

ANNUAL REPORT



2Y0G2B1

LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friend,

Family is at the heart of everything we do at **You Gotta Believe**. It centers us in uncertain times and guides us in every decision we make. As we grow and expand the organization, we remain firmly rooted in our unwavering belief that a permanent, loving family is the solution for every youth waiting in the foster care system.

2021 was a transitional year at YGB, as we continued to weather the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic while expanding programs. **Here are just a few of the many accomplishments you helped make possible:**

- We achieved a 69% increase in the number of youth we connected to permanent loving families.
- We significantly ramped up parent training classes, meaning more parents are ready to be matched to youth in need of families!
- We launched a free-of-charge, Adoption Competent Therapy program available to all YGB families, providing mental health services for negotiating challenges unique to adoptive families.

This report highlights more of our 2021 work toward the day when no young person leaves foster care without a family's unconditional lifetime commitment. While our mission is driven here in New York, our work inspires from coast to coast. That's evident in the diversity of our supporters who connect with our mission from all over the country.

For example, in March, our friends at Discovery Inc. established the **Willie Garson Fund** at YGB to honor the legacy of our late Advisory Board member and fellow permanency advocate. Through this fund, we are launching our new **Garson Advocate Program** and educating folks around the world on the importance of permanency for youth in foster care.

I invite you to learn more about our work, our families, and the truly transformative impact we make together. We are bolstered by your support and cannot do what we do without you. Thank you for being part of our YGB Family!

Jennifer Pinder

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Pinder". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly legible.

Executive Director
You Gotta Believe

ABOUT YGB

You Gotta Believe (YGB) is focused exclusively on finding permanent families for kids in foster care, before they age out of the system alone. For more than 25 years, we have worked with the toughest-to-place kids (including those in group homes and residential treatment facilities) to find them permanent loving families. These families may be part of a child's family of origin, someone they know (such as a coach or neighbor), or a match from our parent training and certification program courses. We welcome all capable families and individuals with interest to provide a permanent and loving home. **The bottom line is that all kids must be connected to someone who is prepared to make an unconditional lifetime commitment.**



Our goal is for each youth to experience **love, hope**, and a **sense of belonging**. Connection to a permanent family enables young people to flourish. **YOU CAN COUNT ON YGB TO:**

RECRUIT

Our approach to finding parents prioritizes closely connected relatives, kin, and community members

TRAIN

We prepare families with a permanent mindset and certify them to parent kids who have trauma histories

PREPARE

We help youth and young adults address trauma and fear from years of abuse, neglect, rejection, and loneliness

SUPPORT

Our crucial, ongoing, pre- and post-placement support services ensure enduring families

2021 IMPACT

The YGB team guides both youth and prospective families through the matching process. Then, YGB provides post-placement support to newly formed families for as long as needed to ensure successful outcomes.

15

Parents Licensed

58

Parents Reached through
Support Groups, Parent
Cafes, or Social Hours

67

Completed MAPP
Trainings

41

Families Supported
Post-Licensing

21

Youth Connected

19

Game Nights
(information on pg.11)

50

Youth Served

13

Moral/Legal Adoptions
(information on pg.9)

21

Quarantine & Chill
(information on pg.11)

YOUTH PROGRESS ON THE PATH TO PERMANENCY



22 YOUTH PLACED



16 YOUTH PRE-PLACEMENT



8 YOUTH WITHDRAWN
(temporarily or permanently)



4 YOUTH RETURNED

YOUTH STATUS | END OF YEAR 2021

The YGB team served **50 youth** in 2021. At year's end, as shown to the left, **44 percent** (22 youth) were placed in families and receiving post-placement supports; **32 percent** (16 youth) were in various stages of the pre-placement search process.

16 percent (8 youth) were withdrawn from YGB services due to various reasons including extreme mental health issues, being unreachable, or refusing services.

8 percent (4 youth) returned to the original municipality's care. The percentage of disruptions of YGB-formed families is remarkably low, given that more than 90 percent of foster children nationally experience at least one placement disruption while in care.

