



FROM THE LAB · PORTLAND GRANTS

FIVE YEARS OF COMING ALONGSIDE.

The story of the Brilliance Labs micro-grant program — every round, every recipient, and the work it set in motion across greater Portland.

2022 — 2026 · NINE ROUNDS



\$263,710

DISTRIBUTED

53

GRANTS AWARDED

42

ORGANIZATIONS

9

ROUNDS

WHERE IT BEGAN

IN THE SPRING OF 2022, Brilliance Labs gave away its first six micro-grants. There was no template for it, only a conviction: that the churches and ministries doing the quiet, unglamorous work of loving Portland — often the smallest and most overlooked among them — deserved to be believed in, and that a relatively small, timely, trusting gift could go a remarkably long way. Those grants carried forward the legacy of Central Bible Church, and they were aimed deliberately at organizations serving communities that are under-resourced or otherwise neglected by majority-culture churches and ministries.

The idea was simple and it has not changed. Twice a year, we invite churches, nonprofits, and grassroots community projects across the greater Portland area to tell us what they are doing to bless their neighbors. We read every application. And wherever we can, we come alongside — with a grant, with training or a design lab, and sometimes with both. We have never tried to fund the largest or best-resourced organizations in the city. We have tried to find the ones already doing faithful work on the ground, and to remove a barrier or two so they can do more of it.

Five years later, that twice-a-year rhythm has become something with real shape and weight. What follows is the whole story, in order — the nine rounds, the focus each one took, the forty-two organizations we have funded, and, most importantly, what those grants actually made possible in the lives of real people. Much of what you will read in the second half of each round comes straight from the impact reports our recipients have sent back: the youth retreats, the playgrounds, the refugee families, the rescue horses, the men coming home from prison. The numbers tell one story. Their reports tell the better one.

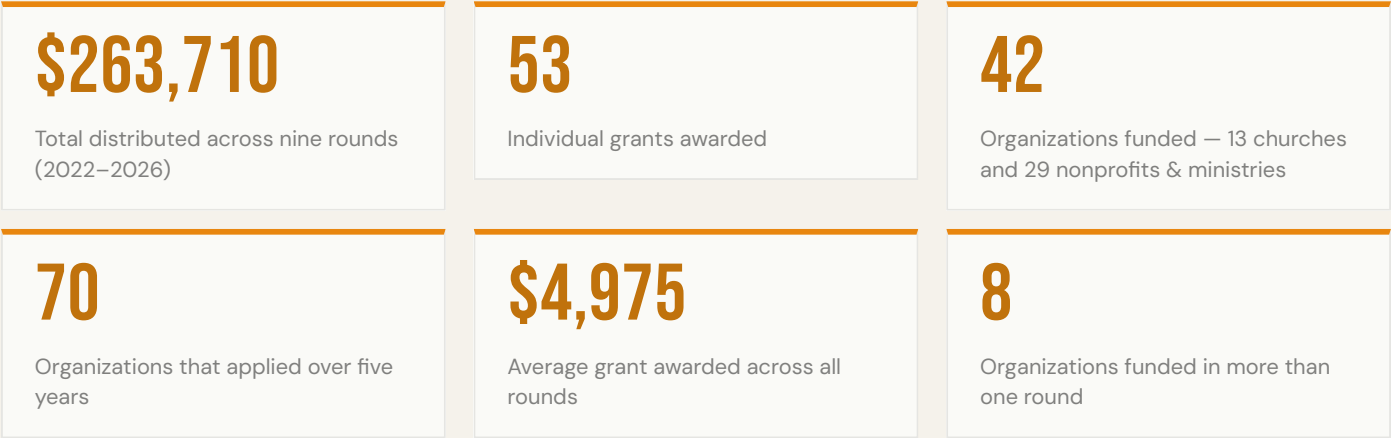


OUR CONVICTION

We never set out to fund the biggest or the best-resourced — only the faithful, already at work in Portland's overlooked places.

BY THE NUMBERS

Nine rounds. Seventy organizations applied; forty-two were funded. Fifty-three grants in all, totaling \$263,709.66.



