



**FY23**

# SWB HUB REPORT

Colorado Edition





“

**SWB has been part of my family since I came to the USA. I really met great and amazing friends and until now I'm still friends with them, so I'm so glad that they found me and let me join this community.**

-Lovely, SWB Colorado Participant

# About Soccer Without Borders



## Our Mission

To use soccer as a vehicle for positive change, providing underserved youth with a toolkit to overcome obstacles to growth, inclusion, and personal success.

## Our Vision

A more inclusive and equitable world where all young people have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

## Our Culture

Our six mantras – Leave Your Shoes at the Door, We're Glad You're Here, Know the Thingy Thingy, You Play Best When You're Smiling, Get Them to the Field, and Celebrate the Pass More than the Goal – guide us to prioritize what matters most. [Learn more!](#)



## About SWB Colorado

With in-school, after-school, weekend, and summer programs, Soccer Without Borders Colorado supports newcomer youth (refugee, asylum seeking, and immigrant youth) to overcome barriers to participation in sport, to gain a sense of belonging, and to build social capital. SWB delivers year-round TEAM programs, intentionally-designed leagues, and summer camps across Weld County and the Denver Metro Area.

SWB actively participates in the Colorado sports-based youth development community, partnering to ensure that every youth has a safe environment to play, learn, and grow.



## What We Do

### Our Sites

All programs take a holistic approach to youth development through sport, combining soccer, education, and community-building led by trained, caring coaches. SWB Colorado current program sites include:

- Aurora West College Preparatory Academy
- Greeley Summer Camps
- McElwain Elementary (Denver)
- Thornton High School
- Aurora Summer Camps
- Heath Middle School (Greeley)
- Prairie Heights Middle School (Greeley)
- Thornton Summer Camps

### The Team

- Mosh Babiker
- Abigail Griffin
- Joe Kroymann
- Grace Oberschmidt
- Sydney Wilson
- Erin Crossley
- Matt Kaiser
- Shahir Nasim
- Sarah Stangl Keras
- Quinn Wagner

### Our Programs

- **TEAM Programs:** Combining soccer, education, and community-building, each TEAM program is uniquely tailored to meet the unique needs of the specific community.
- **Summer Programs:** Soccer activities, English language instruction, and academic support keep youth engaged with learning and connected to a community of teammates while out of school for the season.
- **Camps & Clinics:** Each camp is purposefully designed to support the 'whole person' through a range of activities that starts with soccer, but can also include art, dance, music, cultural celebrations, yoga, and more.
- **Leagues & Tournaments:** More than lifting a trophy, these programs are designed to strengthen community cohesion, teach social-emotional skills, and raise awareness and knowledge about specific social issues.

 **Colorado  
Public Radio**

#### In the Media

Following an influx of refugees from Ukraine and Afghanistan within the state, Colorado Public Radio featured SWB Colorado's work with refugee and immigrant youth in Greeley and Aurora. It can be read here.

[Read the Article](#)

# Letter from the SWB Colorado Hub Director

Dear friends,

I am incredibly grateful for your interest in Soccer Without Borders Colorado (SWB CO) during such a critical time, as we all stand witness to one of the most urgent social issues of the 21st century. In 2022, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 108.4 million people worldwide fled their homeland as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations, and climate-induced displacement – an increase of 19 million people compared to the end of 2021.

As the causes of forced displacement continue to grow exponentially year over year, so does the responsibility to support the refugee and asylum-seeking community arriving in Colorado. SWB CO is responding to this need, which is why I am so proud and humbled to accent the highlights of the organization's work from Fiscal Year 2023, shared in this report.

The program year of FY23 was defined by deepening community impact in the Denver Metro Area and in Weld County. SWB participants in both regions were provided with more game-play opportunities, community-building activities, and academic support due to an increase in service hours and new partnerships. Two Fall tournaments comprised of SWB teams from school-based programs in Greeley-Evans and Aurora is a shining example of the organization's growth in these areas, as the tournament was the first time SWB CO was able to bring its participants across the state together to foster an even greater sense of belonging and community. In addition to school-year programming, SWB CO served 373 newcomer youth by hosting 6 camps in June and July. SWB's summer camps provide youth with a positive, safe space to play soccer, make friends, and practice their English to prevent summer learning loss while school is out. All SWB's program activities are of no cost and all participants are provided with the necessary equipment to participate.

