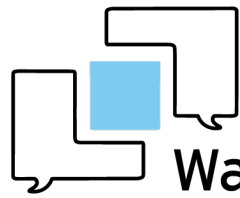




Washington English Center



2022 Annual Report



# Washington English Center

**SINCE 1993**, Washington English Center (WEC) has welcomed newcomers to the United States. While at the outset our volunteers taught primarily Latino immigrants, our student population has expanded and diversified each year. WEC regularly serves students from over 100 countries.

Many of our students, including recent Afghan and Ukrainian arrivals, have escaped from political strife. Others have fled from natural disasters or are looking for better economic opportunities. **While the world around us is ever-changing, our vision remains constant: That all immigrants have access to the education and support they need to achieve their goals.**

Included herein is WEC's 2022 *Annual Report*—this is who we are, what we do, and why our work matters. We invite you to step into the shoes of a recent immigrant or a volunteer and see firsthand what sets us apart.



## A YEAR IN REVIEW

Take a look at the infographics and stats that reflect the year in review.

GO THERE →

## STORIES FROM OUR COMMUNITY

Hear from the students, volunteers, and staff who make up our community.

GO THERE →

## SUPPORTERS & PARTNERS

Review the donors, sponsors, and foundations who make our work possible.

GO THERE →

## FINANCIALS & LEADERSHIP

View financial information and see the leaders who support our work.

GO THERE →



SECTION ONE

# A Year in Review



# SECTION ONE: A YEAR IN REVIEW



**1,323** Students  
Taught



**749** Volunteers  
Engaged



**848** One-on-One  
Tutoring Pairs



Students Attended  
**6,880** Hours  
of Group Classes

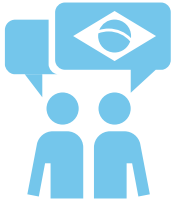
Our mission of providing affordable English-language instruction and workforce programs to adult immigrants using volunteers drives all that we do. Between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022, 1,323 students worked alongside 749 volunteers to learn how to read, write, listen to, and speak English with greater fluency and confidence.



Volunteers Spent  
**34,780** Hours  
Preparing For &  
Teaching Classes



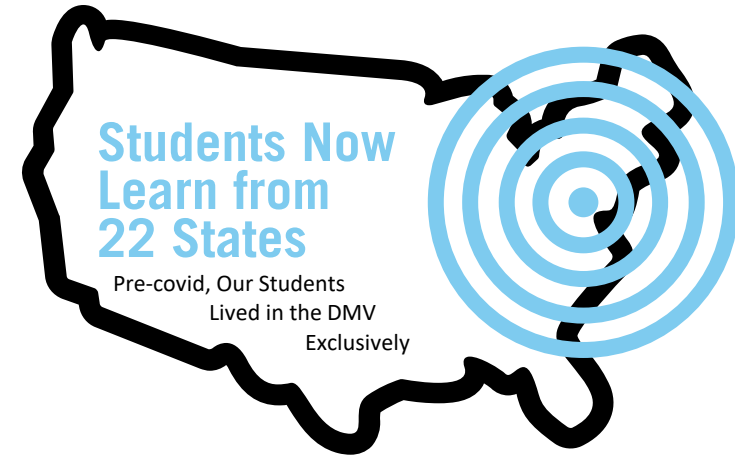
## SECTION ONE: A YEAR IN REVIEW



Our students know first-hand what it's like to be a stranger in a new country and what it takes to acquire English, gradually, through practice and memorization. No matter their level of proficiency, learning a new language is not easy. And it takes time.