ROUND	FOCUS	RECIPIENTS	AWARDED
Spring 2022	Inaugural round — underserved Portland communities	6	\$33,800
Fall 2022	Immigrants, refugees & holiday outreach	8	\$28,800
Spring 2023	Creatives, mental health & recovery	4	\$16,440.66
Fall 2023	Youth & mental health for leaders	4	\$25,572
Spring 2024	Youth, evangelism & immigrant services	5	\$27,500
Fall 2024	Refugees, foster care & church renewal	7	\$34,600
Spring 2025	Local churches only — creative outreach	5	\$25,000
Fall 2025	Largest, most competitive round to date	7	\$34,497
Spring 2026	Men & families — upstream solutions	7	\$37,500
Total		53	\$263,709.66

The grants have ranged from \$1,000 to \$9,000, and they have reached nearly every corner of the metro area — Northeast and East Portland, Beaverton, Gresham, Vancouver, Gladstone, Tualatin, Lake Oswego, Oregon City, Damascus, and beyond. Some organizations we have walked with for years: **One H.O.P.E. Fellowship** (\$20,500 across four grants), **Pamoja House** (\$14,000 across two), **House of Healing** (\$12,500 across three), **We Belong PDX** (\$12,072 across two), and **River City Church** (\$12,000 across two) have each returned to us more than once, and those repeat relationships are some of the ones we are proudest of. The split between churches and nonprofits has stayed roughly even, by design: we believe both are essential to a flourishing city.

THE INAUGURAL ROUND

The first round set the tone for everything that followed. We funded a cross-section of the city: multi-ethnic church plants, immigrant and refugee ministries, and community-development work in some of Portland's most overlooked neighborhoods. **One H.O.P.E. Fellowship**, a multi-ethnic church plant in Northeast Portland whose pastor, Ricardo Barber, describes it as “a place where people belong,” received our largest first grant for community outreach and evangelism. **Jubilee Hall**, a nonprofit coffee shop that creates safe spaces for refugee and immigrant integration, was funded to equip its new Burnside and 122nd location. And **Iglesia El Buen Pastor Beaverton** received support for youth ministry and church planting among Portland's Latino communities.

- **One H.O.P.E. Fellowship** (Church) — **\$7,500** — community outreach and evangelism
- **Jubilee Hall** (Nonprofit) — **\$7,000** — café equipment for the Burnside & 122nd location
- **Iglesia El Buen Pastor Beaverton** (Church) — **\$6,000** — youth ministry & church planting
- **African Family Holistic Health Organization** (Nonprofit) — **\$5,000** — African youth after-school program
- **Oregon Community Development Corporation** (Nonprofit) — **\$5,000** — micro-loans for Rockwood entrepreneurs
- **City Teams Portland** (Nonprofit) — **\$3,300** — Christ-centered entrepreneurial training for three residents



One H.O.P.E. Fellowship. A first-round recipient gathering its Northeast Portland neighborhood at a community event.



Iglesia El Buen Pastor. The Beaverton congregation's youth with the bilingual youth pastors the grant helped recruit.

Even in that first year, the reports told us we had backed the right people. Iglesia El Buen Pastor had been searching since January for a bilingual youth pastor for its growing Hispanic congregation; the grant let the church fly Sergio and Kelyn Barrero up from Miami to meet the youth and their families in person — “a fantastic and very productive visit” — before the couple moved to Portland that fall. “We basically used the funds to bring Sergio and Kelyn,” Pastor Daniel Estrada wrote. “Without your help this would not have been possible.” One H.O.P.E. Fellowship, for its part, put its grant toward an Easter Eggstravaganza that drew more than 500 neighbors — 200 pounds of donated candy, 312 stuffed bags, 5,000 plastic eggs, hot dogs for all, and the Gospel shared through a Resurrection Eggs presentation. Many families, the church noted, were surprised it was all free. (Four years later, that same Easter outreach would draw 552.)

Not every first-round bet unfolded the way we hoped: City Teams Portland's entrepreneurial coaching launched two resident-led startups — an apparel company that donates a shirt to someone experiencing homelessness with every purchase, and a coffee-roasting business built to employ people leaving incarceration — but the men found the week-to-week consistency hard, and the cohort wound down. We counted it as a lesson worth the investment. Several of these first recipients — One H.O.P.E. Fellowship, Pamoja House, and the African Family Holistic Health Organization among them — would return in later rounds, the beginning of partnerships that continue to this day.

