



2024 Impact Report



LEAD Supporters & Friends,

Reflecting on past years, we are **filled with gratitude and optimism**. The LEAD Girls' journey continues to be powerful thanks to the dedication of our team, the strength of the girls we serve, and the unwavering support of our community.

This year, we saw huge growth in our impact, which reflects the deep need for the empowering work we do in our communities. Looking back, we are thrilled to share a few highlights:

We won a **Spirit of North Carolina Award** in the category of "Leading Through the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Lens" through The United Way of Forsyth County. **Britney Dent**, Director of Programs, won the 2024 **Martin Luther King, Jr. Young Dreamers Award**, awarded annually by the City of Winston-Salem.

We expanded into three new schools with our workshop programs: Clemmons and Walkertown Middle Schools and Main Street Academy. Our first year of our **STEAM Pilot Program** was completed! 18 girls visited WFU's Institute of Regenerative Medicine, NC A&T State University, and Winston-Salem State University to learn about biomedical, chemical, and mechanical engineering.

We moved to 1100 West First Street! Our centralized hub includes staff offices and meeting spaces (both group and one-on-one) as well as a Zen Zone and an outside area. There, we hosted **healthy cooking and nutrition classes** for our parents/guardians in partnership with the Forsyth County Cooperative Extension.

Our **LEAD Girls' Summer Fashion Entrepreneurship Camp** was held for two weeks with 15 campers learning about budgeting, business plans, and branding. They learned how to sew, the impact of renewing and repurposing clothing, and much more! Girls also participated in Winston-Salem Fashion Week, where they modeled their designs.

The focus of **LEAD-A-THON** was shifted to ignite the spirit of togetherness among our LEAD families who engaged in activities where they worked together. Our sixth annual **Girls Rising Expo** provided a unique empowerment experience to 100+ girls through workshops centered around mental, physical, and financial wellness. We also purchased a **15-passenger van**, thanks to special grant funding. This ensures that our girls have access to LEAD's programming.

While we celebrate these milestones, we are not immune to challenges. This year, we saw a loss of school funding, which has made our work more difficult. Our girls also needed increased assistance. This led us to supply Thanksgiving meal boxes and host dozens at our first Holiday for HER shopping experience.

As we finalize our **three-year strategic plan** with Northington & Associates, we continue to stay focused on providing transformative opportunities for the girls who need us most.

Thank you for being a part of our journey!

The road ahead is full of promise, and we are confident that with your continued support, we will be able to deepen the positive effects of our work, adapt to the changing landscape, and reach even more girls in the years to come.



*Joy Nelson
Thomas*

Joy Nelson Thomas
Executive Director
& Founder



Katina Little

Katina Little
Board Chair

2024 Impact Snapshot



355
Girls Served



16,209

Hours of Service

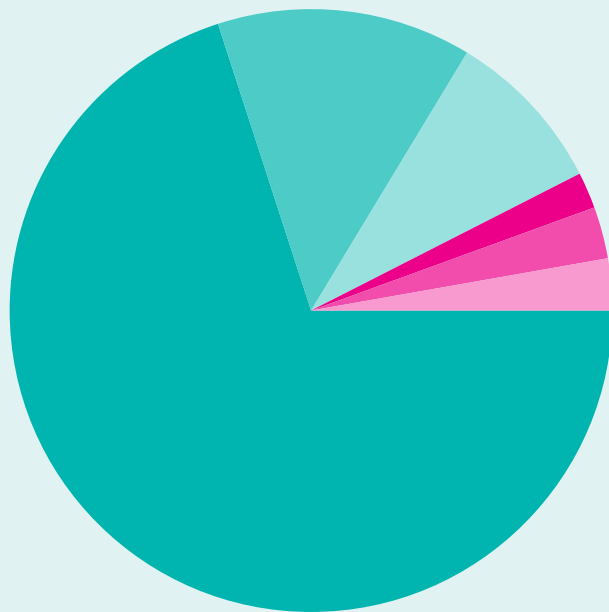
Additional 4500 support hours from 2023



LEAD significantly deepened its community impact by increasing total programming and support hours by nearly