Additionally, the year was also defined by responding to an opportunity to expand SWB's services to the most vulnerable populations within the newcomer community. In FY23, SWB CO added a Program Coordinator position to launch new programming in Denver for refugees from Afghanistan who resettled in Colorado after August of 2021. In July 2023, SWB CO partnered with the Adams 12 School District and hosted the first SWB summer camp in Thornton for over 80 middle and high school aged participants, 95% of which were newcomers from Afghanistan.

The urgency for services welcoming newcomers to the state of Colorado could not be greater as forced displacement around the world continues to bring more people to our communities who are seeking asylum and belonging. SWB CO is proud to be a part of the effort locally. As always, thank you for your continued support which enables us to continue to provide and expand our services that provide newcomer youth with the opportunity to say – "I belong and I can contribute." See you on the field soon!

With gratitude,



Matt Kaiser  
SWB Colorado Director





## SWB Colorado by the Numbers

Along with all SWB hubs, SWB Colorado delivers holistic, youth-development programming throughout the year, and are designed to 'get them to the field'. We work to eliminate obstacles that too often keep newcomer youth from participating in the game they love: all of SWB's programs are free of charge, transportation is provided, and all of the necessary equipment is supplied. Learn more about the types of programs offered at SWB Colorado on [our website](#).

### Participant Numbers

(Fiscal Year 2023)



755

Registered  
Program Participants



438

Total Group  
Activities Led



29

Countries  
Represented



22

Languages  
Spoken



98%

Participant  
Retention Rate



Gender Identity:  
54% Male  
46% Female



Participants by Age:  
10% 0-8 years • 11% 9-11 years  
53% 12-14 years • 21% 15-18 years •  
5% 19+

# Our Outcomes

Our program model combines soccer practices and games with educational support and community-building activities focused on whole person youth development. Our programs are trauma-informed and designed to create a sense of belonging, build individual agency, and provide avenues for every youth to feel valued and contribute. Learn more about Our Methods here.

In Maslow's hierarchy of needs, safety and belonging are essential basic needs. This means that in order to optimize education outcomes and personal goals, we must first make sure that youth feel safe, welcomed, and experience belonging.

Sport is a powerful intervention to support healing from trauma and to build positive mental health. Not only is exercise beneficial to combating anxiety, but the relationships with peers and mentors allows youth to feel safe instead of dysregulated. In a safe and supportive environment, participants build a healthy identity and gain the social capital and skills they need to confidently take the next step in their lives.

## Youth Survey Results

(Fiscal Year 2023)

### English Language

"I feel comfortable using English at SWB."

100%

### Program Connectedness

"I feel like I am part of the SWB community"

94%

### Cross-Cultural Understanding

"I make new friends from other cultures"

96%

### Safe Space

"I feel comfortable being myself at SWB"

90%

### Safe Space

"I feel safe at SWB."

96%

# SWB Colorado Hub Highlights



## Growing in Impact Across SWB Colorado

Throughout FY23, SWB Colorado experienced significant growth in the number of sites and types of programming, enabling the staff-team to provide even more opportunities for young people to reach their greatest potential.

New sites were launched in the Denver Metro Area and Weld County, summer programming was expanded for elementary-aged youth, and the number of girls enrolled across all programs more than doubled. Additionally, SWB Colorado added a Program Coordinator position to launch new programming in Denver for Afghan refugees who resettled after August of 2021.

## Creating Belonging on CO Hiking Trails

In June, coaches and participants from our Greeley and Aurora sites united together to lead a girls' hiking trip to a lake near Nederland, a Colorado mountain town.

Not only was this an opportunity to experience the beauty of the Rocky Mountains, more importantly, it was an opportunity for our participants to step out of their comfort zones, challenge themselves, and grow together as friends and teammates.

Whether wearing hiking boots or soccer cleats, team-building trips like this are perfect examples of the whole-person approach to our work.

## Tournaments Build Bonds Across Sites

Leagues and tournaments at SWB are not about lifting trophies. Rather, they are designed to strengthen community cohesion, teach social-emotional skills, and raise awareness and knowledge about specific social issues.

In November, participants from SWB Colorado's Greeley and Aurora sites combined forces to create four teams that competed in two tournaments led by SWB, one in each location.