ROUND 2

FALL 2022

8 recipients · \$28,800

IMMIGRANTS, REFUGEES & THE HOLIDAYS

Our second round leaned into the season — and into the city's immigrant and refugee communities. **River City Church** in Vancouver and **One H.O.P.E. Fellowship** were both funded for Thanksgiving meal programs, while **Punto de Encuentro** received support for gift-card outreach to newly arrived families. **HOLLA School**, which changes the academic narrative of Black, Brown, and Indigenous youth, was funded for its in-class mentor program, and **Pamoja House** — a Southwest Portland organization serving immigrants through ESL, driver's education, tutoring, and citizenship classes — received interim staffing support. It was the beginning of a long partnership with several of these organizations.

- **Pamoja House** (Nonprofit) — **\$7,000** — interim staffing & sabbatical coverage
- **River City Church** (Church) — **\$5,500** — Día de Acción de Gracias community meals
- **HOLLA School** (Nonprofit) — **\$4,000** — in-class mentor program
- **Immigrant Connection PDX** (Nonprofit) — **\$4,000** — client services for under-resourced communities
- **Jubilee Hall** (Nonprofit) — **\$3,700** — refugee & immigrant vocational training
- **New Creation Chinese Church** (Church) — **\$2,100** — inaugural Fatherhood conference
- **One H.O.P.E. Fellowship** (Church) — **\$1,500** — Thanksgiving meal-box program
- **Punto de Encuentro Comunidad Cristiana** (Church) — **\$1,000** — gift-card outreach for newly arrived families



Pamoja House. Women from the immigrant and refugee community Pamoja serves in Southwest Portland.



Pamoja House. Children at one of Pamoja's classroom programs — preschool, ESL, and homework help for immigrant families.

Pamoja House would later report just how far that support reached. A subsequent grant helped fund their administrative assistant's full school-year salary of \$30,000 — “Emily did an incredible job,” the team wrote — freeing the organization to keep serving the refugee and immigrant community through ESL, job coaching, preschool, homework help, and community events. It is the kind of behind-the-scenes capacity that rarely gets funded and almost always determines whether a small organization survives its first hard years.

The holiday grants did exactly what we hoped. River City Church served more than 400 people over Thanksgiving weekend and delivered upward of 300 of those meals directly to neighbors who were shut-in or living in homeless camps and safe-stay housing — one family wrote that, without it, they would not have had a Thanksgiving meal at all. Forty volunteers made it happen, and in the weeks after, several joined a follow-up serve day and five asked about joining the church. Punto de Encuentro turned its \$1,000 into gift cards for twenty-two high-need students at Liberty High School heading into winter break; the school's family-outreach liaison confirmed every card reached a student in need. “It was hard,” the pastor admitted, “to choose just twenty-two.”

ROUND 3

SPRING 2023

4 recipients · \$16,440.66

CREATIVES, MENTAL HEALTH & RECOVERY

The third round was smaller but unusually creative. We funded **Humble Beast**, which equips Christian artists, to produce *The Halftime Podcast with Shai Linne*; **LifeCity Church** in East Portland to open a mental-health clinic offering professional counseling to people who otherwise had no access; and **House of Healing**, a young Northeast Portland church plant, to expand its children's ministry. The most unexpected grant went to **New Life Church** for a podcast called *One Right Church*, made specifically for people leaving high-control religious groups.

- **Humble Beast** (Nonprofit) — **\$5,000** — production of *The Halftime Podcast with Shai Linne*
- **LifeCity Church** (Church) — **\$5,000** — mental-health clinic offering professional counseling
- **New Life Church** (Church) — **\$3,940.66** — *One Right Church* podcast for cult recovery
- **House of Healing** (Church) — **\$2,500** — children's ministry expansion & Bible distribution

House of Healing put its smaller grant to work on an August back-to-school event that served some 130 to 145 neighbors — food for families and for the houseless, games tied to scripture, and sturdy backpacks set aside specifically for high schoolers, a group most giveaways overlook. They handed out \$25 gift cards for the particular things students needed — a calculator, a lunchbox, toiletries — and prayed over students, parents, and school staff alike.

New Life's report on the podcast is one we still think about. At its peak it drew more than 2,000 listens a week, with the top ten episodes each played over 700 times — reaching members of the church, people who had left the Followers of Christ, and unaffiliated listeners alike. Two fourteen-year-old boys told the team the podcast had helped them navigate their own families' exit from the group. A small grant, an enormous reach.