218 Scholarships Awarded, Totaling:

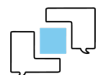
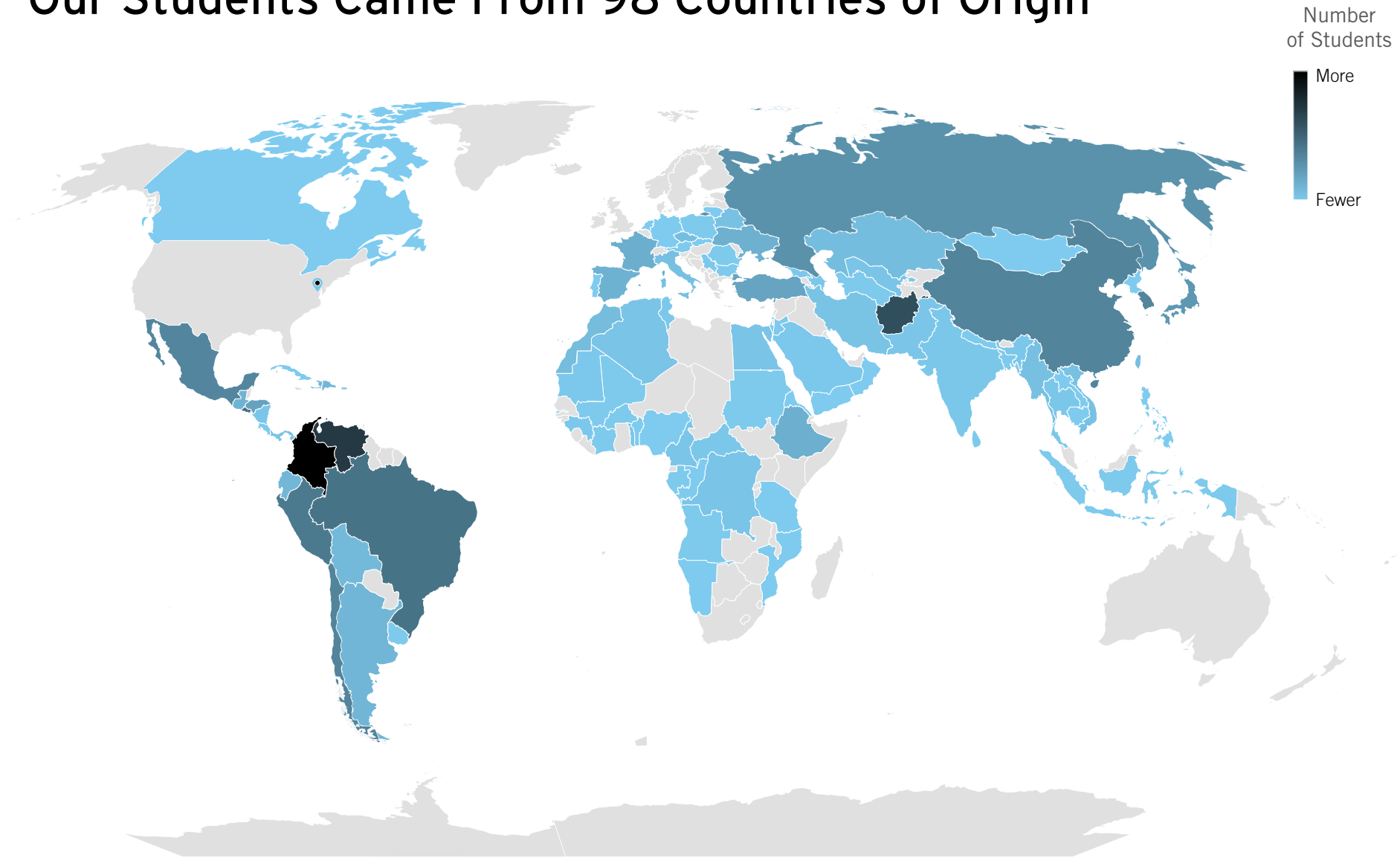
**\$ 31,425**



Our volunteers come to WEC because they are looking to give back. They are immigrants, the children of immigrants, or live and work in a world surrounded by immigrants. With our volunteers, we welcome students to our community and we meet them where they are, literally and figuratively.



# Our Students Came From 98 Countries of Origin





SECTION TWO

# Stories From Our Community



# EMMANUEL

## STUDENT

“If you want to learn about architecture, you need to learn about nature,” said Emmanuel Arredondo, who immigrated to the U.S. from Cuernavaca, Mexico. He shared that Cuernavaca was originally called Cuauhnahuac, which in the local language means “‘close to the grove’—a place where there are a lot of trees.” Adding, “Even today, my city is known as the ‘City of the Eternal Spring,’ due to its beautiful climate.” For Emmanuel, architecture (his profession) and the environment (his passion) are inexorably linked.

“When I arrived to D.C., it was difficult to find English schools,” he said. “In the library, they gave me a big list of schools in the area. But, unfortunately, when I called many schools, they were closed.” That is, until he heard from WEC earlier this year: “I got an email, and I signed up, and I’m here now. I think it’s great.”

Over the years, Emmanuel has held many titles: architect, environmentalist, elected official, and, most recently, student. No matter the title, he has learned the importance of “working as a member of my community.” But to work as an architect in the U.S., he must be fluent—not just in English but in industry-specific terminology, which he practices in WEC’s Business English Club.