“

This partnership specifically addresses the Families First Act requirement to limit time kids spend in residential care facilities. You Gotta Believe's expertise in working with older youth is a terrific complement to our efforts to connect every child in our care to a loving family.

– Jeremy Kohomban,
President and CEO of
The Children's Village

A SMART CONNECTION



KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE AND FAMILIES TOGETHER

In 2019, YGB entered into a partnership with The Children's Village (CV). This like-minded organization reaches 17,000 children, teens, and families each year through a variety of innovative, community-based, and residential programs. Our partnership focuses on providing the most vulnerable youth in CV's residential facility with intensive family recruitment and long-term support services. In conjunction with CV, we aim to provide the best possible outcomes and ensure that all children are loved and belong to a family.

During 2021, YGB served 24 youth from The Children's Village. Six youth (including three reunifications with family members) achieved moral/legal adoptions. Twelve youth were at various stages on the road to permanency, including five youth with whom matches with families had been made (one a reunification). The remaining six were withdrawn from the active rolls during the year, as they did not continue work with YGB to find a match.

SUPPORTING OLDER KIDS

46%

Ages 5 - 13

36%

Ages 14 - 17

18%

Ages 18 & Older

Of the 22 youth placed with families and receiving post-placement support services in 2021, ten youth (46 percent) were ages 13 or under, our youngest kids were part of sibling groups; eight youth (36 percent) were between 14 and 17; four youth (18 percent) were 18 years or older.



“

When we first set out on our journey to expand our family, it took a lot of research and work to understand the community we were joining and figure out how to move the plan forward -- and through that early phase, so many people we connected with pointed us to YGB. As soon as we made contact and ever since then, YGB has been a supportive guide, and we're really proud that our growing family is connected to it.

– New YGB Parent



Identify as Female



Identify as Male

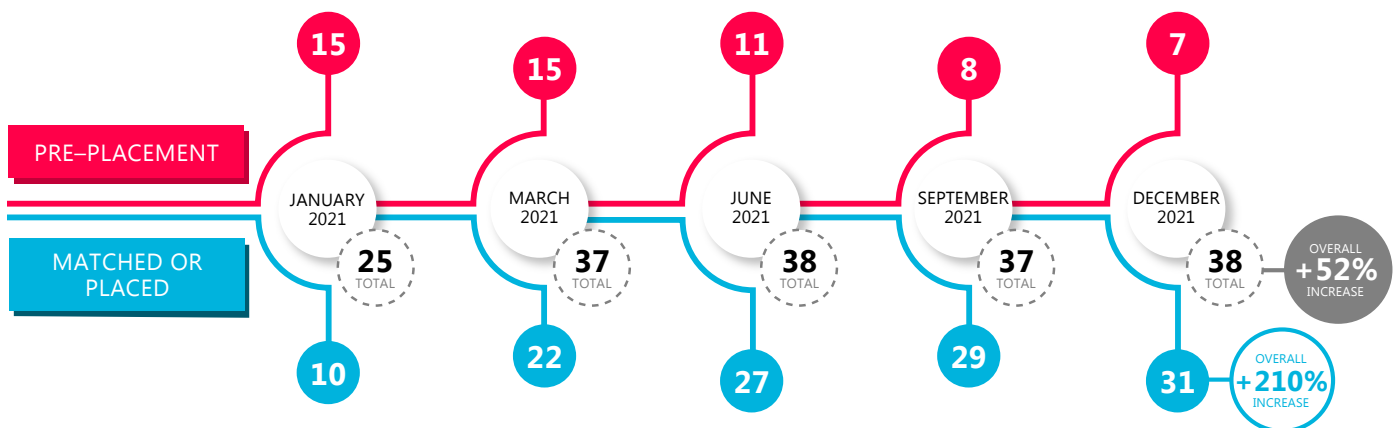
INCREASE IN YOUTH SERVED BY YGB

As shown below, at the start of 2021, 25 youth were being supported by YGB. These included ten currently matched with a YGB family and 15 in pre-placement (either intensive search or exploring resources).