“Two fourteen-year-old boys said it helped them navigate their families' exit from the Followers of Christ.”

NEW LIFE CHURCH · ONE RIGHT CHURCH PODCAST IMPACT REPORT

ROUND 4

FALL 2023

4 recipients · \$25,572

YOUTH & THE MENTAL HEALTH OF THOSE WHO SERVE

By the fourth round we were funding larger, more established projects. **HOLLA School** returned for playground updates on its campus; **River City Church** again ran its growing Thanksgiving meal program, which the mayor of Vancouver once called “an anchor of hope in the city”; and **We Belong PDX** received its first grant for two months of children's mental-health programming. We also funded something easy to overlook: **Thrive Church Planting** used its grant for mental-health counseling for ministry leaders and their families who needed it but could not afford it.

- **HOLLA School** (Nonprofit) — **\$6,500** — playground updates on the school campus
- **River City Church** (Church) — **\$6,500** — Día de Acción de Gracias community Thanksgiving meals
- **Thrive Church Planting** (Church) — **\$6,500** — mental-health counseling for ministry leaders & families
- **We Belong PDX** (Nonprofit) — **\$6,072** — two months of programming for 15 children



We Belong PDX. A mentor and two students in the out-of-school program.



We Belong PDX. A summer program day in the neighborhood.

HOLLA's later report quantified what culturally responsive education can do. Now in its third year and serving 100 students from kindergarten through fourth grade, the school had raised student retention by ten points to 99%, recorded 96% parent satisfaction, and watched literacy scores climb 26.5% in a single year. “We are meeting our original goals,” the team wrote — an understatement.

“An anchor of hope in the city.”

THE MAYOR OF VANCOUVER, ON RIVER CITY CHURCH

YOUTH, EVANGELISM & IMMIGRANT SERVICES

The fifth round funded five organizations across a wide range of work. **Pamoja House** returned for an interim director overseeing its women's and children's programs; **One H.O.P.E. Fellowship** received support for evangelism training and Easter outreach; **Mosaix PDX** launched a design lab for a new diaspora-ministry coalition; and **Faithful Friends**, a mentoring program that matches volunteers with children ages six to nine, was funded to grow its staff capacity. But the grant whose story traveled furthest went to **House of Healing** for a youth retreat.

- **Pamoja House** (Nonprofit) — **\$7,000** — interim director for women's & children's programs
- **One H.O.P.E. Fellowship** (Church) — **\$5,500** — evangelism training & Easter community outreach
- **House of Healing** (Church) — **\$5,000** — youth retreat to invest in young people
- **Mosaix PDX** (Nonprofit) — **\$5,000** — design lab for a new diaspora-ministry coalition
- **Faithful Friends** (Nonprofit) — **\$5,000** — launch of a youth-mentoring internship



Faithful Friends. Mentors, children, and families gather for the annual bowlathon fundraiser.

Faithful Friends, meanwhile, pivoted its grant to bring on Grace Dyck for events and communications; she organized their annual bowlathon, and as the program merged with Transitional Youth, her role grew into what is becoming a full-time position.



House of Healing. The youth group at the Silver Cove retreat.

IMPACT STORY

A WEEKEND THAT DIDN'T END

With its \$5,000 grant, House of Healing took 23 young people — and eight volunteers — to a campsite at Silver Cove, Washington, for a weekend built around honest conversation and the Gospel. “We did break-out sessions related to life experiences,” the church reported, “then incorporated the Gospel.” What began that weekend didn't stop there: since the previous fall, the youth had kept a group text thread where they check in with their leaders twice a week — and on New Year's Eve, four of the teens who came to the retreat were baptized. “Youth are inviting their friends to service,” the team wrote — the quiet, compounding evidence that one weekend, and a few adults who keep showing up, can change the direction of a young life.

