



How the
VISION
is Taking Root

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Hope, Practiced

In a world marked by volatility, fragmentation, and deep uncertainty, hope can feel fragile, even naïve. Over the past ten years, I have come to believe something different: hope is not a feeling we wait for. It is something we build.

At Education Reimagined, we understand hope as an active force. It becomes real when people come together to imagine what could be and then take responsibility for making it happen. This matters especially in education. Young people are growing up in systems built for and from another era, and are navigating complexity we never dreamed of (let alone designed for). The challenges are real. The question is whether we are willing to respond with creativity, courage, and care.

For more than a decade, Education Reimagined has held a clear conviction. Learner-centered education offers young people agency, belonging, and purpose, and society needs them to thrive now more than ever. Ten years after releasing a unifying vision for public education, we are seeing that conviction tested, strengthened, and increasingly realized across communities in the United States.



What gives me hope today is not abstraction. It is practice. Steady, often almost invisible, practice.

But we can see it, if we look with new eyes. It is visible in communities designing learning around young people's strengths, cultures, and aspirations. It is present where educators are redefining their roles to center relationships and guide learning without controlling it. It appears as leaders in policy and philanthropy begin asking not how to mandate innovation, but what conditions allow it to grow. And it is unmistakable when learners describe how connected learning reshapes how they see themselves and their futures.

Our role at Education Reimagined is to make this work easier to accomplish and sustain. We do this by connecting people who are often working in isolation; by illuminating practices that show what learner-centered education looks like across diverse contexts; by advancing policy conversations so systems support what communities are building; and by helping the field make sense of what it is learning together.

Precisely because the world feels so uncertain, this work matters now.

We practice hope by building tangible spaces where possibility is not only imagined, but lived. I am deeply grateful to our team, Board, funders, and partners who make this work possible and who share our belief that when learning is centered on young people, a more just and humane future becomes not only imaginable but achievable.

With gratitude and resolve,

Demi Edwards

Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder

Ten Years In: From Vision to Viability

In 2025, Education Reimagined marked a significant milestone: ten years since the release of *A Transformational Vision for Education in the U.S.* When that vision was articulated, learner-centered education lived largely at the margins. It was held by a dispersed set of educators and communities who, in some cases for decades, believed learning could be more human, more connected, and more responsive to young people's lives.

What was planted then has not only taken root. It is growing.

