



# Resilience & Resolve

**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2025**



healthbrigade



## Executive Letter

Dear Friends,

Your moral commitment to humanity through your actions and financial contributions to Health Brigade over this past year is nothing short of miraculous. **THANK YOU!**

The legacy of Health Brigade, the continued evolution of Fan Free Clinic, remains steadfast in its values to serve those least served in our communities.

There have been many periods in our 55-year history when resources were lean and serving marginalized people were met with disdain and judgment. That did not stop us.

**Resilience and resolve** are core to our organizational DNA. Political pressure, policy mandates, significant funding losses, and yes, even those in power who would like for us to stop caring about those least served on the margins of our society will not stop our RESOLVE.

In the pages that follow, you will get a glimpse of the difficult year we've

had in facing unparalleled funding losses that came very quickly. You will see how we moved into action with our **Care is Resistance** effort and leaned into the community to transparently share the challenges. You will see our commitment to lift up the stories of those suffering the most from layoffs, loss of services, fear and anguish of immigrants regardless of legal status, and the weaponization of government institutions against people. You will see in the photos our expressions are serious. We are serious and resolved to serve, no matter what.

**Your support enables our resilience and leads us to sustainability.** To all of you who have shared your heart with us through word, caring actions, volunteering, funding, and helping to tell our story, we are deeply grateful.

We hope you will continue to stand with us as we fight our way forward to a sustainable future and expanded services in the community. **Our fellow humans need us all.**



## Facing Reality

In this fiscal year, Health Brigade sustained \$1.85 million in combined federal and state funding cuts. The reductions — including losses from the Virginia Department of Health — had an immediate and devastating impact on programs serving people with HIV and other communicable diseases.

The loss of both direct federal grants and state-administered funds has forced Health Brigade to make painful decisions that directly affect vulnerable patients.

Among the hardest-hit services are:

- Closure of the HIV/AIDS Prison Program, which provided education, treatment, and care linkage for incarcerated individuals since 2008.
- Severe reductions in HIV/AIDS case management, including the elimination of emergency assistance

for housing, food, transportation, and mental health support.

- Cuts to HIV and Hepatitis C prevention, testing, and linkage programs, reducing early diagnosis and treatment access.
- Losses to the Comprehensive Harm Reduction/Needle Exchange Program, a key defense against disease transmission and overdose.
- Elimination of \$850,000 in federal facility funds, forcing Health Brigade to list its building for sale.

“These cuts are not abstract numbers — they are lost lifelines,” said Executive Director Karen Legato. “Every dollar lost means someone losing HIV medication, safe housing, or the chance to live a healthy life. After more than fifty years of service, we are now fighting for our own survival.”

Executive Director Karen Legato and Board Chair Dr. Nakeina Douglas-Glenn

The Health Brigade Ryan White B and HIV testing teams.





## Responding with Action

To address the crisis created by the rapid loss of federal and state funding cuts, Health Brigade held three Town Halls providing space for transparency, advocacy, and collective action, and to welcome everyone to participate and share their voices.

The goal of these town halls was to educate the Richmond community, solidify HB's partnership with the **Greater Richmond Safety Net Collaborative**, inform funders and reassure the people we serve that we were standing with them.

The first one was held in the back parking lot of the agency. The latter two were held at the Richmond Public Library-Main Branch.

Topics included how federal attacks on Medicaid would strip health coverage from our most vulnerable neighbors and the impact of current immigration policies and how they threaten access to health care. The groups

gathered at each event included HB patients/clients, community leaders, community partners, volunteers, board members, donors, concerned citizens, legislators, media and current and former staff members.



## Resilient Care

For the past three years, a Community Health Worker (CHW) at Health Brigade has supported families in Richmond's Latino community as they navigate a complex and often overwhelming healthcare system. Her work reflects the quiet, consistent advocacy that defines our approach to care.

One family she supported had recently arrived in Richmond after leaving difficult circumstances in their home country. They were raising three young children, each with unique health needs, while working hard to build stability in a new environment.

When the mother came to Health Brigade for her own care, the CHW learned more about the daily challenges the family was facing. Their eldest child, who had significant mobility needs, did not have a wheelchair. Each day, the mother carried her daughter everywhere she needed to go—onto the school bus, into appointments, and through daily routines—shouldering both physical and emotional weight.

A social determinants of health assessment revealed several gaps. Although Health Brigade primarily treats adults, the CHW partnered with

a local pediatrician and community organizations to secure a wheelchair and connect the family with essential supports such as food, diapers, and household supplies.

Just as the family began to find more stability, the mother was unexpectedly detained on her way to the grocery store and deported within days. The family had no opportunity to prepare or say goodbye. Her absence created profound emotional strain and left the father balancing full-time caregiving with the need to provide for the household.

