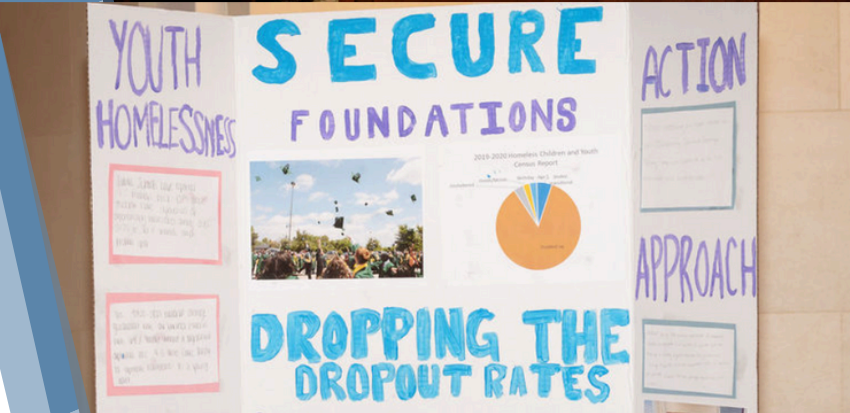
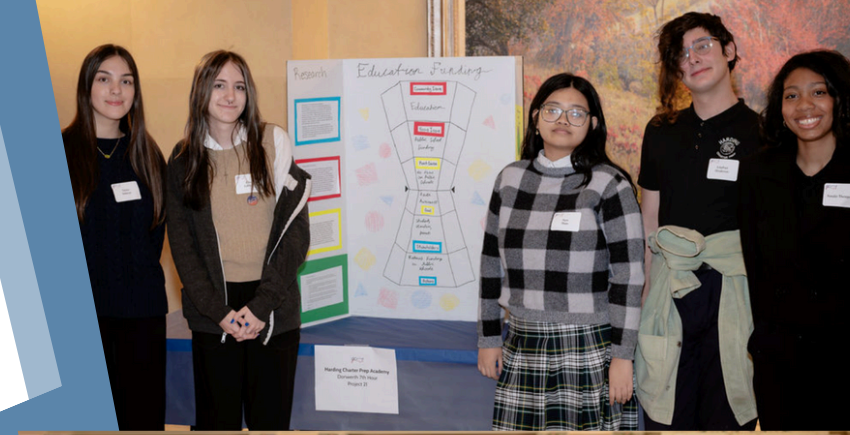


2024 ANNUAL REPORT

SOUTH

*Kentucky, North Carolina,
Oklahoma, and Texas*

The Future in Focus:
Youth Leading Change



Letter from Our Executive Director

Thinking back over the past year with Generation Citizen in the South, a couple of moments really stand out. Whether it was seeing our Oklahoma students presenting their Community-Based Civics Projects to community leaders at Civics Day at the Oklahoma State Capitol, or watching a news story from Kentucky, where GC Students invited over a dozen local leaders to their school for a Civics Panel, our GC students are stepping into their role as the next generation of citizens, and it's both heartening and inspiring.

For those new to GC, our core is the GC project and journey to Civics Day. Using our Community-Based Civics framework, students use hands-on learning to explore the Constitution, choose local issues, learn respectful dialogue, research root causes, and develop a plan to make a difference in their community, whether by engaging leaders, starting a new initiative, or championing laws.

My connection to our work is personal. Rooted in my Southern upbringing in Louisiana and a small town in Oklahoma, I know the value we place on our communities and making them the best they can be. My own interest in civics was sparked by some great civics teachers, Mrs. Byers and Mr. Mannen, and supportive community members, like our local newspaper owner Steve Bolton, who gave me opportunities to get involved in civic activities at a young age. That's the same kind of hands-on learning I want every student in the South to have as part of their education. And Generation Citizen is doing this work.

This year brought some exciting growth for GC in the South: GC will now be a part of all 9th-grade civics classes in Oklahoma City, we're expanding into rural schools in Kentucky and Oklahoma, plus launching programs in North Carolina. Whether it's in a big city, a suburb, or a small town, seeing young people find their voice to improve their communities is something that connects us all.