40%

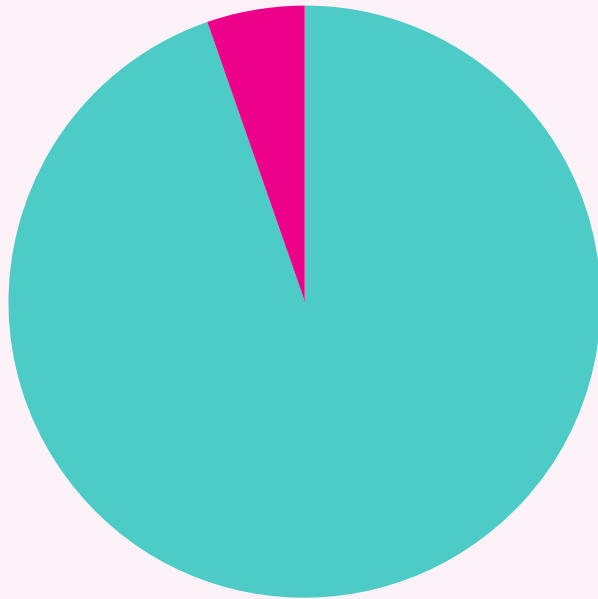
Every Girl deserves to be seen, heard, valued and equipped.



- Black / African American: 73.7%
- White / Caucasian: 18%
- Hispanic: 6%
- Asian / Pacific Islander: 0.6%
- Native American / American Indian / Alaskan Native: 0.6%
- Multiracial: 1.1%