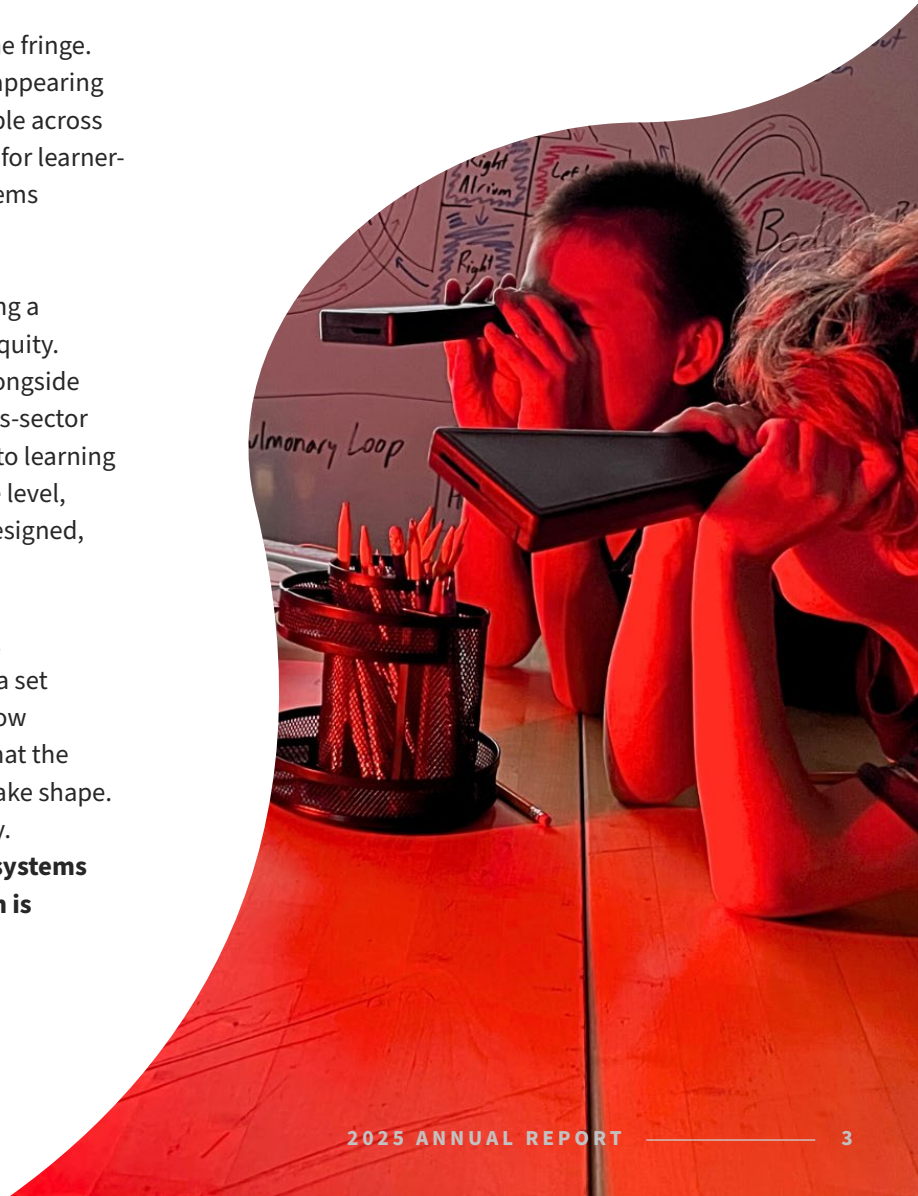
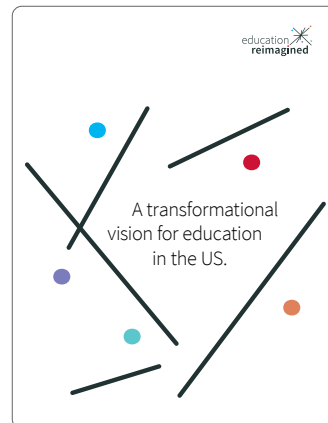
Over the past decade, our work has moved from vision to practice, and from possibility to tangible action. In 2025, that progress became especially visible.

Learner-centered education is moving away from the fringe. Awareness and demand are rising, and the work is appearing in increasingly diverse contexts, serving young people across backgrounds and circumstances. Yet, we know that for learner-centered education to endure and expand, the systems surrounding it must change.

That urgency is growing. Young people are navigating a world marked by rapid change, complexity, and inequity. Conventional systems are struggling to respond. Alongside this urgency, however, opportunity is opening. Cross-sector initiatives are emerging, reweaving communities into learning ecosystems. Shifts in policy, particularly at the state level, are creating new space to rethink how learning is designed, supported, and sustained.

This annual report reflects a moment of movement. Rather than cataloging accomplishments, it shares a set of signals emerging from the field. These signals show that learner-centered education is advancing and that the conditions needed for it to thrive are beginning to take shape. Together, they point to a simple but powerful reality.

When learning is centered on young people and systems are aligned to support that work, transformation is possible. And it is already underway.



Our Mission

Education Reimagined exists to make learner-centered education available to every young person in the United States, inclusive of race, background, and circumstance.

We are guided by a question: *In what ways can Education Reimagined make it easier for learner-centered education to succeed and grow across communities, contexts, and systems?* Our efforts focus on learning together, removing barriers, strengthening practice, and shaping the conditions that allow learner-centered education to spread with integrity and purpose.

What We're Seeing, and What's Growing

Signals of Learner-Centered Education Taking Root

What follows are signals of a field finding firmer ground, taking up the space it deserves. These signals show where momentum is building, where conditions are beginning to align, and where learner-centered education is spreading with greater coherence and durability. Taken together, they point to a field that is no longer confined to isolated examples, but one that is steadily taking root and continuing to grow. Education Reimagined is honored to serve as a catalyst and weaver of it.