Our students are really taking the idea of leading change to heart. They're learning that making a difference often starts locally, right where they are. As GC student Amber said at Civics Day, it *"gives you an experience of how to move forward with plans that you have, for your community, for your family, for your people..."* And Chloe, who's from a rural area, pointed out, *"Whether you live in a rural area...or you're in the city areas...it's very important to be able to come together to solve problems, and that's what Generation Citizen was able to teach us."*

This report will share more about the inspiring work of our students, teachers, and partners throughout the South. You'll see how empowering young people with the skills and confidence to be active citizens is making a real difference in their lives and their communities. Now, more than ever, equipping the next generation of citizens is vital for all of us. And I am hopeful as we continue our work and engage our young people to bring their fresh ideas and passion to their communities, the future will be brighter not only for our local communities, but for the entire South Region and our nation.

With gratitude for your partnership,
Michelle Tilley



MICHELLE TILLEY

Executive Director, South

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What We Do



COMMUNITY-BASED CIVICS

Educators across the country teach GC's project-based, interactive civics curriculum with support from our national and regional program teams. As civics learning comes to life, students become active citizens in their own communities.



YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT

The next chapter of our history will be written by today's students. We provide young people with the tools they need to lead through alumni engagement, fellowship programs, and leadership training.



POLICY, ADVOCACY, & FIELD-BUILDING

Supportive civic education policies and a strong field of experts are more important than ever. Together with our partners, we advocate for funding and support to preserve and strengthen access to civic education. We provide young people with the tools they need to lead through alumni engagement, fellowship programs, and leadership training.



"We can actually make a difference. Look where we are. The Governor's office is like down the hall, he should see what we are doing."

- GC Student at Oklahoma Civics Day

OUR 2023-24 SOUTH IMPACT

4,990 middle & high school students engaged

61 teachers delivered GC's curriculum & received training, professional development, and support

at **33 SCHOOLS** across **KENTUCKY, OKLAHOMA AND TEXAS**

OUR 2023-24 NATIONAL REACH & IMPACT

33,570 middle & high school students engaged

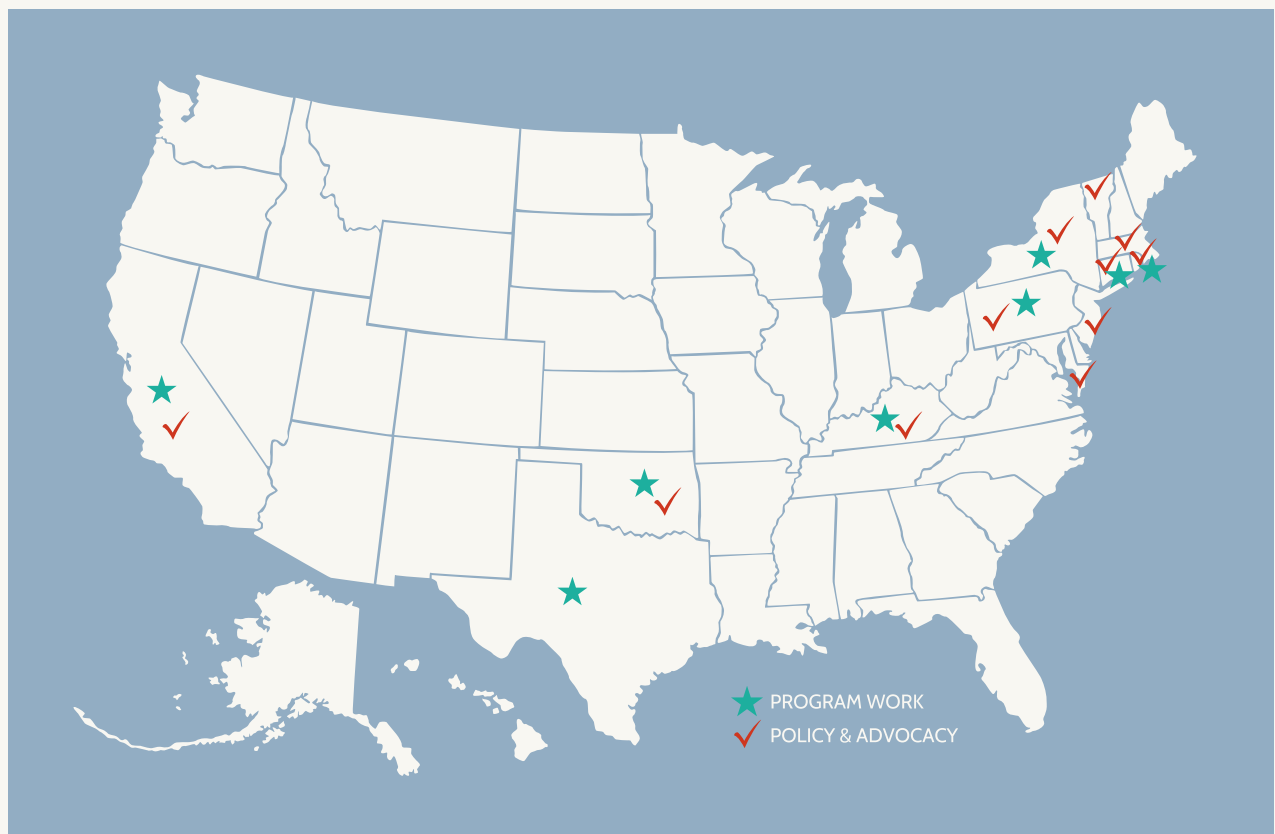
544 teachers delivered GC's curriculum & received training, professional development, and support