Throughout this crisis, the family's Community Health Worker remained a steady source of support. She coordinated emergency assistance, helped the father access longer-term resources, and ensured the children stayed connected to the care and services they needed.

At Health Brigade, we see every day that healthcare extends far beyond clinical appointments. It is advocacy, compassion, and the commitment to stand with people through moments of uncertainty. The persistence of CHWs like this one helps families maintain dignity, stability, and hope—even in the most difficult circumstances.





CARE

IS

RESISTANCE

## Building Community

In a world where care is being questioned, challenged and even under attack, caring itself becomes an act of resistance.

Caring that families stay together. Caring that people can live freely as who they are. Caring that food, shelter, safety, and healthcare are not luxuries but basic human rights.

In this moment, choosing to care is choosing to resist the forces that would rather we turn away.

**Care is Resistance** began as a single sentence in an appeal, simple but steady, but it grew into a mission, a rallying call, a hope turned into action. At a time when caring for our neighbors, especially those on the margins, is under threat, we needed a truth to stand on. And this was it.

And yet, none of this is new. Resistance-through-care is the very foundation that Health Brigade was built upon. It showed up in the late 60s and early 70s when we fought for birth control access and healthcare for those in need.

It showed up in the 80s when we sat with those living and dying with AIDS, refusing to let them be forgotten. It showed up in the late 90s as we welcomed and affirmed our transgender community with

dignity and love. It's always been our way. **It's who we are.**

This year our Health Brigade community resisted by showing up once again. You called out inhumanity, you sent funds no matter how small, you shared the message from all corners of the internet.

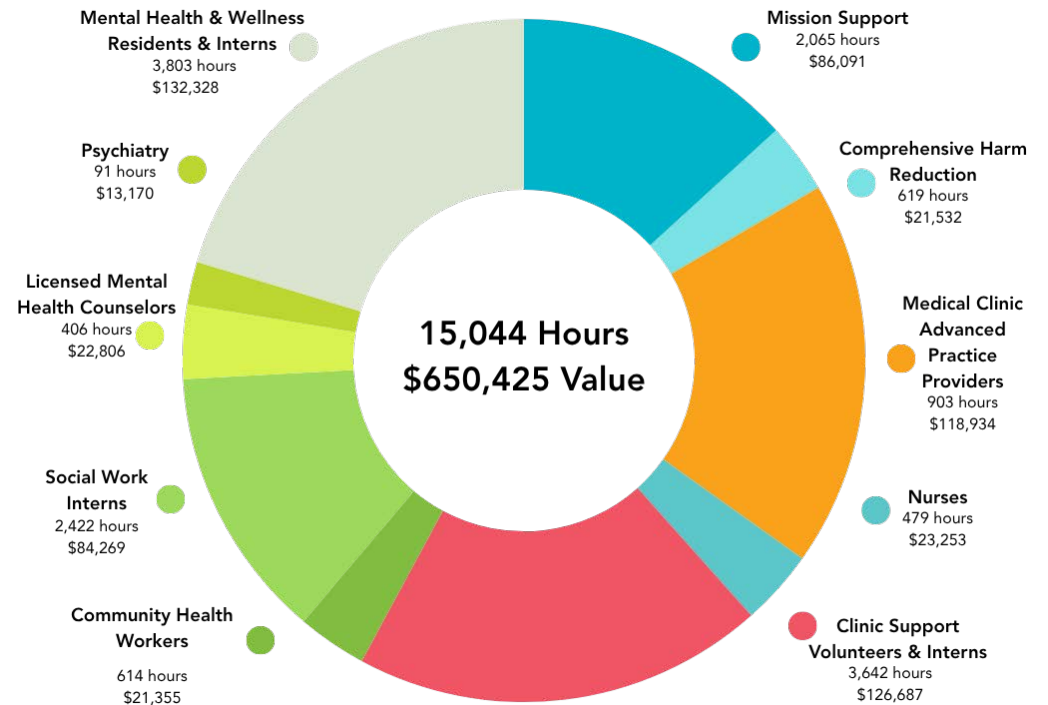
You gathered together at town halls, you had countless conversations trying to figure out ways to help each other, and by showing up together, we used our collective voices to speak truth to power.

Today, we stand with so many others who are resisting with a care that sees people fully, honors their humanity, meets them where they are, gives them exceptional healthcare and insists on dignity for all. We resist the idea that anyone deserves anything less.