“When you speak, you gain this confidence, [and] things change,” he said. It isn’t always easy. In fact, frequently, “It’s very hard.” With some people he’s met, “If you don’t have the confidence to even speak English, their behavior with you is not always welcoming.” Learning a new language takes hard work, practice, and dedication. “I needed confidence in order to speak,” Emmanuel said, “and I gained this confidence [at WEC]”: “My life, my everyday life, has changed.”

# ANU

## BOARD MEMBER

“What WEC offers to immigrants is hope and connection through access to English language services. It’s potential, it’s community,” said Anu Mullick, a member of WEC’s Board of Directors and a first-generation American. This potential is generated through morning and evening group classes and hundreds of one-on-one tutoring pairs every term—with our programs funded by foundations, corporations, government entities, and individuals.

“When I think about the importance of being integrated in your community, it’s the ability to build friendships, to participate fully in community life,” Anu continued, noting how WEC’s workforce programs support “the practical aspects of finding a job and navigating day-to-day life.”

“This is personally significant to me,” she said of her service on WEC’s Board. It combines “personal background [and] professional skills,” and results in a very real “synergy.” That’s part of what led Anu to invite “a new community to the mission of WEC,” hosting a backyard fundraiser with her neighbors to support recent Afghan refugees. The event brought in nearly 80 supporters who contributed over \$12,500 to WEC’s work.

“The fact that WEC had been so responsive and helpful to Afghan families was a catalyst [for this fundraiser],” she said. “The idea was to bring new communities, new faces, new individuals to WEC,” and the event did just that, ensuring WEC could offer scholarships, textbooks, and support for refugees from Afghanistan and so many others from around the world.





# YARITZA

## STAFF MEMBER

“I love meeting enthusiastic volunteers, especially volunteers who are immigrants or whose parents are immigrants and want to give back to our students. I relate to that,” said Yaritza Abrego, WEC’s Associate Director of Volunteers. “I love walking through our hallways, seeing our students’ progress and hearing all their laughter.”

For Yaritza, who joined WEC’s staff at the start of 2020, and for so many others, this work is about “building community.” She said that even a simple introduction between a prospective volunteer and a long-time volunteer who feels passionately about our students can help that prospective volunteer think, “*I do* want to volunteer here.” Meeting people with a shared purpose “makes others excited. It makes them want to volunteer.”

WEC’s graduation ceremonies are a great “reminder of the huge impact our classes have on our students’ lives,” Yaritza said. Beyond the pictures and the videos students and teachers submit, it’s “the energy and sense of accomplishment” that motivates her: “it’s a great feeling to know that you are a part of a community that roots for and uplifts one another.”

But it’s not just new volunteers who excite Yaritza. “I like seeing our advanced students step into the classroom as teachers, and all the confidence that comes with that.” Increasingly, WEC’s advanced students “get to be role models” and “demonstrate everything they’ve learned to their peers.” Seeing WEC’s students give back and teach others is “a great confirmation of the confidence they have built throughout our classes. It’s rewarding to me to see our students grow that way.” But for every student who returns to WEC to volunteer, there’s often a story—or more than one—of volunteers who have inspired and brought together entire classes.

# WILLIA & EILEEN

## VOLUNTEERS

“One summer, we had 24 students and they spoke 18 languages,” said Eileen Keefe (left), volunteer since 2009 and co-teacher with Willia Hennigan (right), volunteer since 2011. “These were students from far-flung corners of the world, and they became friends. They bring so much energy to the room.” Willia agreed: “It’s euphoria.”

Adults from 98 countries came to WEC seeking English classes this past year, but the students often found much more. “They make such a bond. They become friends,” Willia said. “To me, it’s just the best. We just enjoy the people.” Over the last year, to support its community, WEC’s staff created WhatsApp text message groups; organized 31 social events, both online and in-person; and are preparing to launch a Discord server that will help students and volunteers connect in new ways.

The two met as volunteers (and became friends) when Willia took one of her classes to WEC’s computer lab on a day Eileen was working. Both recalled how much has changed in the near-decade since they met, including a time when students didn’t have cell phones—let alone smartphones.

Because of COVID-19, WEC moved its classes online for eighteen months, resuming in-person instruction in September, 2021. For Eileen, the return was “a relief,” as teaching classes at WEC “is a part of the structure of life, so it was good to have that back.” For Willia, “Coming back in September was just a joy.” It was a “relief” for her, too.