90% of students in GC's classes were students of color

99% of teachers agree that the GC curriculum supported their ability to develop a democratic classroom culture

98% of GC students showed adoption of civic skills

1,344 STUDENT CIVICS PROJECTS COMPLETED!



GENERATION CITIZEN SOUTH CIVICS DAYS

OKLAHOMA CIVICS DAY

In December 2024, Generation Citizen returned to the **Oklahoma State Capitol** to host its **first in-person Civics Day at the Capitol in several years**. For students and educators, the event was more than a culminating showcase—it was a moment of visibility, belonging, and renewed civic purpose. **More than 150 students** from across the state gathered to present the community-based civics projects they developed over the semester, addressing issues deeply rooted in their communities.

Topics ranged from **teacher retention and school funding to homelessness, gun violence, the opioid crisis, rural hospital technology, and PTSD in youth**. One team, concerned with rising maternal mortality rates in Oklahoma, proposed stronger state-level policies to support maternal health care and expand access in underserved areas. Another focused on improving translation services and English as a Second Language resources in public schools.

The day began with remarks from **State Representative Arturo Alonso**, who received GC's **Community Changemaker Award**. He encouraged students to stay engaged and see themselves as active participants in shaping the future of their state. GC also honored **Teacher Changemaker Matt Hesser** from Capitol Hill High School for his sustained leadership in civic education.



“We are the future, but we are also the present, and the changes we make today can shape the world we inherit tomorrow.”

– A’Karia B.
GC Student Changemaker at
Oklahoma Civics Day

NORTH CAROLINA CIVICS DAY

GC hosted a **school-based Civics Day in North Carolina at Southeast Magnet High School** in Raleigh. The event brought together a diverse audience—students, parents, educators, community members, ten pre-service social studies teachers from NC State University, and several local professors—underscoring the broad community interest in civic learning.

Students presented thoughtful community-based civics projects, highlighting issues like **school safety, community policing, access to mental health resources, and school discipline policies**. For many students, it was their first time sharing their work in a public forum and the response was overwhelmingly affirming.

Social studies teacher **John Hensley** reflected on the significance of the moment: “We had a very diverse group of participants...the students got a lot of good feedback and really felt empowered by the experience.” **Educators from NC State University** echoed that sentiment, walking away inspired by what students had accomplished and by the potential for civic learning to grow across the state.



CIVIC LEARNING IN ACTION

A Town Hall Experience in Owensboro[↗]

In Fall 2024, students at **Owensboro Innovation Academy (OIA)** in Kentucky took part in a schoolwide Civic Town Hall, engaging directly with **more than a dozen local and state elected officials**. More than 150 students rotated through panels featuring city attorneys, school board members, and state representatives, asking questions and learning firsthand how government decisions are made.