SIGNALS

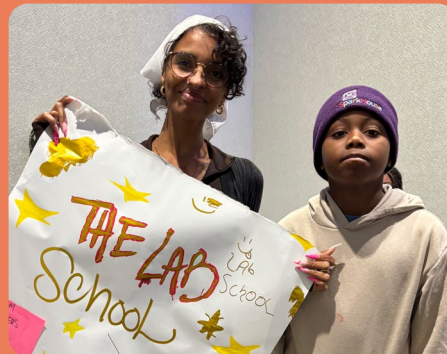


1

Relationships are the foundation upon which new systems emerge and learner-centered education spreads.

What we're seeing

Across our work, one signal continues to surface with increasing clarity: relationships are the core infrastructure of learner-centered education. Wherever this approach deepens, strong relationships are what hold it together. Through them, communities engage, policy conditions shift, and connection and camaraderie are nurtured. This is the often unseen infrastructure through which transformation emerges.



SIGNALS

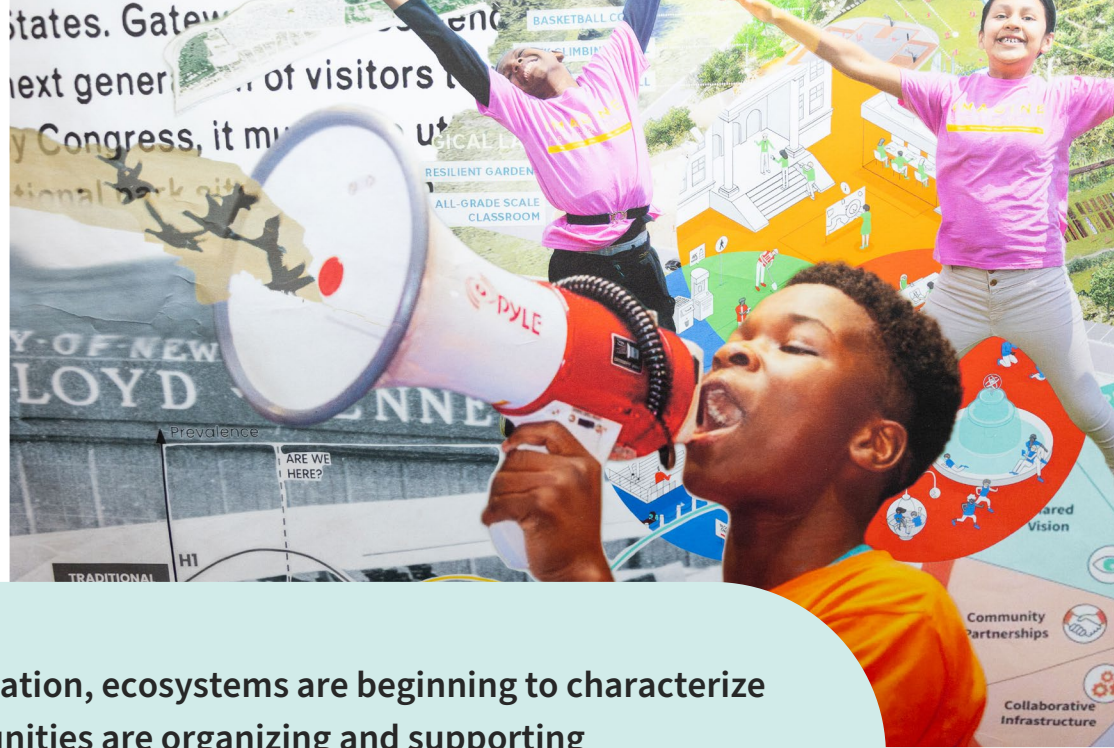
How we helped create the conditions

- Through the Learning Lab, we convened and nurtured a growing network of over 1,420 learner-centered leaders and practitioners, creating space for shared learning and cross-pollination. In 2025, educators and researchers gathered at Crosstown High in Memphis, TN, and at Jefferson County Open School in Lakewood, CO, experiencing powerful expressions of learner-centered education, strengthening relationships that continue well beyond these gatherings.
- Our annual SparkHouse convening brought young people together from learner-centered environments across the country. This year, 55 learners from 12 diverse communities gathered in Minnesota, connecting with peers who are experiencing learning rooted in agency, belonging, and real-world relevance.
- An exploration into how educator roles evolve in learner-centered environments and ecosystems uplifted relationships as the core mechanism through which learning expands. *Known, Connected, Supported*, a new report, offers shared language to deepen and broaden the relationships (and people) that shape young people's journeys.