By year end, 38 youth were active, including 22 placed and 9 matched with a family, and 7 in pre-placement.

This represents:

52 percent increase in youth supported
210 percent increase in youth matched or placed



“

We were blown away by YGB MAPP classes! We find ourselves talking with friends and coworkers about these classes all the time. The most valuable thing was the opportunity to learn about the experience of others on the same path and to become part of a community – one that will be there for us even after these early days start to settle down and we can jump into participating more actively!

– New YGB Parent

YGB HOUSEHOLDS SEEKING ADOPTION

50

Pre-License Training
5+ MAPP Classes

17

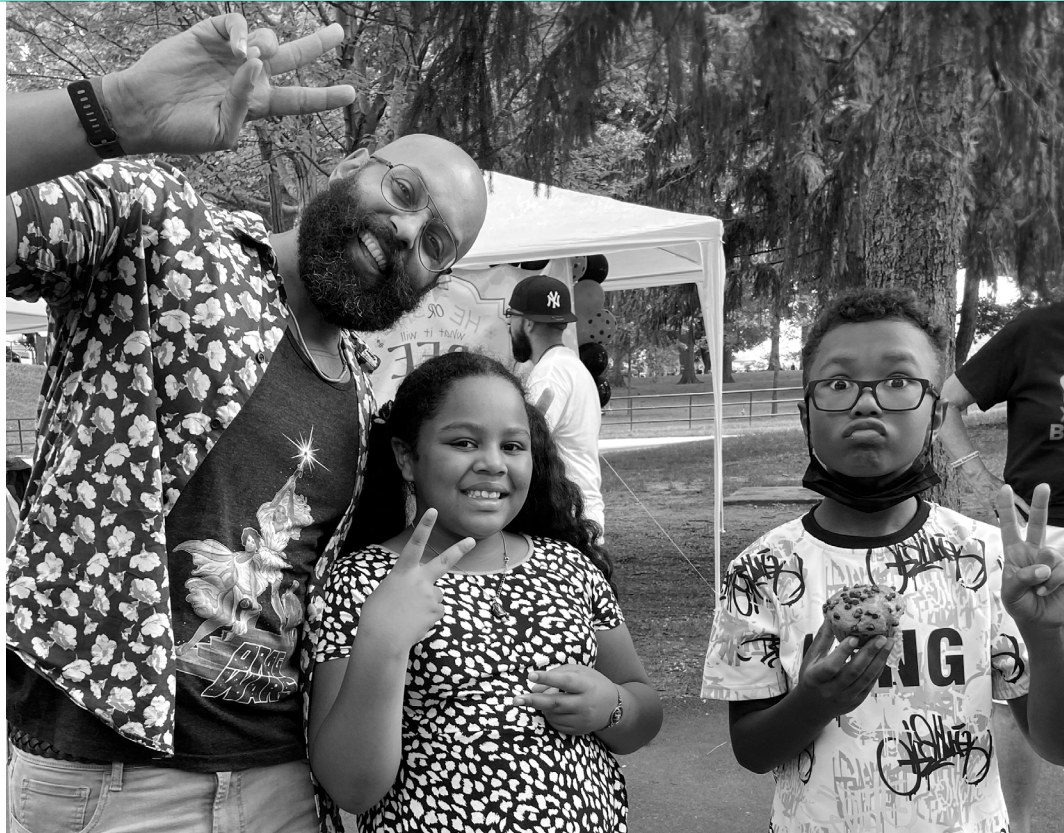
Licensed/
Pre-Placement

13

Placed/
Post-Placement



80 HOUSEHOLDS
TOTAL



ACTIVE HOUSEHOLD STATUS

A total of 87 households engaged with YGB during 2021. At year-end, 80 were active. Thirteen households (15 percent) had youth currently placed with them. Seventeen households (20 percent) had been licensed by YGB and were in various stages of the search process. Fifty households (57 percent) were pre-licensed, of whom 32 households had completed all ten MAPP classes during the year.