The event was designed as a launch point for a larger civic learning arc: students are now developing projects that identify pressing community issues and propose meaningful policy solutions. They'll present their ideas to the same group of elected officials in November—turning civic observation into civic participation.

OIA's Community Outreach and Job Placement Coordinator, **Julie Starnes**, emphasized the importance of involving community stakeholders in student learning. *"It's essential for these projects to have community involvement... to have our elected officials, local business owners, and different individuals from the community come share their expertise with our students."*

Students raised concerns about school safety, housing, and education equity. **Sawyer M.**, a 7th grader at OIA, reflected on how the experience pushed his thinking in new ways: *"Just sitting down and reading notes and books is boring. It doesn't really help get your mind moving. Doing something more innovative like this helps people think—and become greater people later on."*

GC's Pilot Classroom in North Carolina

In Fall 2024, Generation Citizen launched its **first-ever North Carolina classroom** at **Southeast Magnet High School in Raleigh**, partnering with social studies teacher **John Hensley** and reaching **more than 50 students across two classes**.

For Mr. Hensley, GC's community-based civics program brought new energy and deeper connections to his classroom. He noted that students felt proud to be the state's first GC participants. After the first semester, he chose to extend GC to additional classes in the spring and began advocating to bring the program to other schools across the state.

The experience also shifted classroom culture in unexpected ways. Hensley reflected that working with GC's curriculum helped him adjust his teaching approach—**treating students more like young adults and encouraging greater autonomy**. That shift deepened trust and strengthened the bond between him and his students.

He praised GC's curriculum as "high quality," citing the **root cause and State vs. Local Breakdown lessons as transformative**. For him, GC isn't just a program—it has helped to create a shared bond with students and has become a catalyst for deeper civic learning. This pilot classroom marked a meaningful entry point into North Carolina and a foundation for GC's work to grow throughout the state.



Did you know? After completing a project, 92% of GC students report having developed the skills necessary to participate in public life, and—perhaps more importantly—81% report that they believe they can make a difference in the public square.

A Strategic Partnership with GRREC



Expanding Civic Access in Rural Kentucky

In 2024, Generation Citizen expanded its reach in Kentucky through a new partnership with the **Green River Regional Educational Cooperative (GRREC)**—a network supporting 49 school districts across Western Kentucky. This collaboration reflects GC's long-term commitment to bringing **community-based civics to students in rural areas**, where opportunities for hands-on civic learning are often limited or unevenly distributed.

In May, **Megan Brandon**, Program Director for the **South Region**, and **Allyson Cook**, Chief Program & Impact Officer, led an informational webinar for GRREC district leaders, introducing GC's approach to student-led civic action and its alignment with the **Kentucky Civic Seal**. The response was immediate: district leaders were eager to find accessible, standards-aligned civic learning that connected to students' real lives and communities.

By fall, two new districts—**Owensboro Public Schools** and **Metcalf County Public Schools**—had joined the GC network. GC hopes to replicate this type of partnership with educational cooperatives aimed to meet rural communities where they are, providing programming that builds civic confidence and leadership from the inside out.



"[Students] do understand what it means to be a leader. They do understand what their own civic identity should look like. They are not citizens in waiting. They are citizens right now."

— Allyson Cook
GC's Chief Program & Impact Officer



KY CIVIC SEAL ALIGNMENT

The KY Civic Seal program is an opportunity for students to go above and beyond in demonstrating good citizenship according to four identified elements:

Civic Engagement Project

Students create or actively participate in an informed civic engagement project.

Understanding of Government

Students complete coursework and submit a summative collection of evidence of knowledge for their civic engagement project.

Information Literacy

Students regularly practice finding and using varied and credible sources, and submit a portfolio or project that demonstrates information literacy.

Self-Reflection

Students show growth in civic knowledge, skills, and civic commitments by sharing learnings from a civic engagement project.

