



# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT





**Brazos Interfaith Immigration Network (BIIN) promotes the human dignity and well-being of all immigrants in our community by making it easier to access legal, educational, and social services.**

**BI** Brazos Interfaith  
**IN** Immigration Network

# FROM OUR CHAIR

Dear BIIN supporter,

For the last 13 years, BIIN has been a safe haven for immigrant families in the Brazos Valley. Our volunteers, contributors, and staff have worked endlessly to form relationships with the immigrant community and provide them with the resources that make them feel safe and welcome. We have continued to do this in 2023 even though it was a year of change; change in our administration, programs, and funding. We have come out the other end stronger and more passionate than ever. We began our year under our new Executive Director Vanessa Rivera. However, when her visa was not extended, she had to return precipitously to Columbia. We moved quickly and efficiently and hired Ana-Luisa Ortiz in July. Although she came into the Director's position midstream, she adapted quickly and adeptly. Under her strong leadership, and with the help of the grant writers, interns, and staff, BIIN continued to provide Information, Referral and Assistance services, ESL program, and citizenship classes. In addition, we received several grants and awards that allowed us to expand our programs.

In the Fall, when almost 150 persons registered for our ESL classes, we negotiated an extra classroom with our landlords with the help of The Philanthropy Grant and started a morning ESL program in addition to the evening classes. We were also able to buy new computers and much-needed classroom technology. The Texas Bar Foundation grant allowed us to completely revamp our IRA program by hiring a part-time attorney and legal assistants to help with the more challenging legal cases. In the Fall BIIN once again received several grants from the Wells Fargo Foundation that will allow us to continue our programs.

December saw an abrupt end to our partnership with Region 6, which ran the ESL program, as they opened their own new education center. Once again, with the help of our Director, volunteers, and interns, we developed an ESL curriculum, drew on volunteers as teachers, and our ESL classes continued in Spring without a hitch. We now have 108 students in our 4 ESL classes and 31 in our Citizenship classes.

With the ongoing government hostility towards immigrants, our goal has been to be the needed bridge between immigrants and the Brazos Valley community at large. Every day we work on strengthening our existing partnerships, building more relationships with churches and organizations, and being present as often as possible in the community, to better serve our immigrant neighbors and create a safer, stronger community. As a team, our staff and board members have attended legislature workshops to know how to prepare for the year ahead and the services that will need to be provided to our clients. We are committed to working together to change our world. We are humbled by the people who walked through our doors and everyone in the community who invests and believes in our mission. The bottom line is, that we would not survive without you, our community, and allies! Thank you for believing in BIIN and everything you do for our immigrant brothers and sisters.

Sincerely,





# MEET A STUDENT

Bernardino Nájera



Meet Bernardino Nájera. Berna, as those close to him have nicknamed him, is from San Luis Potosí, Mexico. Bernardino completed an agriculture degree at Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí. During his time at the university, he expanded his interest and knowledge in agriculture which later resulted in the awarding of an Agricultural Degree from Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí. With his degree, Bernardino worked in agriculture, focusing on exports and imports of vegetables between Mexico and the United States. Not only did he work hands-on in agricultural business, but also worked at the state level as President of the State Committee on Amaranth, which allowed him to utilize his agricultural knowledge at a greater level. Besides agriculture, during his free time, he loved to spend time with his family, finding whatever time he had to travel with them throughout Mexico.

During Bernardino's work visits to the United States, he established genuine work connections with the people he had met on his travels. He also began to notice that the country truly had viable business opportunities for him to succeed in if he wanted to. In 2021, Bernardino chose to settle in Bryan, Texas after his niece, Julisa Salazar, invited him to live in Bryan. He found that Bryan had a calm and friendly environment. Everyone that he met was very amicable, and one thing that set itself apart from other small towns in Texas was that it had a more culturally diverse group of residents than other places. Bryan has now been home to Bernardino for a couple of years and he enjoys everything Bryan has to offer, including BIIN.

When it comes to Bernardino and his time at BIIN, he has worked hard to utilize the resources to allow him to succeed beyond what he had already accomplished. In late 2022, Bernardino heard about BIIN from a coworker. He had heard of the current programs that BIIN had to offer such as the English and citizenship class, and saw it as a great opportunity to gain greater knowledge and skills that could help him establish himself even more within the country. In January of 2023, Bernardino enrolled in his first semester of ESL classes at BIIN.

When asked about the first thoughts he had as he walked into BIIN, he didn't know what to expect, but he was excited. He remembers the cheerful faces of interns and volunteers that greeted him. He recalls that every individual who formed part of BIIN could make him and other students heard, cared for, and treated as if BIIN had known them for years. From the moment of his placement exam, he can recall the abundance of care that BIIN took in making him feel welcome.