This is our rallying cry, our hope, our stand:

**We resist because we care.**

## Volunteer Service

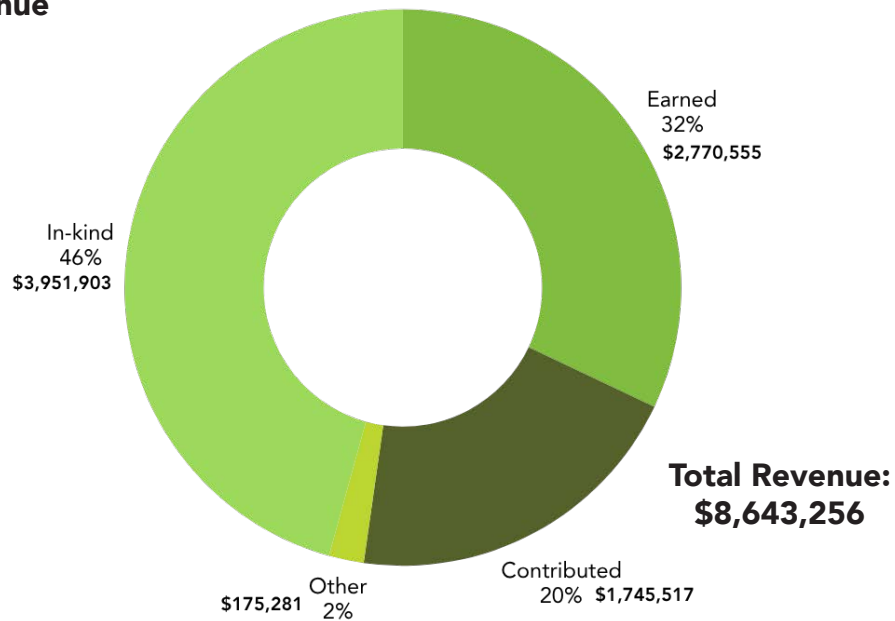


## Dedicated Service Awards

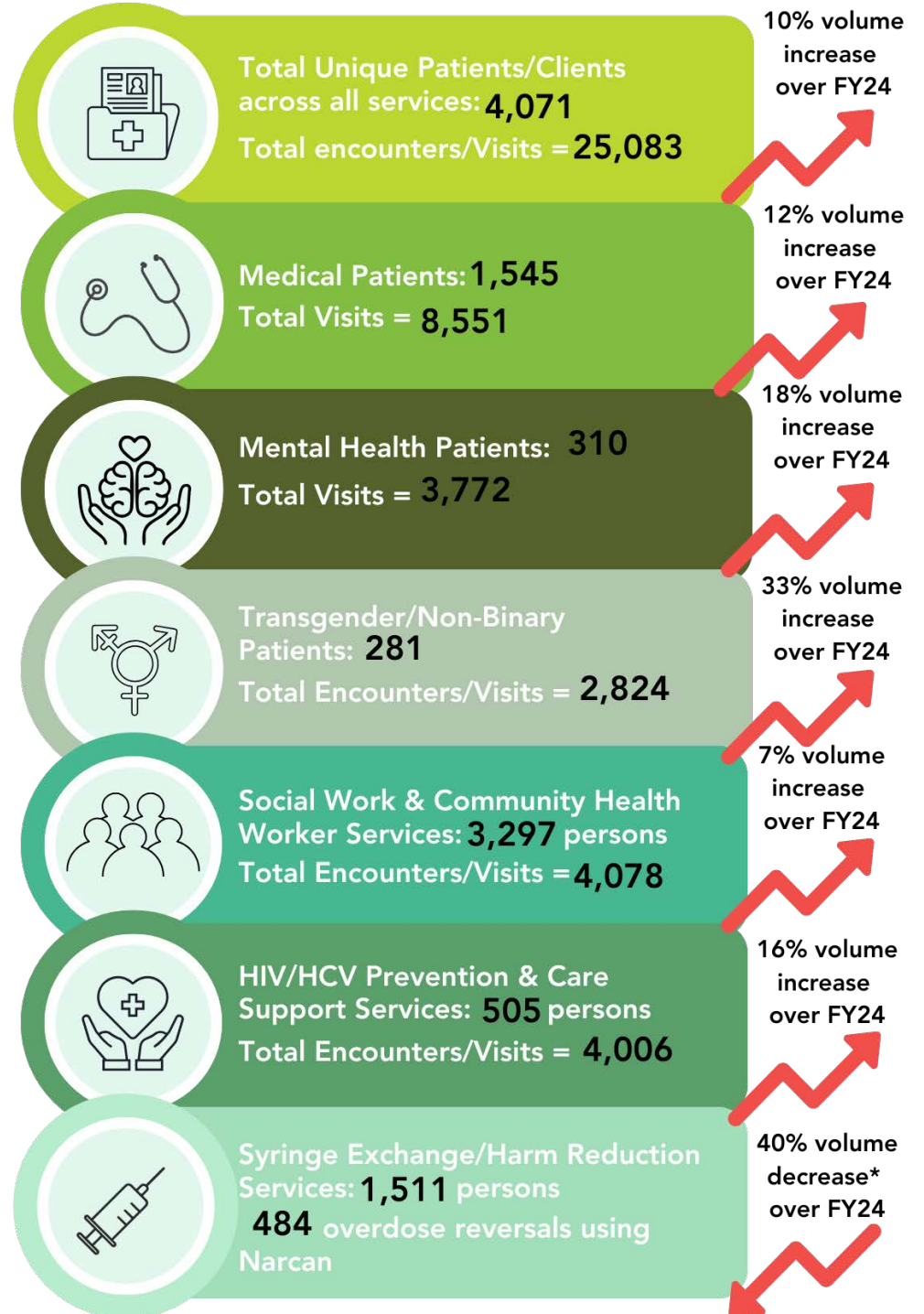
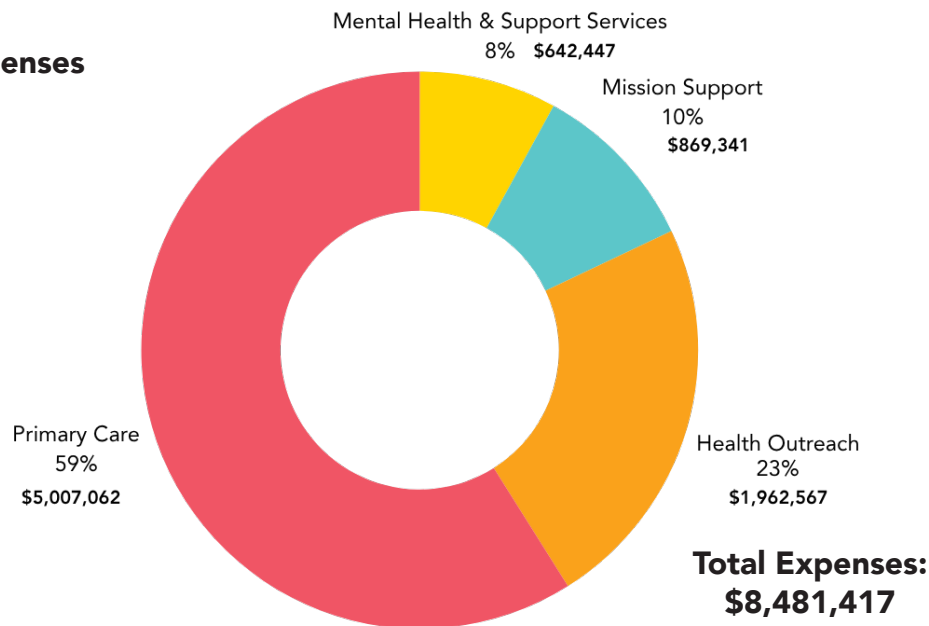


L to R: **Noor Chouman**, 575 hours in Medical Clinic; **Julia Squillante**, the *Dr. Jo Lynne Robins Award for Dedicated Service in Medical Clinic*; **Emily Park**, 376 hours in Health Outreach; **Dana Clark**, the *Bev Chamblin Award for Excellence in Mental Health & Wellness*; **Ashley Mottley**, 800 hours in Mental Health & Wellness; **Joanna Fowler**, the *Sid Koerin Award for Dedicated Service in Mission Support*. Not pictured: **Anne Marie Fontaine**, 110 hours in Mission Support; and **Jeff Urquhart**, the *Dedicated Service Award in Health Outreach & Advocacy*.

**Revenue**



**Expenses**



\*decrease due to funding cuts

# Our Mission

The mission of Health Brigade is to provide exceptional health services to those least served in a caring and non-judgmental environment.

# Our Values

Welcoming • Trusted • Inclusive  
Integrated • Impactful • Responsive

# Our Cover

It has been a tough year. But the brigade has resilience and resolve to continue our life-saving work for those who need us most.

L to R: Edward Peters, Outreach Specialist; Dr. Rachel Waller, Medical Director, Joe Santiago, CHR Program Associate

Photos cover, pages 2, 3, 5, 6 by Patience Salgado

Photos page 4 by Patricia Munford / Photo page 9 Bob Papas

# Our Lists

The following lists can be found on our website at

[www.healthbrigade.org/2025AnnualReport](http://www.healthbrigade.org/2025AnnualReport)

- Board of Directors List
- Annual Fund Donor List
- Staff List
- Volunteer List



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