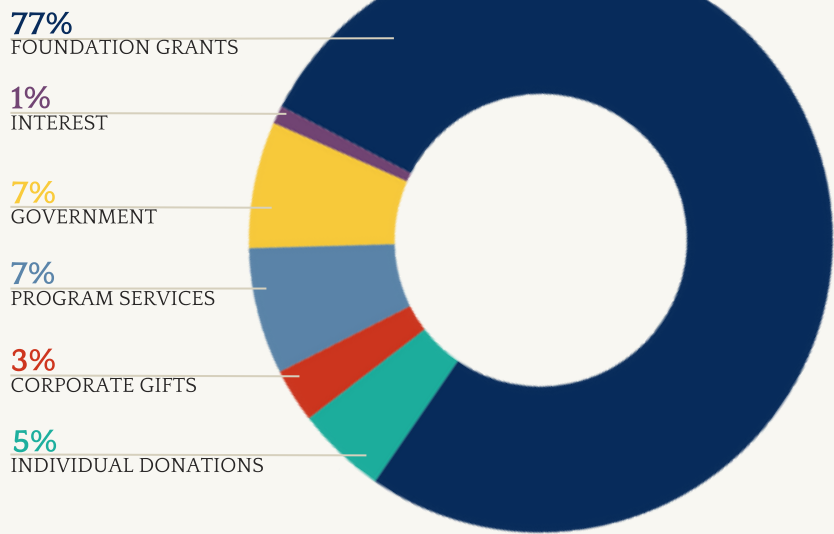
OUR FINANCIALS

In the 2024 Fiscal Year, Generation Citizen raised \$7,424,838.30 and spent \$5,153,515.50.

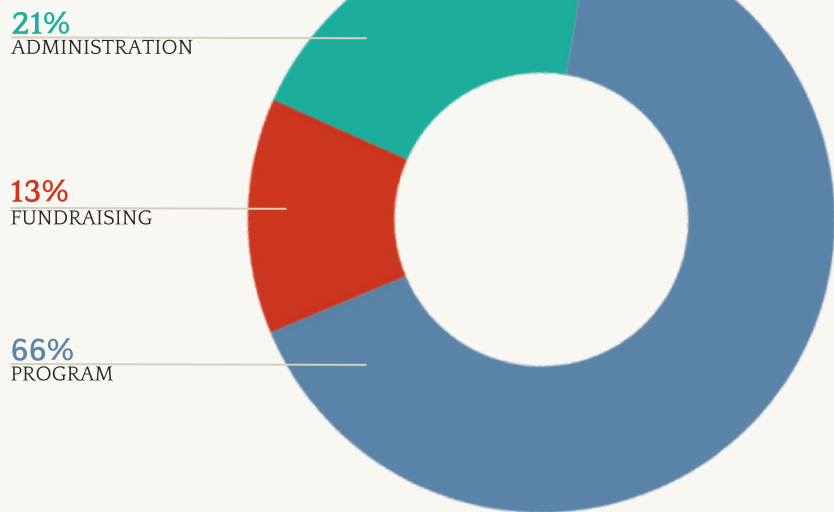
Generation Citizen was able to invest in critical new capacity this fiscal year thanks to generous multi-year gifts from donors, including significant gifts from New Profit and Yield Giving.

Due to these and other generous investments, we brought on additional staff focused on partnership development and program delivery as we grew the number of schools, teachers and students we worked with, and laid the foundation for future growth into new states.

REVENUES



EXPENSES



Many thanks to the generous supporters who made significant gifts during
Generation Citizen's 2024 Fiscal Year.

*Your partnership and commitment are deeply appreciated. Together, we are empowering a
movement of young people prepared to lead and transform our democracy.*

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"Being involved in this class and participating in discussions, debates, and projects has deepened my understanding of how our voices and actions can influence policies, create movements, and ensure that the issues that matter to us are heard."

— GC Student, South Region



"Your voice, your mind, the things that matter to you is what makes education what it is...you have to really think about what are the things that matter to you and your community."

— Dr. Nyshawana Francis-Thompson
Chief of Curriculum & Instruction for The School District of Philadelphia



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"This civics work—this is who I am."

— GC Student, West Region



"Our youth feel empowered when they can potentially make a change and especially to have adults listen to them, and hear them, and have conversations with them about what they think is important, it really does empower them."

— Tristan Williams
Department Head, Social Studies at Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School