Three households (3 percent) chose to stop the search process. Placements of youth with four separate households (5 percent) were each disrupted during the year. Despite careful vetting, matching, and support services, there are times when a match, unfortunately, disrupts. Following a move-in, some parents find themselves unable to meet the extensive needs of their child despite their best intentions and hopes. When this happens, YGB staff work with parents to make this tough decision and then communicate that decision to the child. Every effort is made to move the child to another YGB home and make sure the child can maintain a consistent relationship with their YGB worker.

YGB HOUSEHOLDS SEEKING ADOPTION

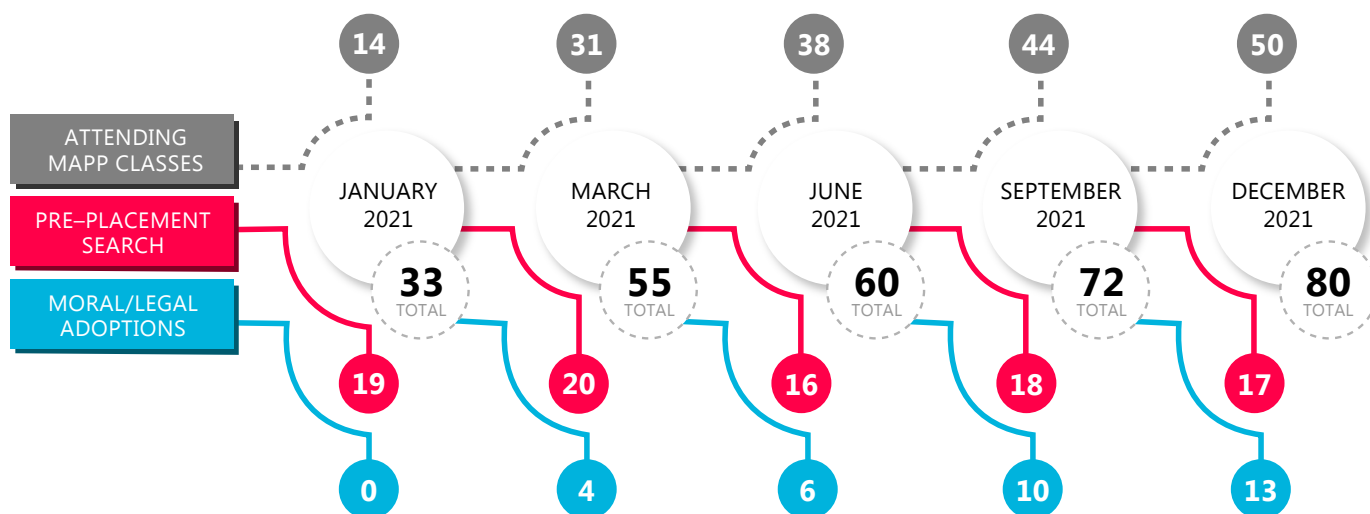
(continued)

As shown below, at the start of 2021, 33 households were being supported by YGB. These included 19 who were licensed by YGB and seeking a youth match and 14 attending and having completed at least five MAPP classes.

By year end, 80 households were active, including **13 households where adoptions had occurred** and who were currently receiving post-placement support. In addition, 17 households were seeking a youth match and 50 households were attending and had completed at least five MAPP classes.

This represents:

58 percent increase in households served post-licensing
142 percent increase in total households supported



EXCITING EVENT

On May 29th, 2021, You Gotta Believe partnered with the virtual show Stars in the House for a special Foster Care Awareness Month event. Actors Soleil Moon Frye and Cherie Johnson joined to talk about Punky Brewster, one of the first television shows to highlight adoption from foster care.



GROWING COMMUNITY OF YGB SUPPORTERS

THE WILLIE GARSON FUND



In 2021 we were heartbroken by the passing of our friend and Board of Advisors member, Willie Garson. He was a fierce and constant advocate for finding parents for every child in foster care. We were privileged to have him on our Board of Advisors.

