



Our Mission:
We are a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to meeting the unique needs of families and individuals living within the 37377 zip code during times of financial challenge and crisis. Our longer-term focus is to provide clients the services and guidance they need to become self-reliant.

Annual Report 2022

Dear SMSS Friends,

Strong relationships are at the core of our work, and we see how they change lives everyday. I am proud to live in Signal Mountain, where our neighbors know the lasting effects of this meaningful work. The relationships with our clients and volunteers make critical connections that help to sustain our thriving community. With the generous support of our volunteers and donors, SMSS served 145 households in 2022.

SMSS clients were heavily impacted by rising food and housing costs in 2022. SMSS food pantry visits increased by 86%, feeding 526 adults and 297 children. Emergency financial assistance also increased by 28%. Not only does SMSS support clients during a crisis, we empower them with resources and guidance towards a better future. We believe education is the most effective way to prevent the need for our services. With more students participating in the SMSS scholarship and tutoring programs than ever before, we hope to help break the cycle of generational poverty.

SMSS was excited to introduce the Beacon of Light scholarship in 2022, which rewards one applicant who demonstrates selfless service and determination. It was a tough decision this year as we had three finalists to choose from! We were also very honored to receive the TN Governor's Award of Excellence, along with other great nonprofits in our area. Thank you to our amazing volunteers and donors for believing in SMSS and the work we do.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Neal

Governor's Award



2022 Program & Services

Total Number of Households Served: **145**

Life Skills
Counseling:

128
Clients

Senior Support:

18
Households

Emergency Services:

67 households received assistance with rent, utilities, childcare, medical care, emergency home and vehicle repairs

94 households: totaling **276** visits to the Food Pantry and **1656** bags of food distributed

Home Repairs:

14
Households

Educational programs / number of students served:

Tutoring: **55**

School supplies: **72**

Extra curricular activities: **40**

Summer Scholars: **14**

Scholarships (preschool and post secondary): **19**

Christmas Basket &
Sponsor programs:

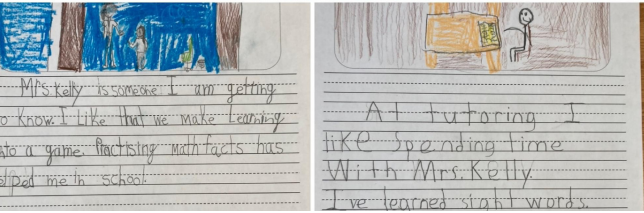
58
Households

2022 Community Impact

The SMSS Education programs provided life-changing opportunities for preschoolers through adults. The K-12 tutoring program continues to grow and the undivided attention they receive at the SMSS Learning Center and their schools has led to a 95% high school graduation rate for our clients' children. Our seven tutors are teachers, counselors, advocates, and mentors to these students, which greatly enhances their advancement and self esteem. SMSS provided scholarships to summer camps, athletics, and extra curricular activities to 40 students this year, offering experiences that their families could not otherwise afford. Five preschoolers were assisted with scholarships to prepare them for successful entry into Kindergarten. Post-secondary scholarships were awarded to 14 students enrolled in technical to university institutes through a needs-based application process. The scholarships are renewable pending required documentation. Many of these young adults are first generation higher education attendees, creating a new path for their families for years to come.

The Home Repair program significantly increases quality of life and can prevent homelessness. This program also addresses safety concerns in clients' homes that may otherwise be delayed or ignored because of financial constraints. Partnerships with professional crews who often volunteer their time and skills are vital to the success of this program. SMSS replaced a failed septic system for a senior client, installed a new roof on the home of a single parent, and replaced the HVAC system for a homebound client.

The Emergency Assistance program continues to be a critical component of SMSS. We are fortunate to have all encompassing services that enable us to customize the assistance granted based on the client's documented need. Home visits are customary for clients seeking financial assistance. These visits allow our social workers to get a clear assessment of the needs and further develop a relationship with the client. As a result, we are better equipped to address the emergency and strategize with clients on long term goals. Examples of emergency assistance in 2022 was a rent payment for a single parent facing eviction after a sudden job loss and assistance with a vehicle repair for a working client facing no transportation to their job.





Our goal for the clients we serve is for each to reach self-sufficiency and manage resources wisely. There are often underlying issues, barriers, or habits that hold them back from reaching this goal on their own. Our social workers use life skills counseling to act as change agents for clients who may have lost jobs, do not have a healthy support system, are experiencing a medical crisis, are facing transportation barriers, or struggling with parenting issues. Life skills counseling starts with building trusting relationships. Once that is established, our social workers can assist with resource allocation, referrals, setting goals, accountability, budgeting, job searches, and technology education.