HOUSE OF HEALING · YOUTH-RETREAT IMPACT REPORT

ROUND 6

FALL 2024

7 recipients · \$34,600

REFUGEES, FOSTER CARE & CHURCH RENEWAL

Our sixth round was our broadest yet, funding seven organizations. **Refugee Care Collective** received support to develop training and resources for churches serving resettled families; **The Contingent** was funded for its Every Child PDX foster-care mobilization; and **Sanctuary Inn** built out office space to better serve missionary families needing rest. We also backed **Sacred Spaces PDX**, which works to keep neighborhood church buildings from being sold off, and **We Belong PDX** returned for year-round programming at its Centennial site. **The Language Hospitality Project** and **Love INC of Clackamas County** rounded out the round.

- **Refugee Care Collective** (Nonprofit) — **\$6,000** — resources & training for churches serving refugees
- **Sanctuary Inn** (Nonprofit) — **\$6,000** — office space to serve missionary families
- **We Belong PDX** (Nonprofit) — **\$6,000** — year-round programming at the Centennial site
- **Sacred Spaces PDX** (Nonprofit) — **\$5,000** — networking, marketing & forming 501(c)(3) status
- **The Language Hospitality Project** (Nonprofit) — **\$4,000** — video telling the story of its first cohort
- **The Contingent / Every Child PDX** (Nonprofit) — **\$4,000** — foster-care mobilization
- **Love INC of Clackamas County** (Nonprofit) — **\$3,600** — the Healthy Habits Program

We Belong PDX's reporting from this period is some of the most encouraging we have received. Across a full year of consistent engagement with 22 children at the Centennial site, 90% of surveyed youth said they had at least two adults they trusted, 70% could distinguish whole foods from processed foods, and 80% were doing activities at home that they had learned in the program. Refugee Care Collective, for its part, completed a series of focus groups and launched a Navigating Systems Checklist, Guidebook, and Essentials video series — and stretched the grant further than planned when several stakeholders declined

their stipends. Sacred Spaces PDX recruited a board, began offering services, and started the work of forming its 501(c)(3), candidly noting that legal fees ran higher than expected.



We Belong PDX. Kids at play at the Centennial neighborhood site, where We Belong runs year-round programming.



Sacred Spaces PDX. “Preserving, revitalizing, expanding sacred spaces for the good of the local church.”

ROUND 7

SPRING 2025

5 recipients · \$25,000

LOCAL CHURCHES ONLY

For the seventh round we did something deliberate: we limited it entirely to local churches. As a Christian nonprofit, we wanted to see Portland-area churches get more creative about reaching their neighbors — equipping their members to serve, and finding new ways to be salt and light in the city. The five churches we funded did exactly that. **One H.O.P.E. Fellowship** returned for an Easter neighborhood outreach event; **As Is Church** received support for Hope Center Homes, a sober-living and transitional-housing ministry in Gresham and East Portland; **Columbia View Church** was funded for its Immigrant Connection legal-services ministry; **House of Healing** launched The Family Gathering, a summer of park gatherings and outdoor worship; and **Restoration Church** developed a drop-in center as a safe space for vulnerable East Portland youth.

- **One H.O.P.E. Fellowship** (Church) — **\$6,000** — Easter neighborhood outreach event
- **As Is Church** (Church) — **\$5,000** — Hope Center Homes sober-living & transitional housing
- **Columbia View Church** (Church) — **\$5,000** — Immigrant Connection (ICPDX) legal-services ministry
- **House of Healing** (Church) — **\$5,000** — The Family Gathering summer outreach
- **Restoration Church** (Church) — **\$4,000** — drop-in center for vulnerable youth

Columbia View Church's grant went to ICPDX, its Immigrant Connection legal-services ministry — the only DOJ-recognized immigration legal office operating as a church ministry in East Portland. By the midpoint of its project it had already served 160 immigrants, past its goal of 150, and helped families secure green cards, work authorizations, citizenship, and DACA renewals — competent legal help paired with relational care at a moment of real fear for many immigrant families.

IMPACT STORY

ONE GRANT, USED A HALF-DOZEN WAYS

Restoration Church's report is a small masterclass in resourcefulness. When the basement venue they had counted on suddenly became unavailable, the congregation refused to cancel — they built a *mobile* outreach center from scratch: food stands, shade set-ups, yard games, and art supplies. Over the summer of 2025 they hosted two “pay-what-you-can-afford” community and art markets, partnering with Matthew 25, Rivercrest Community Church, and Columbia Christian School, where neighbors — including people experiencing homelessness — were welcomed to shop for produce, share meals, and make art with dignity. And because the whole center was built to move, it kept going: the same materials have since served worship gatherings, art-therapy nights at the Portland Rescue Mission's Harbor House, a prayer and inner-healing weekend, and an after-school youth drop-in.