What's growing

Stronger connections are forming among learner-centered educators, practitioners, and communities. At the same time, there is growing coherence around relationship-centered practice across contexts, with educators increasingly able to name their work with clarity, confidence, and a shared sense of purpose.



2

Across the nation, ecosystems are beginning to characterize how communities are organizing and supporting learning experiences—opening new possibilities for the sustainability and equity of learner-centered education.

What we're seeing

Across diverse communities, learner-centered education is increasingly taking shape not as a collection of isolated programs, but as a connected ecosystem of people, places, and opportunities. Communities are reimagining the assets already present around them—local organizations, cultural institutions, businesses, and public spaces—as powerful sites of learning. When these relationships are intentionally woven together, and leaders approach the work with an explicit commitment to equity and liberatory design, learner-centered education can grow more durably and reach more young people—while maintaining its responsiveness to local context.



SIGNALS

How we helped create the conditions

- We convened 23 sites across two cohorts in the Learner-Centered Ecosystem Lab to advance locally rooted visions for learner-centered education. Through ongoing advisories and peer connection, leaders tackled real design challenges: coordinating partners, supporting young people across settings, and sustaining leadership over time.
- Immersive visits to SparkNC in North Carolina, The Lab School of Memphis in Tennessee, Rock Tree Sky in Ojai, CA, and The PAST Foundation in Columbus, OH revealed ecosystems at different stages of development, offering tangible examples of community-driven transformation in action.
- A culminating gathering in Chicago, IL brought leaders and young people together to share lived experiences, while a gallery installation made the often-invisible work of ecosystem design visible through art and story.
- *Where Learning Lives: Insights from the Learner-Centered Ecosystem Lab* documents ecosystem design in practice and offers shared language and insight into systems change for communities building learner-centered education together.



What's growing

Ecosystems are increasingly understood as a shared strategy for advancing learner-centered education, rather than a niche approach. Communities are using ecosystem language to align partners, coordinate resources, and clarify roles. Perhaps most importantly, there is growing confidence that place-based approaches—designed with and for local communities—can support learner-centered education in ways that are both sustainable and equitable.



3

Policy is increasingly being held as a catalyst for possibility, rather than a constraint.

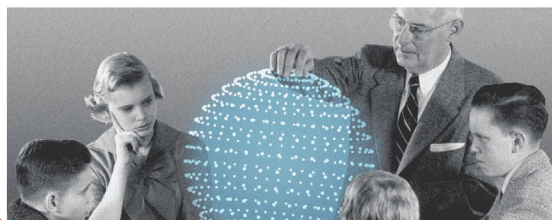
What we're seeing

Across multiple contexts, policy is being deployed—often through creative application—to enable learner-centered education, rather than limit it, underscoring both the field's ingenuity and the continued need for more enabling policies and conditions. Communities and states are exploring how flexibility, alignment, and intentional education R&D infrastructure can create the conditions for learner-centered approaches to develop and spread. This signal reflects a growing recognition that durable transformation depends not on prescribing solutions, but on policies that support learning as it actually happens—in communities, across settings, and over time.

OPINION THE BIG PICTURE

Why States Must Lead on Education R&D, and How They Can Start Today

Joe, Bishop-Root and Colwell: To prepare students for the opportunities and challenges ahead, states must prioritize research and development.



Smart Town Hall
Seizing the Opportunity for State Education R&D
5.20.25 | 10 a.m. PT

SIGNALS

How we helped create the conditions

- We continued to advance state education R&D as a critical lever for transformation by co-developing the [State Education R&D Playbook](#) with Transcend and the Alliance for Learning Innovation. Informed by insights from more than 100 education stakeholders across diverse contexts, the playbook outlines actionable steps for state and local leaders, policy influencers, and philanthropists to move from isolated innovation to sustained, system-level learning.
- We published [Seeds of Possibility: Connecting Policy to Practice Across Learning Ecosystems](#), highlighting how eight communities across the United States are leveraging policy and local conditions to expand learner agency, extend learning beyond the classroom, and broaden who is recognized as an educator. The report surfaced both the opportunities communities are seizing and the key mechanisms needed to support ecosystem design, growth, and long-term sustainability.