To honor his legacy, Discovery Inc. established The Willie Garson Fund at You Gotta Believe to support our work of connecting every child in foster care to a loving family that commits to them for life. We thank everyone who joins us in honoring Willie's dream and legacy.

In just a few months, people worldwide raised more than \$500,00 to support YGB families like SJ and Mikey, who finalized their adoption in November 2021.

Through the Willie Garson Fund, You Gotta Believe will be launching the Garson Advocate Program in 2022, an 8-week intensive advocate training program for former foster youth who wish to become leaders and changemakers in child welfare.



NYC MARATHON

On Sunday, November 7, 2021, "Team You Gotta Believe" ran the NYC Marathon to support foster youth who need families. **The team raised \$32,925.**

One runner ran because she and her wife met their son through YGB. A family member has now joined YGB's staff.

“

I ran for YGB because I love their mission. Every child, and everyone, needs family. We all need to know that there is someone out there who has our back, who will put us first before all else. Family is powerful. While my family and I are still early in our adoption journey, I felt that running the New York City Marathon was a more immediate way that I could help YGB to help kids in foster care find family.

– YGB Parent & Donor

TRANSFORMING CHALLENGES INTO OPPORTUNITIES



GAME NIGHTS

YGB Advocates Michelle Lyles, Desiree Moore, and Catreena Strait, with Recruiter Aileen Rosario hosted 19 Game Nights, as a safe, virtual space during the pandemic for YGB staff, families, and youth to have fun and build relationships among others sharing the permanency adoption journey.

QUARANTINE & CHILL

On 21 Friday evenings, YGB Advocates hosted a live Instagram show called Quarantine and Chill. Youth, current and prospective parents, caseworkers and others appreciated learning from the personal experiences of inspiring foster care survivors interviewed by YGB peer hosts.

“

It has been a roller-coaster ride, but we are so grateful that we found our son and daughter through You Gotta Believe. They brought joy to our lives, and we will be there for them no matter what.

Thank you, YGB!

– YGB Parent & Donor

MORE PRAISE FOR YGB



“

I am happy to have Greg and James as my dads, and I am happy I can still have my family/relationship with my mom.

– Eric, YGB youth

“

“We support You Gotta Believe because it helps find permanent families for older kids in foster care. We met our son and daughter through You Gotta Believe and we are forever thankful for the support and care we received throughout our journey. We know firsthand that You Gotta Believe makes a huge difference in children’s lives, and we applaud its dedication and work to bring families to those children in need.

–YGB Parent & Monthly Donor

“

Our family had the pleasure of attending classes with You Gotta Believe. The most valuable thing we learned in the classes was to trust the process and never give up. You Gotta Believe provides everlasting support that is unmatched.

– YGB Parent

“

“When we became part of the YGB family, we could not believe the amount of support we continuously received. There is no problem too big or too small. Everything we’ve learned in our MAPP classes was instrumental in making our family blend. We have trusted the process.