RESTORATION CHURCH · OUTREACH-DEVELOPMENT IMPACT REPORT

IMPACT STORY

A FRESH START, AND A PLACE TO BELONG

As Is Church used its grant to open Hope Center Homes, a Christ-centered sober-living home for men coming out of recovery programs. The first two residents moved in the month before the grant arrived, and their stories say everything. One stayed four months, landed a steady full-time job and then a promotion, and moved out to reunite with his wife. The other spent two semesters working toward becoming a recovery counselor, stayed sober, began leading recovery meetings of his own, and still shows up for the Wednesday family-night dinners. Holding it all together is house manager Israel — himself nearing five years sober — who runs the weekly house meetings, the random drug tests, and a Celebrate Recovery study, and folds every resident into his own family's life. The home's conviction, in its own words: that “every man deserves a fresh start rooted in faith, built on love, and surrounded by community.”

AS IS CHURCH · HOPE CENTER HOMES IMPACT REPORT



Restoration Church. The mobile, pay-what-you-can market the church built when its venue fell through.



As Is Church · Hope Center Homes. A Wednesday family-night dinner at the men's recovery home.

OUR LARGEST, MOST COMPETITIVE ROUND

Fall 2025 was our largest and most competitive round to date, with 25 ministries and organizations applying. We funded seven, and the range was striking. **Charis Counseling Associates** partnered with Transitional Youth to bring professional mental-health support to unhoused young adults; **Echo Ranch** resurfaced the footing in its arena and round pen, where rescue horses help mentor foster kids and at-risk teens; **Parklane Christian Reformed Church** bought a van for its East Portland youth ministry; **Portland Central Young Life** funded its Acts 29 student-leadership program; and **Relife NW**, **Divine Threads**, and **The Family Room** rounded out a round defined by care for the vulnerable.

- **Charis Counseling Associates** (Nonprofit) — **\$5,750** — mental-health support for unhoused young adults
- **Divine Threads** (Nonprofit) — **\$5,247** — the Rebuilding Package for a program participant
- **Echo Ranch** (Nonprofit) — **\$5,000** — arena & round-pen footing for the rescue-horse ministry
- **Parklane Christian Reformed Church** (Church) — **\$5,000** — a van for youth-ministry transportation
- **Portland Central Young Life** (Nonprofit) — **\$5,000** — the Acts 29 student-leadership program
- **The Family Room** (Nonprofit) — **\$4,500** — Backpack Food Program for food-insecure parents
- **Relife NW** (Nonprofit) — **\$4,000** — family-support services & capacity for refugee women



Echo Ranch. A rider on the resurfaced arena footing this grant completed.



Parklane CRC. The van the grant bought for East Portland youth ministry.



Relife NW. A shared meal with one of the refugee families Relife walks alongside.

Because these grants are recent, the reports are still arriving — and they are remarkable. Echo Ranch completed both its indoor arena and outdoor round-pen footing projects, leaving only a few French drains to finish; the result is safer, more comfortable, less dusty ground for riding and exercising the rescue horses. Portland Central Young Life's Acts 29 program saw 24 students finish the year and 9 graduate on to college, with attrition under 10% — far below the 20–25% they had braced for. Charis Counseling Associates, partnering with Transitional Youth, stretched its grant into a \$15,000 initiative providing trauma-informed counseling to unhoused and housing-insecure young adults for just \$10 a session — several of whom now cross town by bus every week to keep their appointments.

Relife NW logged more than 109 grant-funded hours between December and May, directly serving four refugee families — 19 individuals — and indirectly supporting four more through ministry partners. And

Parklane's youth van, purchased on January 30, is already shaping the church's Wednesday-night program, Sunday worship, and a planned summer of mission trips and Bible camps — helping young adults without parental support stay connected to a community that knows their names.

ROUND 9

SPRING 2026

7 recipients · \$37,500

MEN & FAMILIES · UPSTREAM SOLUTIONS

For our most recent round, we did something different again — and it may be the clearest expression yet of what we have learned. After five years of work in this city, we have come to believe that many of the problems Portland's ministries are working so hard to solve would be far less severe if men stepped fully into their God-given calling to love, lead, and care for their families and communities. So Spring 2026 was dedicated entirely to organizations serving, equipping, and building up men and families — an upstream investment in the conviction that Portland grows stronger when families are stronger and men look and act more like Jesus.