State Education R&D Playbook:

An interactive tool for state and local leaders, policy influencers, and philanthropy

LEARN MORE

SEEDS OF POSSIBILITY

Connecting Policy to Practice Across Learning Ecosystems

Sarah Bishop-Root and Emily Liebtog, Ed.D., in partnership with Remake Learning

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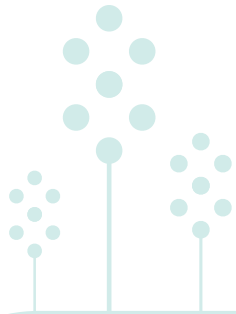
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OCTOBER 2023

What's growing

State leaders are increasingly exploring education R&D as a strategy for transformation, alongside a deeper understanding of how intentional R&D infrastructure can support learner-centered education. At the same time, learner-centered practice on the ground is increasingly informing policy conversations—signaling a shift toward policies and conditions that create space for learning, adaptation, and long-term possibility.





4

Learner-centered education is increasingly poised to meet specific needs of families.

What we're seeing

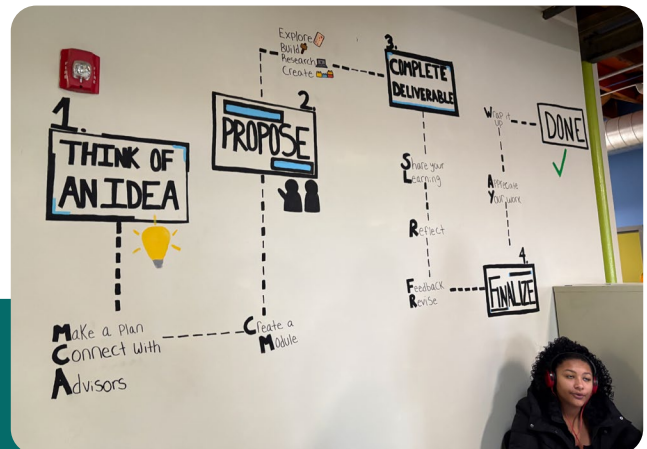
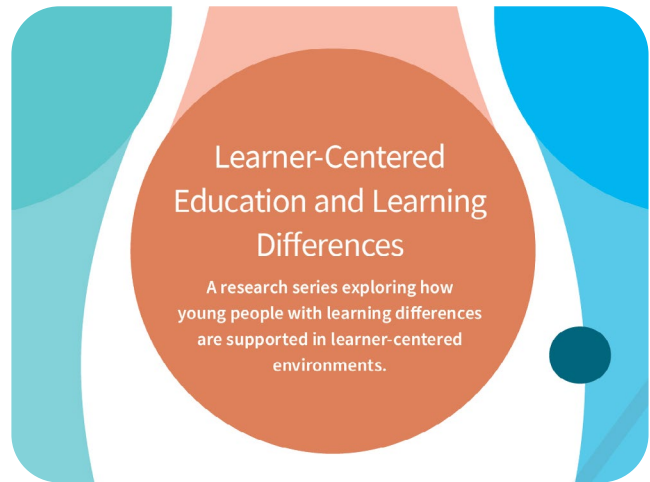
As families navigate increasingly complex educational landscapes, learner-centered education is emerging as a responsive and credible approach. Rather than asking learners to fit rigid structures, learner-centered education adapts to the child, making it especially relevant as demand grows for approaches that honor individuality, dignity, and potential.



SIGNALS

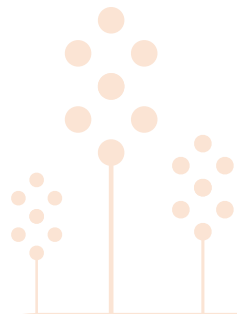
How we helped create the conditions

- We conducted a series of Immersive Inquiries with a team of practitioner-researchers to examine how three learner-centered environments engage and support young people with learning differences across varied contexts. The practitioner-researchers left rejuvenated and stocked with new ideas and strategies.
- We published our findings through a series of research briefs: *A Collaborative Multi-Case Study of Learner-Centered Education and Learning Differences*.
- In *Addressing Specific Learning Differences Through Learner-Centered Education: Evidence from Practice and Literature*, we link real-world practices supporting specific learning differences to research theory and evidence—reinforcing learner-centered education as both rigorous and inclusive.
- In *Navigating Policies and Conditions: Supporting Youth with Learning Differences in Learner-Centered Environments*, we examine the policy conditions shaping what is possible for these environments, illuminating how flexibility and thoughtful interpretation of policy enable inclusive practice to thrive.