– YGB Parent

“

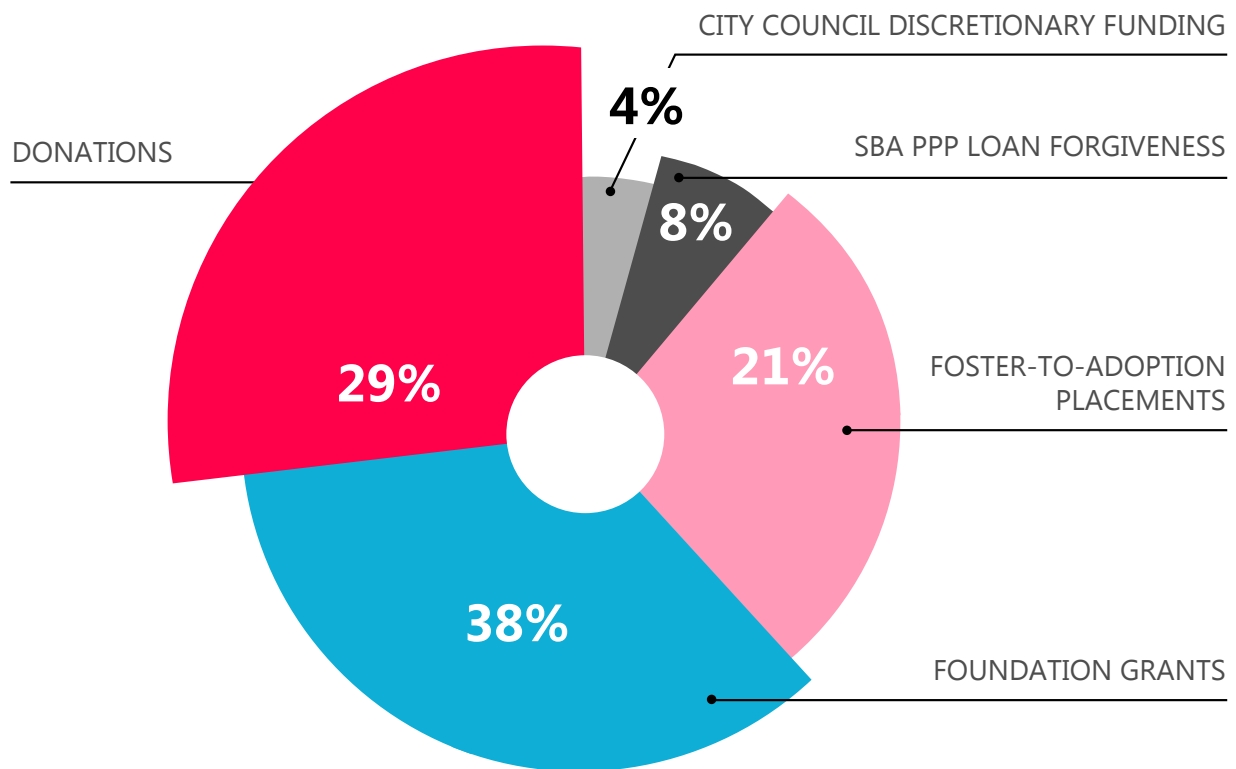
We attend the events of YGB. The most impactful are the parent support group meetings. We meet with parents that have or are going through the same experiences that we are going through. It’s a great way of having support and advice with no judgment. We look forward to being able to vent, then laugh at what we thought we could not get through throughout the week.

– YGB Parent



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

2020 – 2021 REVENUE (per audited financial statements)



“

I give to YGB because Family is a safety net, a foundation,
and a real solution.

– Maria L, Monthly Donor

YGB STAFF



Jennifer Pinder
Executive Director



Mary Keane
Senior Advisor, Family
Permanency Services



Donald Antonetty
Director IT/QA



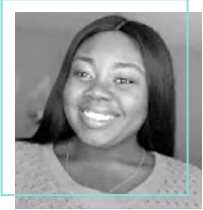
Stephanie Arcella
Grantwriter Consultant



Yaridania Betancourt
Nobody Ages Out
Coordinator



Emily Collins
Director of
Family Support



**Mariama
Toe-Freeland**
Recruiter



Erinn Hartley
Social Media Manager
& Designer



Nicole Hayward
LI Training
Coordinator



Rachel Hood
Director of Home
Finding and Placement
Services



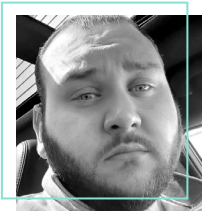
Martha Hornthal
Permanency
Specialist



Kaeyla Hyatt
Permanency
Specialist



Anni Keane
Director of
Nobody Ages Out/
Overseer of Recruiters



Richard Lefebvre
Senior Advocate



Jennifer Lucas
Finance Director



Amanda Lydon
Strategic Communications
Consultant



Michelle Lyles
Youth Advocate



Andrea Marinelli
Permanency Specialist



Desiree Moore
Executive Assistant



Nyamekye Reynolds
Staff



Monica Rolston
Manager Office
Operations



Aileen Rosario
Senior Recruiter/
Trainer & Coordinator of
Nobody Ages Out Activities



