary mental health resource for families who cannot afford private services. Yet, teachers and youth workers are rarely equipped with effective tools to address these needs.

In part, APF was founded to fill this critical gap and today provides these leaders with training in CBT and DBT — two of the most effective evidence-based skills and interventions for working with adolescents. These partnerships improve student outcomes, rebuild families, and strengthen communities.

At Democracy Prep and Hawthorne Cedar Knolls Union Free School District, we trained 98 staff members who work with more than 3,750 students daily. Staff at both schools feel empowered and have observed students implementing their new strategies and coping skills to make better decisions.

"I'm so glad we partnered with Access Psychology Foundation. It's how we create the best possible learning environment for our kids, demonstrate that mental health is a priority, and provide our teachers and social workers the tools they need to feel supported and be successful."

— Destony Stewart, Director of Social and Emotional Wellness, Democracy Prep Public School

"The DBT training gave me a new perspective on how to support our students, especially during moments when communication feels most challenging. Before the training, I had strategies, but I didn't always feel like I had the right tools for helping students regulate in real-time. Now, I feel more confident and grounded in how I respond, and I've noticed a difference in how the students respond, too."

— Victoria J. Shields M.S. CCC-SLP, Speech-Language Pathologist, Hawthorne Cedar Knolls

"We have some students who can be very reactive and lose control quickly when triggered. They usually require an external voice to regulate versus being able to do it themselves. For us to see them stop and think very quickly, 'should I continue, or stop this?' and then decide on their own to walk away, is huge."

— Aisha Prendergast, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, Hawthorne Cedar Knolls

Another 1,100+ women, children and families here and abroad built skills to manage emotions, handle stress, and strengthen relationships thanks to five \$2,200 APF scholarships for 10 days of CBT and DBT training.

- Zhane Hutchings, MS School Counseling – Rye School District (Mt. Vernon, NY)
- Javier Pecora, Clinical Psychologist – Gandara Center (Buenos Aries, Argentina & Salem, MA)
- Camille Booth, MSW and PhD candidate – University of Alaska (Anchorage, AK)
- Karen Taylor, MSW Social Work – Concern Housing (Bronx, NY)
- Andrea Dogostiano, MSW – YWCA (Yonkers, NY)

Building the Pipeline of Diverse Mental Health Professionals



Four talented undergraduate psychology students spent the summer of 2024 gaining hands-on experience with our partners at CBC, shadowing clinicians, assisting with group sessions, and sharing their own ideas for how we can better meet the needs of our community. Looking ahead, we're thinking about ways to reach young people in high school or earlier, to spark interest in mental health careers and help truly diversify the workforce on a larger scale.

Financials

Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2024

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$240,908
Pledges Receivable, Net	\$200,000
Prepaid Expenses and Other Assets	\$4,000
Total Current Assets	\$446,483
Other Assets	
Office Equipment Net of Accumulated Depreciation	\$2,102
Right of Use Asset — Occupancy Lease, Net	\$243,314
Pledges Receivable, Net	\$162,776
Total Other Assets	\$408,192
TOTAL ASSETS	\$854,675

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

CURRENT LIABILITIES	
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$32,082
Accrued Payroll Liabilities	\$51,844
Other Current Liabilities	\$6,117
Current Portion of Operating Lease Liability	\$60,300
Total Current Liabilities	\$150,343
Long-term Operating Lease Liability	\$243,314
Less Approximate Current Portion of Lease Liability	(\$60,300)
Total Long-term Liability	\$183,014
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$333,357
NET ASSETS	
Without Donor Restrictions	\$521,318
With Donor Restrictions	-
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$521,318
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$854,675

SWING INTO SPRING



2024 EVENTS

Thank you!

Your support at our Swing into Spring indoor golf experience in May and Sip & Support Wine Tasting in November helped raise critical funds and awareness! Extra gratitude to APF Board member Kate Snow, NBC News correspondent, Aisha Prendergast, Assistant Superintendent of PPS & Curriculum Instruction at Hawthorne Cedar Knolls School District, and Michele Pisarz Albert, Supervisor of Special Education, Hawthorne Cedar Knolls School District, for sharing their moving testimonials with attendees.



SIP & SUPPORT WINE TASTING



Thank You, Donors

We are immensely grateful for your support.

(Contributions received January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024)

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Dan Broden

Anthony Del Monte

Executive Director

Damian Travier



We're Growing!

In 2024, we welcomed several new Board members and staff members to our team. We thank Kate Snow, Scott Miranda, and Adam Comora for their dedicated service. We've also formed new Board committees and engaged consultants to expand our reach!



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PSYCHOLOGY
FOUNDATION

Stay Connected.

Your support provides care for those in need and trains the next generation of diverse, culturally competent psychologists. Together, we are changing the mental health care landscape for good.



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