Our Christmas Basket program is a long-held tradition in our community, bringing us all together for a joyful day of packing and delivering food and gift items to clients over the holidays. SMSS matches sponsors with special families during this time as well, usually in the Sequatchie County 37377 zip code. This is a time of year when our clients' budgets can be particularly stretched, so the assistance they receive from SMSS is a tremendous gift to their families.

Senior support continues to be a top priority at SMSS. These clients receive regular home visits and supportive case management from our senior social worker. They often live on a fixed income so budgeting assistance and resource allocation is crucial to their well being. We also connect them to special volunteers who provide warm meals and visits to help them feel less isolated.

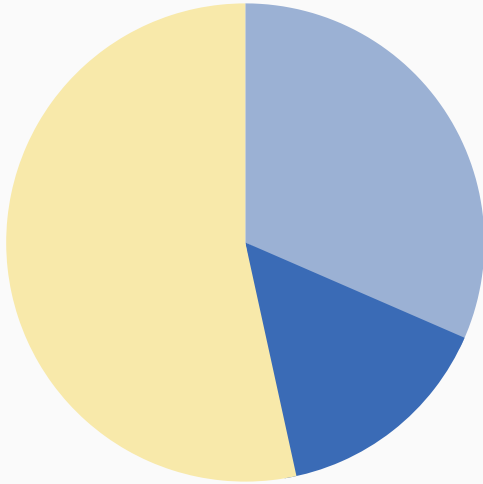


The new Beacon of Light scholarship is in memory of Steve Ward, a long time friend and volunteer at SMSS.



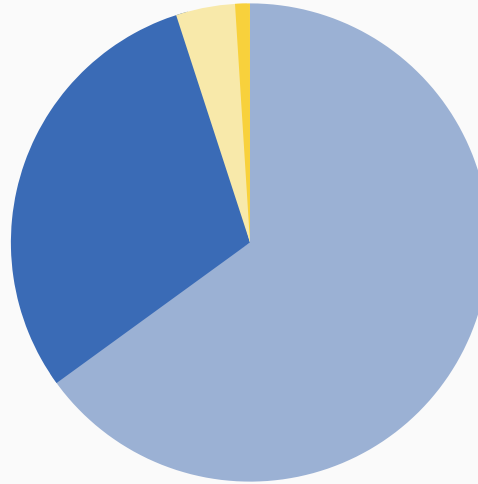
2022 Financial Profile

Operational Expenses



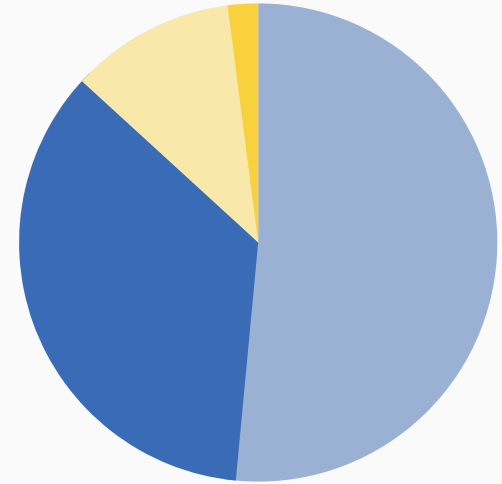
Direct Services: 171,934
Clothes House: 101,439
Office and Administrative: 48,410

Funding Sources



The Clothes House: 65%
Individual Donations: 30%
Community Organization Donations: 4%
Church Donations: 1%

Cost of Direct Services



Educational programs: 88,536
Emergency assistance: 60,692
Life Skills Counseling: 19,190
Christmas Assistance: 3,516

*Fiscal year ended December 31, 2022

*In Kind donations not included

All agency expenses were covered by generated income. The Clothes House continues to be the primary source of income but SMSS also relies heavily on churches, civic and school groups, community businesses, and individual donations to maintain financial solvency. All of our funding sources are critical in our mission to maximize the investments we make in our Signal Mountain families.

Thank you to our volunteers

We have over 100 devoted volunteers who give their time, energy, and skills that help keep costs down to maximize the use of our funds. They assist in staffing the Clothes House and Food Pantry. They also provide direct support for clients by providing home repairs, warm meal deliveries, senior visits, and assistance with special projects. The Board of Directors consists of 10 dedicated individuals who offer their expertise to oversee the direction of the agency. 23 Council Members represent various community organizations on the mountain. They are an invaluable link to resources and the manpower behind the Christmas Basket event each year. We truly could not do the work we do without our amazing volunteers.

Looking Forward

SMSS will continue to meet the unique and complex needs of our neighbors. We look forward to a productive 2023, providing critical strategic services aimed at client stability, improvement, and self-sufficiency. Through outreach and engagement, we are identifying the needs of our community and always striving to better serve Signal Mountain residents. We have pilot projects planned for 2023 focusing on mental health awareness and resources for families. Stay tuned to our social media for announcements about upcoming events!