“The timing, the space”—located at 401 9th Street, NW, in Penn Quarter—and “the technology at our fingertips [were] wonderful,” according to Willia. “I’m always about change, and the change was good.” For Eileen, it was “delightful to come back.” She said, “The first class we had was great, the second was great. They’ve all been great. It’s been great.”

According to Eileen, WEC “attracts a certain kind of individual. It’s a community unto itself.”

# ANDREA & AKBAR

## STUDENTS



“The patience and dedication of my teachers, tutors, and classmates was a determining factor in my learning process,” said Andrea Pino, one of two student speakers at the 2022 Spring Event. For Andrea, who immigrated to the U.S. from Venezuela because of a humanitarian crisis, and for the other student speaker, Akbar Danesh, who came to the U.S. as a refugee in 2021, group classes and tutoring have made all the difference.

When Akbar, his wife, and their children fled Afghanistan, they were “living under the shadow of fear [...] and nightmares of being tortured and killed.” Those were “the worst days of [his] life,” he said. Yet, when Akbar began looking for work in the U.S., he wasn’t even considered for professional positions because of his lack of fluency. In order to support his family, Akbar realized he needed to improve his English. Andrea agreed, noting that it was necessary to learn “new expressions and words” to gain fluency and to “get back to [her] usual routine” by securing work.

“I was able to learn the language step-by-step,” Andrea said. “Improving and gaining more confidence in my communication skills.” After some time, and not without difficulty, she realized she could “enjoy the process of learning English” and becoming “a bilingual person.” Following his instruction at WEC, Akbar secured a job at the World Bank where he now works alongside representatives of 30 low- and middle-income countries from around the world. Akbar says he is “so honored” to do the work that he does. He credits WEC for playing “a key role” in supporting him and his family in their new home.

For Akbar, Andrea, and over 1,300 other students this past year, WEC has offered the potential of something new. As Akbar put it, WEC “opened the door and [the] prospect of a bright future.”





SECTION THREE

# Supporters & Partners

## SECTION THREE: SUPPORTERS & PARTNERS

*Included below are the foundations, corporations, government entities, and individuals who supported our work throughout the last fiscal year at the \$1,000 level or higher. We are grateful for every gift we receive, no matter the amount. This list does not include anonymous gifts.*

### Valedictorian (\$10,000+)

- A. James & Alice B. Clark Foundation
- DC Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs (MOLA)
- Elizabeth and David Ford
- Joan M. Kerrigan
- KIHOMAC, Inc.
- Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)
- Diane Zipursky and John Holmes

### Dean's List (\$5,000 - \$9,999)

- Clark Construction, LLC
- DC Mayor's Office on Asian & Pacific Islander Affairs (MOAPIA)
- Kindy French and Emanuel Friedman
- Felice Friedman
- Barbara and David Garlock
- Ann M. Gosier
- Susan K. Hattan and Steven Kittrell
- Keegan Werlin, LLP
- Sheila Kerrigan
- Linda and Henry Lynch
- Nora Roberts Foundation
- Nancy Noonan and John Odenwelder
- Dian and Stephen Seidel

### Honor Roll (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

- Amy F. Berger and Glen Nager
- Jennifer and Vincent Browning
- Ashley Bryant-Baker
- Chevy Chase Dental Center
- Cooley, LLP
- Mary Janice and Frank Dicello
- Patti Franco and Charles Clark
- Rose Gutfeld and Peter Edwards
- Laura and Barry Levine
- Connie and John McGuire
- Morgan Stanley
- Newmark
- Terry O'Hara Lavoie and Jack Lavoie
- Margot and Richard Peet
- Savant Wealth Management
- Liz and Patrick Tisdale
- Webber Family Foundation
- Louise and Burt Wides

### Scholar (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

- Maya Ajmera
- Susanne K. Bennet
- Blank Rome, LLP
- Booz Allen Hamilton
- Clare Bresnahan English
- Fran and Frank Butler
- Tamara Clarke
- Gina Dallabetta
- Karren DeSeve
- Mary Douglas and James Dick
- Fannie Mae
- Fidelity National Financial
- Ann and Tom Friedman
- Ruth B. Gramlich
- Mary Ellen and Michael J. Guerra
- Aleshia Harding and Emmanuel Wondwossen
- Haskell Fund
- Connie Heller
- Margaret Freeston Hennessey
- Joe Hoban
- Nora and Chris Hohenlohe
- Dr. Jeanne Holzgreffe and Glenn Westley
- Dr. Michael Horberg and Chip Brian-Horberg
- Independent Land Rover Specialists
- Sharon and Phillip Johnson
- Susan and Daniel Joseph
- Johns Hopkins Employer Health Programs (EHP)

- Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States
- Cheryl Kariya
- Katherine Kelley and Robert Feinberg
- Cathy Klion and Tom Plotz
- Chris Lansing
- Roberta Rubenstein Larson
- Rod and Caroline Levine
- Bonnie Loeb
- Judge Alan and Liz Lourie
- Mark Lynch
- Bruce MacLennan
- Michele Manatt and Wolfram Anders
- Brigid McCarthy
- Anu and Tareh Mullick
- Shy Pahlevani
- Pillsbury, Winthrop, Shaw, Pittman, LLP
- Kim Price
- Marina Primorac
- Melissa Reinberg and Neal Kravitz
- Susan Ross
- Deborah Schneider
- Siranli Facial Implants
- Martha Talley
- TTR Sotheby's International Realty
- Emily and Antoine van Agtmael

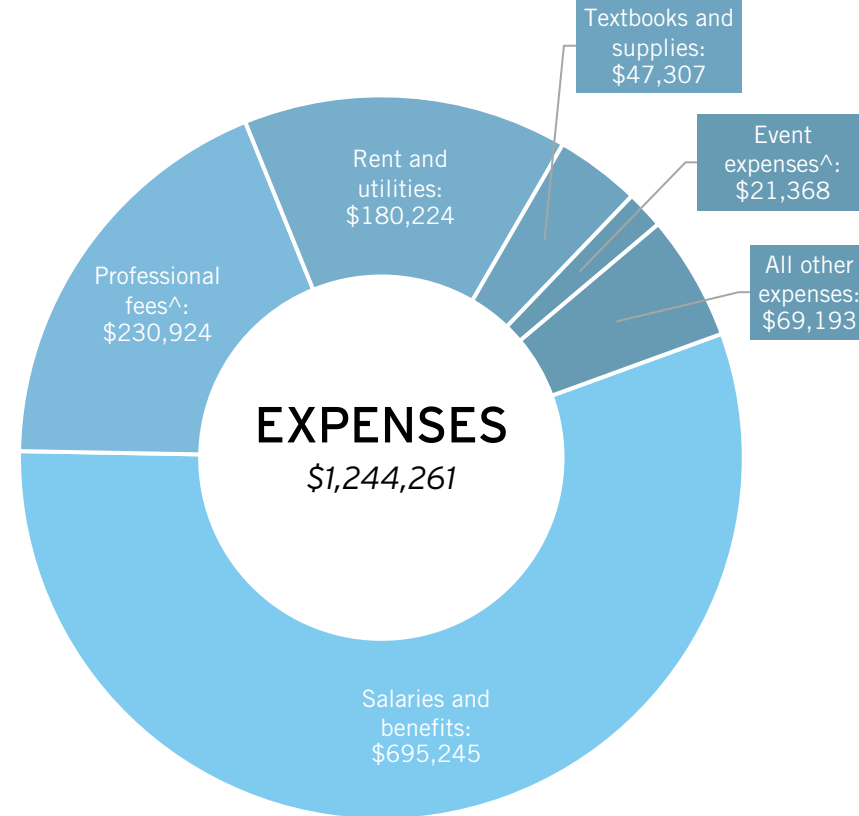
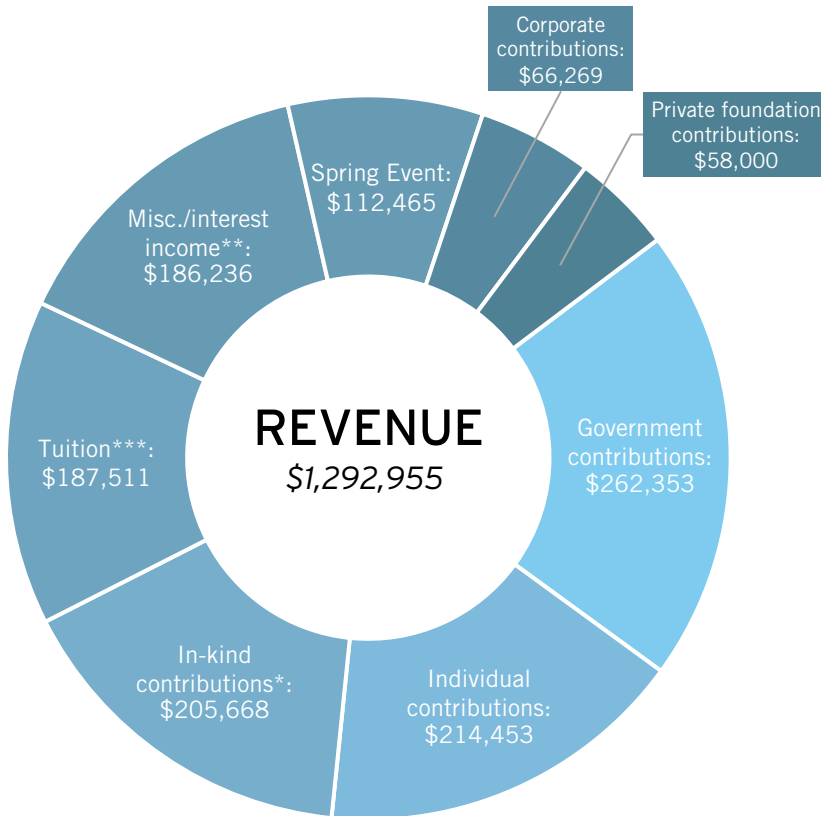