Our Reach

The Girls We Serve

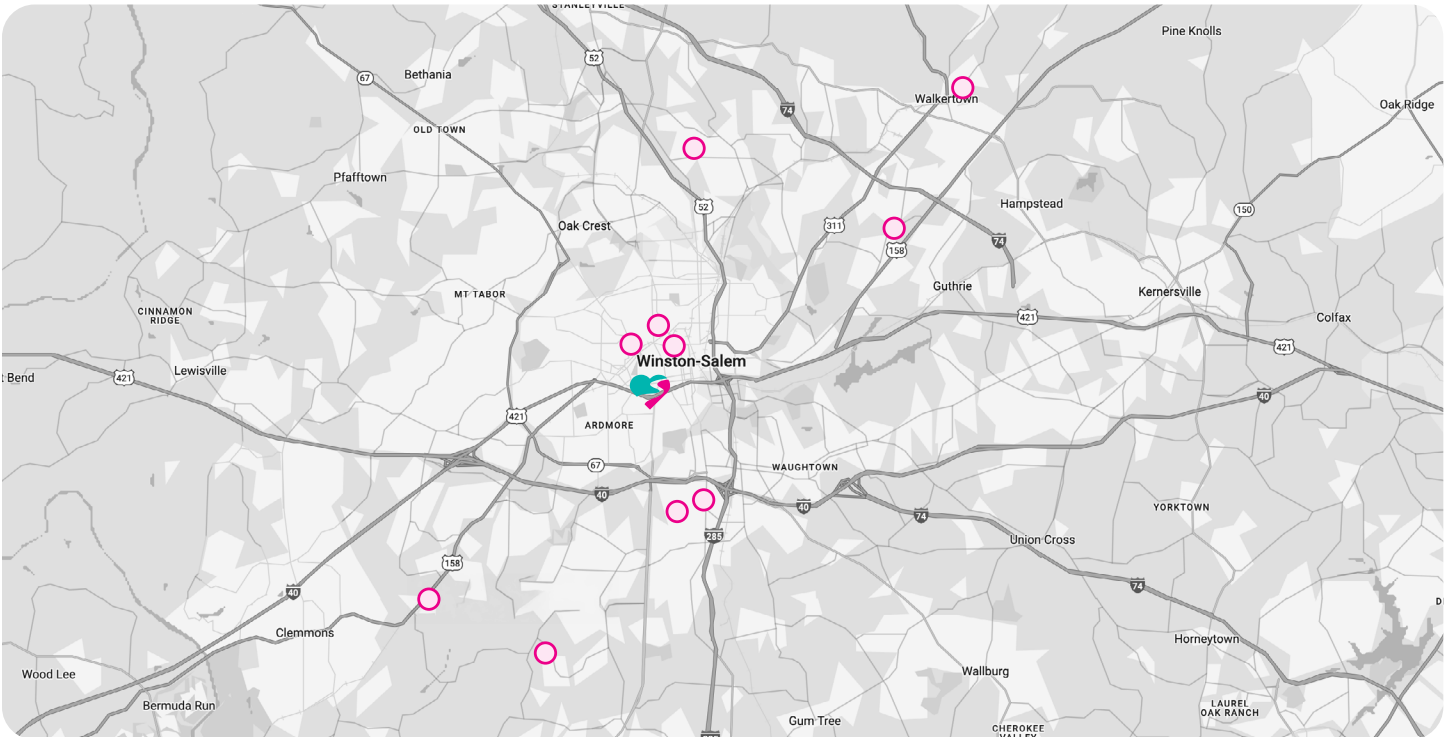


5th - 8th Grade



Lead Ambassadors
9th - 12th Grade





Where We Serve

LEAD Girls of North Carolina Office **27101**

Clemmons Middle School **27127**

Walkertown Middle School **27051**

Crossnore Community for Children **27104**

Cook Literacy Model School **27105**

Academy at Middle Fork **27051**

Wiley Middle School **27104**

Flat Rock Middle School **27127**

Philo-Hill Middle School **27127**

Paisley Middle School **27105**

Main Street Academy **27107, 27127**

Mineral Springs Middle School **27105**

Community LEAD **27012, 27045, 27051, 27101, 27103, 27104, 27105, 27106, 27107, 27127, 27265, 27360, 28262**

We Know LEAD Girls Changes Lives!



When **Emily**, now an 8th grader, joined LEAD Girls last year, she had no idea how transformative the experience would be. A standout moment for Emily was the Fashion Entrepreneurship Camp, where she discovered her passion for floral design. During the camp, **she spent time at Green Bee Floral Designs, learning from Jennifer Brannon**, co-owner of the business, and creating floral arrangements. **Inspired by the experience, Emily launched her business, Sweet-Pea Floral Design, crafting unique arrangements to sell on weekends.** Her talent quickly gained attention when a customer's photo of her work went viral on social media.

LEAD Girls has done more than just fuel Emily's entrepreneurial spirit—we have boosted her confidence and opened her eyes to the possibility of turning her passions into a career. **“Being part of LEAD has definitely made me a more confident person,”** says Emily. **“It pumps up your self-esteem, and I’ve made some really good friends.”** LEAD Girls has provided Emily with the skills and encouragement to pursue her dreams and the belief that anything is possible, with mentors like Jennifer Brannon showing her the way. With her eyes set on a future in floral design, Emily is excited to continue growing her business, knowing LEAD has given her the tools, confidence, and support to succeed.

After participating in LEAD Girls, **93.3%** of our girls reported feeling their life has meaning.

This is How We Change a Community.



Londyn has been a part of LEAD Girls for three transformative years, and the program has helped her grow into a confident, resilient young woman. What started as a reluctant journey blossomed into a life-changing experience, giving Londyn a safe space during some of her most challenging times, including overcoming bullying. **“LEAD has helped me be confident in myself and stand up for who I am,”** she says. Through friendships, learning about financial literacy, and experiences like the EXPO, Londyn gained the tools to assert herself and embrace her true self. **“Before LEAD, I didn’t always feel like I belonged, but now I know I do,”** she reflects. With dreams of becoming a nurse, entrepreneur, or photographer, **Londyn is excited about her future and determined to help other girls find their confidence,** just as LEAD helped her find hers. **“I want to be there for other girls, like LEAD was for me,”** she shares. LEAD has given Londyn skills, a community, and a brighter future.

After participating in LEAD Girls, **94.1%** of girls reported having a good relationship with at least one parent.

This is How We Change the World.



The Gaither family is a shining example of our powerful impact. For A'lani, what started as a shy and nervous experience quickly transformed her into a confident, empowered young woman. Through LEAD, A'lani has gained valuable leadership and entrepreneurial skills—like **starting her own jewelry business**—and learned the importance of communication and self-expression. Her family, too, has flourished, with Donna (Grandmother) and Tomisha (Mother) finding a more **profound connection through the Parent's Pilot Program**, where they've learned to support each other and tackle challenges together. **“We show up, and we show support,”** says Tomisha, highlighting how the family has grown stronger as a unit. LEAD Girls is more than just a program—it's a **catalyst for change, bringing families closer, empowering them with new skills, and inspiring them to face the future confidently.** One family at a time, LEAD is making the world better, teaching girls and their families the true meaning of strength, growth, and unity.