In the classroom, he had the opportunity to meet Farida, an ESL teacher who also left an impact on him. Farida went above and beyond to help her students. Bernardino shared a fond memory when she invited the students to her house for food associated with Hinduism and a classmate also offered to make tamales. This was a unique experience that he appreciated.

Bernardino took part in the citizenship classes offered at BIIN as well. Not only did he join the classes, but he invited others whom he knew to also join him in the classes. On October 26, 2023, Bernardino and his son both received their citizenship after countless months of hard work and preparation. After this, Bernardino has had the opportunity to be a teacher's aide in class and help other students prepare for the citizenship exam.

Not only did Bernardino utilize our ESL and citizenship classes but also ended up utilizing our IRA services. In the end, after finding help with our services, Bernardino has been able to reach and now pursue new opportunities. Bernardino received a promotion at his current job allowing him to go from a line worker to a quality control inspector. Berna shared that not only did he receive a promotion, but the coworkers he invited to BIIN also received promotions after attending our classes.

What he is most excited about now though, is his ability to venture into business projects he has long dreamed of. He created and registered a business idea that he hopes will soon take off, and has taken the proper marketing classes at a college recommended to him by a BIIN volunteer to gain some business knowledge. His dream is to take this business and create a full-fledged business that has a presence within Mexico and the United States. Then, one day, hopefully, this business will go on to thrive under his family's administration.

In the end, all Bernardino has left to say is thank you. He is grateful for the help he received from everyone at BIIN. He is thankful for every person at BIIN such as Farida, Jeremy, Chanwoo, Viviana, Tania, Azuzena, Ana-Luisa Ortiz, and the dozens of other volunteers who aided him while at BIIN. Every individual always had a smile on their face, always had important insight, and always had something to share. All this added up to advice that helped him get to where he is now. As he stated in his own words, BIIN "made me feel like the most important person in Texas." As for anyone in doubt of what BIIN can do for them, Bernardino shares this "For those in doubt, if you want a place to grow, there is a place in Bryan and its name is BIIN." We hope that BIIN can continue to be an important resource for others, just as it was for Bernardino.

# BY THE NUMBERS

One year of Brazos Interfaith's community impact.

## 449

**Immigrants** in our community served.

## 74

**Generous people** and organizations made a financial contribution.

## 198

**Enthusiastic volunteers** helped immigrants learn English, become citizens, and resolve their problems.

# \$31,522

In individual donations.

# \$129,115

In total grant funding.

# \$8,435

In partner and board contributions.

# \$169,072

BIIN's 2023 total income.

# 143 STUDENTS

Attended our English classes.

# 39 STUDENTS

Attended our citizenship classes.

# 267 PEOPLE

Sought BIIN's help in accessing local resources.

# OUR VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to the many volunteers who supported BIIN in our English classes, citizenship classes, IRA program, Guatemalan Consular visit and administration.

In 2023, 198 volunteers donated 3,952 hours of service. This is valued at \$125,674 in paid labor. The following individuals volunteered over 50 hours in 2023.

Alyssa Ramos Mora  
Ana Vega  
Angela Rios  
Azuzena Mondragon  
Chanwoo Kim  
Charisse Hausman  
Christian Gonzalez  
Christopher Bui  
Dipesh Balakrishnan  
Elizabeth Alvarez  
Emma Smith  
Freddy Nieto Rodriguez

Gabriela Arevalo  
Grace Graham  
Lauren O'Rourke  
Madison Clements  
Melanie Noyola  
Minha Shabbir  
Nan Reichel  
Nena Walton  
Peyton Clark  
Tania Barrios  
Tomas Meyer  
Tony Caraballo