SECTION FOUR

# Financials & Leadership

# REVENUE & EXPENSES



\* Includes pro-bono legal services and event photography.

\*\* Includes \$185,399 from the Employee Retention Credit (ERC).

\*\*\* Net scholarships and discounts.

^ Includes >\$205,000 of in-kind donations for pro-bono legal services and event photography.

# Does not include \$31,425 in student scholarships.



## SECTION FOUR: FINANCIALS & LEADERSHIP

*Those below constitute the staff and leadership of WEC during the 2021-2022 Fiscal Year.*

### Staff

Yaritza Abrego, *Volunteer Manager* • Claudia Belloso, *Student Services Manager* • Phillip Carlisle, *Director of Development* • Sarahim Davila, *Community Outreach Manager* • Jessie Ebersole, *Director of Academic Programs* • Chris Griffiths, *Director of Operations & Finance* • Sheeva Harris, *ESOL Manager* • Renee McKie, *Director of Student Services* • John Odenwelder, *Executive Director* • Kendall Silwonuk, *Academic Programs Associate* • Danny Snyder, *Data Scientist* • Rufina Torrez, *Student Services Associate*

### Board of Directors

Kira Álvarez, *Vice Chair* • Ashley Bryant-Baker • Chip Brian-Horberg • Joy Cook • Clare Bresnahan English • Mary Douglas • Ann M. Gosier • Emilia Gutierrez • Aleshia Harding, *Treasurer* • Joan M. Kerrigan • Laura Levine, *Secretary* • Henry Lynch • Anu G. Mullick • John Odenwelder, *Ex Officio* • Sharon Owens Johnson • Margot Peet, PhD • Diane Zipursky, *Chair*

### Associate Board

Alana Garellek • Christopher Hart • Rohita Javangula, *Secretary* • Basia Jones, *Chair* • Anthony Livshen • Elizabeth Madjlesi • Sweta Maturu • Kavitha Nambiar • Annie Partika, *Vice Chair* • Anne Prusky • Sebastián Schuff • Taylor Shaw • Youmna Sirgi • Jenny Xiao • Tim Zimmer

### Academic Advisory Board

Brock Brady, *Chair* • Claire Kevill • Sherry Lyons • Emily Naber • Mary Spanarkel • Sherry L. Steele • Heather Tatton-Harris • Polina Vinogradova

### Emeritus Members of the Board of Directors

Susanne K. Bennet • Ellen Bennett • Amy F. Berger • Jennifer Browning • Frances F. Butler • Karren DeSeve • Francis P. Dicello • Mary Janice Dicello • Charles Dittrich • Johanna Mendelson Forman • Robin Hanerfeld • Susan K. Hattan • Sarah Hoagland • Alexia Kelley • Jeffrey Kelley • Joseph Khoury • Gerald Langan • Stephanie G. Lawson • Bonnie Loeb • Tamera Luzzatto • Carlos Martin • Thea Mason • Sylvia Miller • Diane Mooney • Fabian Rosado • Erin Haskell Ross • Jocelyn Samuels • Karen Yudelson Sandler • Robert Sledge • Liz Tisdale, *Immediate Past Chair* • Elizabeth Werner • Natalie Wexler • Louise Wides





# Washington English Center

Improving the lives of immigrants through education.



(202) 387-2222



[WashingtonEnglish.org](http://WashingtonEnglish.org)



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