Pamela Rothfeld
Permanency
Specialist



Antoinette Ruckers
Honorary Advocate/
Guest Host for
Virtual Programs



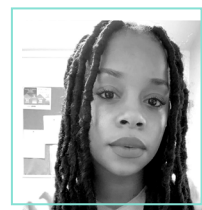
Bianca Bennett-Scott
Nobody Ages Out
Program Manager



Paul Snellgrove
Senior Director
Homefinding
(*retired in July 2021)



Catreena Strait
Advocate



Anayshia Taylor
Advocate



Ricardo Vasquez
Advocate at large



Meghan Wood
Associate Director
of Major Gifts

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We greatly appreciate the heart, dedication, and skills of our 2021 Board members.



Gretchen Beidl

Board President
Sales & Marketing Executive/
Entrepreneur
Adoptive Parent



Amber Williams

Board Vice President
Chief Operating Officer, Latitude
Adoptee



Sabrina Glaser

Board Secretary
Attorney, Ropes & Gray



Daniel Taitz

Board Treasurer
Chief Operating Officer,
Penthera Partners



Juan Battle

Presidential Professor of Sociology,
Urban Education, Public Health, &
Social Welfare at CUNY
Adoptive Parent



Paul Brown

Consult in the Arts
Adoptive Parent



Paul Carlesimo

Head of Equities &
Central Funding Compliance,
RBC Capital Markets



Nicole Green

Founder & CEO,
Small Great Deeds Attorney



Alice Leopold

Wealth Manager,
Janney Montgomery Scott, LLC



Maria Llerena

Managing Director,
Neuberger Berman



Brigitte McCray

Media Consultant



Robin Rosenbluth

Consultant, Advancing Fundraising:
Coaching & Consulting
Foster Care Alum



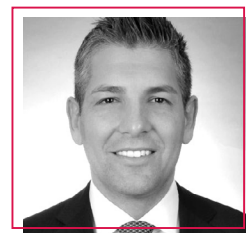
Jonathan Stark

Senior Legal Operations
Program Manager, Amazon
Foster Care Alum



Joelle Keane Tramel

Global Sales Manager, Google
Adoptive Parent



John Weitzer

Managing Director,
Americas and Head of
Regulatory Compliance, HSBC

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR WONDERFUL DONORS

\$100,000+

Discovery Inc.
The Pinkerton Foundation
Karen and Tom Rutledge

\$50,000-\$99,999

Anonymous (2)
The Barbara Bradley Baekgaard Family Foundation
Charter Communications
Dolan Family Foundation
Ira W. DeCamp Foundation
Gretchen Beidl and Michael Willner
Yeniley and Christopher Winfrey

\$25,000-\$49,999

Amazon
Kathy Lee and John Bickham
James Brooks
Kent Family Foundation
The Neuberger Berman Foundation
RBC Foundation USA
Pam and David Zaslav Family Foundation

\$10,000-\$24,999

A&E Networks
Anonymous (2)
The Barker Welfare Foundation
Beacon Group Giving
Berlanti Family Foundation
Bill and Ann Bresnan Foundation, Inc.
Mary Bresnan

David Alexander Scott Memorial Fund
Margaret and Richard DiGeronimo
Flackett-Levin Charitable Fund
Eve Goldman
HSBC Bank USA
Kenworthy-Swift Foundation
Kickstarter
Maryfrances Matrick
Rogers Family Charitable Foundation
The Simmons Family Foundation
Samira and Jeffrey Sine