What's growing

A stronger evidence base is emerging that links learner-centered approaches to inclusive outcomes for young people with learning differences and beyond. Practitioners report greater confidence in serving diverse learners, supported by clearer language and shared understanding of effective practice. At the system level, policy conversations are beginning to shift—away from deficit-based framing and toward flexibility, strengths, and conditions that allow inclusive learner-centered education to flourish.

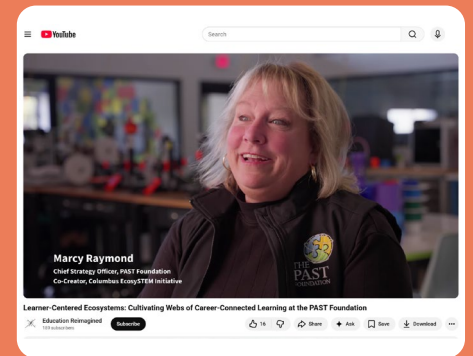


5

Elevating lived experience through storytelling shapes where learner-centered education is going—and what communities believe is possible.

What we're seeing

Across the field, the stories people tell are moving the work forward. They are helping communities recognize themselves as part of something larger, and helping core stakeholders—educators, families, funders, policymakers, and partners—see what learner-centered education can look like in practice. As the movement builds, these narratives are a force that shapes direction, builds alignment, and invites participation. Stories are helping turn isolated examples into shared possibility.



SIGNALS

How we helped create the conditions

- We published a 12-part ecosystem story series that went deeper into the lived contexts of our lab communities designing and advancing learner-centered ecosystems, elevating the people doing the work and the choices they are making along the way.
- We produced and released films and site-based stories that brought texture and visibility to learner-centered education and ecosystems in action—from Columbus, Ohio to communities across our broader network—making the work more tangible and accessible to others.
- We shared insights across national platforms, including *The 74*, *Getting Smart*, *EdNC*, *Youth Today*, and beyond, helping expand awareness and connect local work to a broader conversation.



In Tennessee, a Memphis Mash Up Is Reimagining How Children Learn

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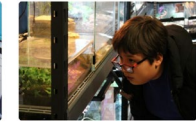
In Dallas, a Big Thought Is Brewing About How Cities Can Help Their Children Grow

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OPINION

How 12 Innovative Teams Make Learning Happen in Communities, Not Just in Schools

Edwards: From New York to California, Learner-Centered Ecosystem Labs are redefining what education means and preparing students for the future.



What's growing

Learner-centered education is gaining national visibility, supported by stronger shared language and clearer narratives about what this work looks like and why it matters. Communities are learning from one another more readily, using stories as bridges across geography and context.

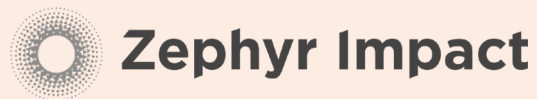
An Invitation

Learner-centered education is growing across communities, contexts, and systems. What began as a shared vision is increasingly visible in practice, policy, and partnership. These early signals of growth are real. They are taking hold. And they still require care.

Hope, in this work, is not passive. It is built through sustained investment in relationships, through conditions that allow local design and learning to flourish, and through systems that support adaptation, equity, and endurance. When these elements come together, learner-centered education can emerge in ways that last.

Education Reimagined exists to help make this care possible, by connecting people, illuminating practice, and catalyzing the systems that allow learning to thrive. We invite you to continue tending to what's growing, so learner-centered education can spread not as the exception, but as the future of public education for every child.

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We are deeply grateful to all the supporters who contribute their time, expertise, resources, and thought partnership to advancing our mission. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the individual donors whose generosity makes our impact possible.

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