Each tournament day was marked by the feeling of accomplishment and bright smiles as participants built bonds with new teammates and friends from a neighboring city.





# Team Spotlights



## Matt Kaiser Named Director

In December, we were thrilled to welcome Matt Kaiser as the new Director of SWB Colorado. Thanks to years of experience, including multiple leadership roles at Big Brothers Big Sisters Colorado, Matt brings a sharp youth development lens, a strong perspective on building culture and programs, and meaningful experience with the foundation and government funding landscape in Colorado. [Learn more about Matt](#)



## Summer Youth Leaders

In FY23, SWB Colorado strengthened its summer camp programming by hiring 37 high school participants from school-year programming to work as camp counselors. Youth Leaders not only provided leadership on the field, but were also active role models on the sidelines as well. More than just a summer job, these students were able to gain valuable experience through a work-based learning opportunity.

\*Photo from the Greeley-Evans District 6 [Facebook page](#).



## Coach Foundations in Greeley

SWB Colorado's Greeley site was host to 20 SWB coaches hailing from all around the United States for Coach Foundations, a three-day intensive, hands-on training designed to set up our coaches for success in ensuring that every SWB participant has the opportunity to reach their full potential. For special inside look at Coach Foundations, the training approaches we take, and the lenses that guide us, have a look at [this article from our website!](#)



### Stay in the Know!

Get the latest news around SWB Colorado and all SWB hubs by visiting the "[Stories from the Field](#)" page of our website!



## Our Local Partners



AIMS Community College  
 Angus Held Foundation  
 ACTION Zone - Aurora Public Schools  
 Aurora City Youth Violence Prevention Program  
 Beacon Fund  
 Colorado Department of Human Services

Colorado Health Foundation  
 Colorado Refugee Services Program  
 Colorado Trust  
 First Congregational Church of Greeley  
 Greeley-Evans School District  
 Trust for Public Lands

United Way of Weld County  
 University of Denver  
 University of Northern Colorado  
 Weld Community Foundation  
 The Weld Trust

### Partner Testimonial

"You all are incredible, everything you do for the kids makes such a difference. I can see how it is positively impacting their behavior and how much they love it. The ones who are here every day can't get enough and there are new kids joining every day."

—Teacher from Greeley, CO

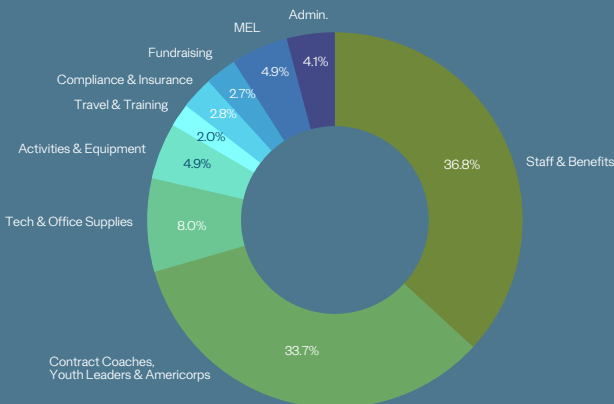


# Financials

SWB Colorado was founded in Greeley in 2011 and expanded to serve the Denver Metro Area in 2019, and is local Hub of Soccer Without Borders (EIN 20-3786129). SWB operates as a shared service organization with centralized administrative functions, sharing the costs of these typically higher-priced functions, optimizing collective learning, and creating an economy of scale that gets more of every dollar to the ground.

*These financials encompass Aug 1, 2021- Jul 31, 2022.  
Organizational financials are independently audited by Daniel Dennis & Co.*

## SWB Colorado Detail Expenses: \$495,485



### Top 5 SWB Colorado Revenue Sources

- State of Colorado- CLIMB
- State of Colorado- Tony Grampas Youth Services
- The Weld Trust
- The Colorado Trust
- Greeley-Evans School District

### SWB Organization Expenses: \$3,188,847

- Direct Program: \$2,682,003 (84.1%)
- Administrative: \$346,451 (10.9%)
- Fundraising: \$160,393 (5.0%)

# SWB Colorado Advisory Board

Our advisory board are local professionals who are passionate about the mission of SWB and work hard to bring their individual and collective expertise to support our SWB Colorado leadership team.

- Zach Kilimann
- Lisa Taylor
- Afshin Sarvestani
- Jasper Verlaan



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