\$5,000-\$9,999

Todd Aaron
AMC Networks
Joy and Leonard Baxt
James Blackley
Anne Connelly
Romy and David Coquillet
Ingrid and David Ellen
Sabrina Glaser
Lauren Goodstein and Eric Grossman
Google
Jill Greenthal
James Hoffman and Doron Sabag
Kristen and Kevin Leddy
Maria and Winder Llerena
Mediacom Communications Corporation
Claudia Nagele
Joan and David O'Hayre
Thomas Pinder
Stifel Nicolaus
Sylvia F. Moss Charitable Fund
Tackel-Raven Family Foundation Trust
ViacomCBS

Ellen and David Watson
Amina and John Weitzer

\$2,500 to \$4,999

Anonymous
William Aseltyn and Jeff Stryker
Elizabeth Colt
Ingrid Dyott
Zach Galifianakis
Thomas Kail
Marjorie Kartinger
Anthea Kelsick and Jamal Epps
Pavel Kudaev
Cherie Johnson
Robert Marcus
Susan McGuirk and Matthew Blank
Richard Plepler
Elisa and Alex Taub
Barry Rosenblum
Stacy Sher
Michael Silber
Gemma Toner and Howard Szarfarc
Amber Williams
Youth INC

\$1,000-\$2,499

Judi Allen
Anonymous (7)
Elizabeth Armstrong
Juan Battle
Kristine Belson
Ashleigh and Royce Bergman
Gale Brewer
Jill Campbell
Nancy Carell
Cindy Chupack
Sean Currie
Suzanne Dyer
Jeanne and Dan Fauci
Nancy N. Foote
Greenbush Gift Fund





Andrew Goldberg
 Janelle and Dale Hanley
 Jennifer and David Holdreith
 Rand Insurance
 Madelyn Jennings
 Emily Kaplan
 Jake Kasdan
 Patricia Kehoe
 Wendy Kirk
 Dana Koenigsberg
 Richard Lampen
 Kim and Stew Leonard
 Shelley and Andrew Leonard
 Denise and David Long
 Constance McDonald
 Maile Meloy
 Gayle Mills
 Xavier Naville
 Michael O'Malley
 Racquel and Walter Oden
 Tami and Warren Planitzer
 Mary Pong
 Lisa Rosenblum
 Robin Rosenbluth
 Roberty Rovner
 Ajay Sahgal
 Hollis Rafkin-Sax
 Kristin Siegesmund
 Barbara Stevens
 Penny and Daniel Taitz
 Eleni Thomas
 Joelle Tramel
 Konrad Trewick
 Michael Uetz
 Bonnie Vitti
 Pamela Weekes
 Christine Weston

Maya Forbes
 Ellen Freeman
 Sugerman Family Fund
 Anne Globe
 Libby Goldstein
 Cambria and Howard Gordon
 Lysa Heslov
 Juliette Hohnen
 Junie Johndon
 Jimmy Kim
 Justin Kirk
 Carol and John Koenigsberg
 Scott Kraft
 Lisa Krapf
 Robert LaZebnik
 Marcus Lien
 Hanna Lynch
 Peter Mackenzie
 Matthew Paszamant
 Karen Pittment
 Bonite Lin and Jesse Price
 Alexandra Pulver
 Philip Rackin
 Evelyn Rodstein
 Mark Ruffalo
 Maria Russo
 Chris Schmidt
 Ellen A. Shaw
 Lindsay Sloane
 Mary Kate Stimmmler
 Sugerman Family Fund
 Jane Susong
 Angela Tarantino
 Comfort Thomas
 Chris Wagner
 Ayelet Waldman
 Dina Waters
 White Collar Closure
 Jackie Wolf
 Carol Yost

\$500-\$999

Anonymous (8)
 Justine Arteta
 Maoni Baigell
 Abby Bilanin
 Matt Bomer
 Ann Carlsen
 Emma Cookson
 Emily Davidson
 John Van Dine
 Timothy Dinneen
 Lauren Donner
 Marle Feinberg
 Laurie Fewell
 Kate Recanati-Fitta



TOGETHER WE CAN

ANALYSIS & REPORT BY



LEARN MORE ABOUT YGB

yougottabelieve.org

We invite you to get involved!

Join our mailing list

Attend an orientation

Donate