- **Paid in Full Oregon** (Nonprofit) — **\$9,000** — salary support for the Spiritual Mentor Director across three Oregon prisons
- **Triple Threat Mentoring** (Nonprofit) — **\$6,000** — the Saturday Senior Lawn Care Service Project
- **African Family Holistic Health Organization** (Nonprofit) — **\$5,000** — launch of the Ubuntu Men's Initiative
- **NextG SAV PDX** (Nonprofit) — **\$5,000** — the NextG Brotherhood Sports & Mentorship Initiative
- **Pure Life Alliance** (Nonprofit) — **\$5,000** — Freed to Lead leadership-multiplication model
- **Dads Helping Dads** (Nonprofit) — **\$4,500** — the Kingdom Impact Fatherhood Fellowship
- **BMIT (Black Men in Training)** (Nonprofit) — **\$3,000** — sustaining the Options Over Ops community hub

The seven recipients trace the full arc of a man's life and the systems that shape it. **Paid in Full Oregon** — which received our largest single grant ever, \$9,000 — works inside the state prison system to form adults in custody as spiritual mentors, addressing the “spiritual deprivation” that drives recidivism more than any skills gap. **African Family Holistic Health Organization** returned, four years after its first grant, to launch the Ubuntu Men's Initiative for African immigrant and refugee men. **BMIT** and **NextG SAV PDX** mentor young men away from violence and toward purpose; **Dads Helping Dads** helps fathers overcome records and barriers to reengage with their kids; **Pure Life Alliance** equips men to lead in recovery; and **Triple Threat Mentoring** puts teenagers to work doing free lawn care for Portland seniors all summer. In all, \$37,500 to seven organizations — our largest round to date, and the one that best captures where we are headed.

THE THROUGHLINE



One H.O.P.E. Fellowship. Families fill a Portland park for a community Easter outreach — the kind of moment these grants help make possible.

Look across all nine rounds and a pattern emerges. We have funded café equipment and counseling clinics, podcasts and playgrounds, youth retreats and rescue-horse footing, refugee staffing and prison ministry. On the surface these could not be more different. Underneath, they are the same thing: people who already love their neighbors, given a little more room to do it. One H.O.P.E. Fellowship's Easter outreach — 552 people, 325 bags of candy, more than 600 hot dogs, the Gospel shared with every family who came — captures the spirit of the whole program. “Many were stunned,” the team wrote, “that an event like this was free of charge.”

The grants are small by the standards of institutional philanthropy. But the impact reports make clear that timing and trust matter more than size. A \$4,000 grant funded two months of a year-long youth program. A \$5,000 grant resurfaced an arena that will serve foster kids for a decade. A \$30,000 staff salary — most of it raised by the organization itself, with our grant closing the gap — kept a refugee-serving nonprofit alive through a critical year. Again and again, recipients told us the same thing: the money came at the right moment, with no strings that strangled the work, and it let them say yes to something they would otherwise have had to decline.

Add it all together — the café equipment and the counseling clinics, the playgrounds and the prison ministry — and what emerges is a pattern of compounding good: a child who now has two trusted adults, a young man who comes home from prison with a purpose, a refugee family that makes it through its hardest year. None of it is flashy. All of it is real. And nearly all of it began with someone deciding that the quiet, faithful work happening down the street was worth believing in.

WHAT COMES NEXT

Five years in, the conviction that started it all is only stronger: that Portland is changed not by the biggest institutions but by faithful people in overlooked places, and that our job is simply to find them and come alongside. Every round still begins the same way — with an open invitation for churches, nonprofits, and grassroots projects to tell us what they're doing to bless the city. And every round still carries the legacy of Central Bible Church into the work of the next generation of ministries.

If you know an organization doing this kind of work, we would love to hear about it. Nominate them, encourage them to apply, or reach out with a question at andrey@brilliance labs.org. The next chapter of this story is still being written — and it will be written by the people on the ground, with us cheering, and helping, from alongside.



PORTLAND MICRO-GRANT PROGRAM · 2022-2026