After LEAD Girls What's Next?

For the fourth consecutive year, the LEAD Girls Ambassadors' Program continued its mission to empower **high school girls** who have graduated from our middle school program. These young women, now in a formal leadership role, serve as integral members of our organization. In 2024, six LEAD Ambassadors participated actively in committees, providing valuable input and feedback while serving as role models for younger girls in our community. **At the core of the LEAD Girls program are values of leadership, service, and spreading love, all embodied by our Ambassadors.**

This year also began an exciting new partnership between LEAD Girls and Crosby Scholars.

Crosby Scholars works to prepare Forsyth County public middle and high school students for college admission and post-secondary opportunities. Their program combines volunteer service with topical discussions starting in sixth grade, ultimately offering scholarship support as students reach high school.

Through a valuable partnership with **Allegacy Federal Credit Union**, LEAD Girls ensures that our high school alumnae and current Ambassadors can access financial services. Many of our girls work after school, and through this collaboration, they now have their own savings / checking accounts and debit cards for direct deposit. This opportunity helps them manage their finances and offers a vital learning experience in money management as they prepare for adulthood.

A key highlight of the year was our collaboration with **Forsyth Technical Community College** to offer eight LEAD Girls an immersive four-day BridgeHER experience. **During this program, the girls were introduced to various careers and opportunities, with tailored career assessments focused on their talents, values, priorities, and skills.** They explored nuclear medicine technology, health information

management, business and information technologies, cybersecurity, and more. Hands-on activities included checking blood pressure, learning about MRI technology, performing heart ultrasounds, and engaging in pharmacy simulations. The girls even attended self-advocacy and psychological safety workshops, building skills that will serve them personally and professionally.

One LEAD Girl shared her transformative experience: "I didn't think I was going to go to college, but now I think I will." This exposure to career possibilities in a supportive, hands-on learning environment has been a game changer for many of our students. It has opened their eyes to the vast opportunities ahead, igniting a sense of potential and confidence to help them think about their future.

The LEAD Girls program continues to **impact young women's lives significantly, empowering them with the tools, knowledge, and resources to excel academically, professionally, and personally.** With the support of our dedicated partners, these girls are not only dreaming **BIG** but taking concrete steps toward realizing their goals and **shaping a bright future.**

88.4% of girls express a desire to go to a college or university

96.7% of girls indicated that their education was important to them.

84.3% of girls reported having a positive attitude toward themselves.

A LEAD GIRL SAID IT BEST:

Once people know
their worth, they behave
differently.



2024 Financial Snapshot

Support & Revenue

Grants, contributions and public support	448,281
Sponsorships	21,600
Government grants	2,936
Program income	55,485
Investment and other income	20,224
In-kind support and supplies	38,033
Total support & revenue	586,558

Expenses

Program services	477,555
Management and general	68,837
Fundraising	96,748
Total expenses.....	643,141
Change in net assets.....	-56,582

*Restricted program funds from 2023 supported our total 2024 expenses and balanced the budget.

2024 Donors & Supporters

2024 LEADHer Circle

The LEADHer Circle recognizes those who provide a solid foundation for our young LEADers as demonstrated through their levels of giving and loyalty. LEADHer Circle members include individuals who: make annual gifts totaling \$1,000 and above, and/or set up a monthly recurring gift, and/or have given in at least 4 of the past 5 years.

In 2021, the Circle was created in partnership with three amazing local leaders and friends of LEAD Girls: Natalie Broyhill, Mary Jamis, and Dr. Paula Wilkins. This Circle is based on the belief that every girl deserves the chance to thrive.

The members below are committed to the next generation's success. Every member of the LEADHer Circle has taken a stand for our young LEADers in a community-wide partnership. Through their philanthropic actions, they give girls an example of how we care for one another.

2024 LEADHer Circle

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in 2024 who helped us throughout the year!

For any questions or updates, please contact hello@leadgirls.org

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