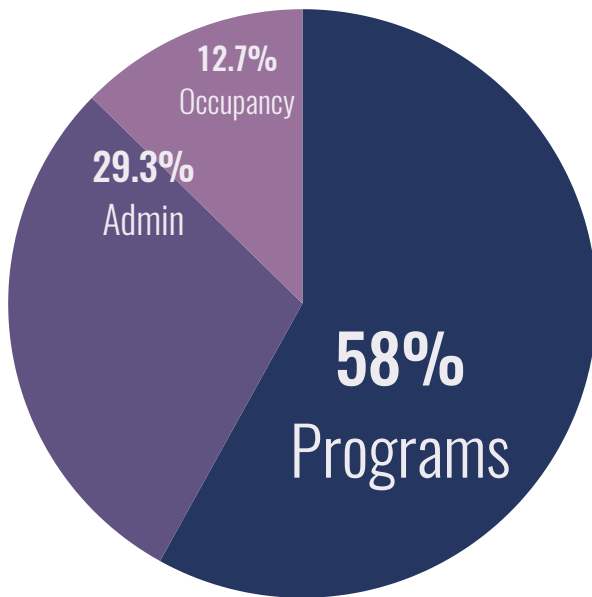




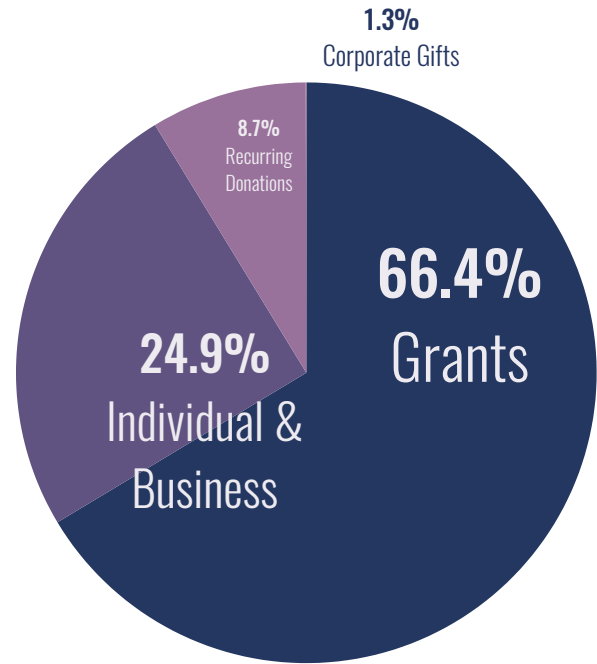
ERICORPS  
GETTING THINGS DONE

Austin  
ERICORPS  
GETTING THINGS DONE

# FINANCIALS



**Actual Expenses**



**Actual Income**

## Statement of Financial Positions as of December 31, 2023

### Assets

Checking	\$27,736.83
Savings	\$161,628.33
Furniture & Fixtures	\$4,149.98
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$193,515.14</b>

### Liabilities and Net Assets

Accounts payable	\$0.00
Payroll liability	\$538.39
Refund	\$0
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$538.39</b>
<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>\$88,093.65</b>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b>\$193,515.14</b>

## Statement of Activities for January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023

### Revenues

Interest	\$1,630.11
Corporate Gifts	\$45.79
Grants	\$129,115.00
Individual & Businesses	\$20,897.41
Recurring Donations	\$14,296.00
Board Contributions	\$4,718.29
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$170,702.60</b>

### Expenses

Programs	\$47,946.65
Management & General	\$24,182.51
Occupancy	\$10,479.79
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$82,608.95</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$87,554.05</b>



# DONATIONS

Donors are the fuel of BIIN's work. The generous monetary gifts we receive each year are utilized to support the ongoing costs of our programs, including English classes, citizenship classes, and our Information, Referral, and Assistance program. We're proud to say that 78.7% of every donation goes directly towards our community building efforts, ensuring your contribution makes an immediate impact.

## **\$5,000 +**

The Philanthropy Lab

Texas Bar Foundation

Nina Astin Winkler Charitable Trust

TAMU - Mays Business School

The George and Barbara Bush Foundation - Mays Business School

Peter Witt and Joyce Nies

## **\$1,000 - \$3,000**

Nan Reichel

St. Thomas Episcopal Church

Unitarian Universalist Church of the Brazos Valley

Michele Esparza

Cady Engler

Kyle Gammenthaler

Kimiye Cabrera

Lewis Ford

## \$500 - \$1,000

Mary Campbell and Jeremy Brett  
Susan Dennis  
Aaron and Christy Becker  
David Bearce  
Rosemarie Swanson  
United Way of the Brazos Valley  
Angela Rios  
Jim and Sandra Petty  
Richard Woodward  
Friends Congregational Church  
Mark Westenhover  
Tony Caraballo  
Kenneth Mcintosh  
Alexander United Methodist Church  
Robert A Richers

## \$250 - \$500

Pat Goldsmith  
Janet Morford  
Fred and Sue Ellen Davis  
Maribel Ramirez Hinojosa  
Bethany Harper  
Roger Smith III

## \$100 - \$250

Miriam Aune  
Nancy Plankey-Videla  
Nathan and Francois Bracher  
Raul Dominguez Cruz  
Maria Perez-Patron  
Sarah Rutherford  
Linda Fitzwater

Cecelia Hawkins  
Rita Portales  
Sean Cargo  
Mary Lenn Dixon  
Robert Hobbs  
William Mcintosh  
Mark Troy

Virginia Fajt  
Maria San Andres  
Milady Blaha

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair - Nancy Plankey-Videla

Vice Chair- Mary Campbell

Treasurer- Nan Reichel

Secretary - Susan Dennis

Immigrant Liaison -

María Luisa Martínez and Tere Vega

Judith Briseño

Antonio Caraballo

Michele Esparza

Doris Machinski

Robert Mackin

Angela Ríos

Freddy Nieto

Daniel Salazar

Roberto Ledezma

Yovanka Gonzalez and Sidney Sanchez





3 Brazos  
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[brazosimmigration.com](http://brazosimmigration.com)



2500 South College Ave  
Bryan, TX 77801