

Impact Report 2025

A Message from our Executive Director

Dear First Friends Supporter,

Recently, I've been thinking a lot about borders—where they exist, and how they work to shape our lives. In a recent conversation after a film screening, something stayed with me. Not the idea that the border is everywhere—unfortunately, that reality is not new—but what it demands of us. If the border is everywhere, then so must our solidarity. At First Friends, that solidarity lives in the volunteers, advocates, supporters, and donors who refuse to let the border define the limits of care. They are the people who show up anyway.

I've seen that truth come to life this past year. I've seen it outside Delaney Hall, where volunteers continue to accompany people through detention with consistency and compassion. I've seen it in the new faces joining this work, in the communities organizing fundraisers, in the steady expansion of what it means to show up for one another.

I felt it personally during a recent accompaniment, when I spent time with someone from my parents' home country. After his appointment, we sat together over café con leche and talked about his life. There was an ease to that moment, a comfort. Hearing his accent in Spanish felt like home to me. In the middle of everything this system tries to take away, that kind of connection still exists. It reminded me why this work matters.

This past year has brought more open hostility, more fear, and more chaos for the people we walk alongside. But it has also made something else undeniable: people are stepping up in bigger ways. They are learning, organizing, giving, and showing up with consistency and care. Our community is growing—not just in numbers, but in commitment and power.

If the systems we're up against are expanding, then our response must expand too. Through First Friends, that response looks like people choosing to stand alongside their neighbors, to defend dignity in the face of cruelty, and to build something different together.

We cannot do that without you. Your support sustains this work, strengthens this community, and ensures that no one has to navigate this system alone. Please make a gift today using the enclosed envelope or by visiting firstfriendsnjny.org.

This is how we meet this moment.

In solidarity,
Katy Sastre
Executive Director



Katy speaking at Nov 8th rally in Jersey City, NJ.
Photo credit: New Jersey Alliance for Immigrant Justice

Our Mission and Vision

Our Mission

First Friends of New Jersey and New York upholds the inherent dignity and humanity of immigrants who are impacted by the immigration enforcement system. We provide compassion and hope through connections with volunteers dedicated to helping them survive detention, gain freedom, and rebuild their lives.

Our Vision

A society where immigrants are welcomed, valued, and empowered.

First Friends' 2025 Programmatic Impact



425 deposits into detained Friends' commissary accounts, enabling them to supplement their diets and purchase personal hygiene supplies and stationery



82 detained individuals received phone funding, allowing them to stay connected to loved ones



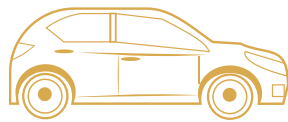
5 families were provided rental assistance, helping alleviate immediate financial pressures



25 immigration bonds paid or contributed to for detained Friends, freeing them from detention to fight their cases from home



32 detained Friends paired with volunteers across our pen-pal and virtual visitation programs



25 individuals were picked up and transported home from local detention centers by First Friends volunteers



36 individuals were accompanied to their immigration court hearing or ICE check-in



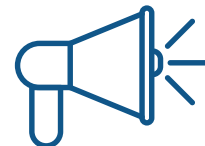
62 families were provided gift card assistance, providing immediate support for groceries and other essentials



236+ immigrants and their families received referrals to other services through our dedicated hotline



8 support letters provided for Friends to show community support during immigration proceedings



33 advocacy and community engagement events to amplify our Friends' voices and advance immigrant justice

Thank you to our volunteers!



Volunteers outside Delaney Hall, July 2025



First Friends volunteers at Spring Fest, April 2025



Volunteers at Friendsgiving & commissary party, November 2025



Volunteers outside Delaney Hall on Mother's Day, May 2025



Volunteers and board members at Friendsgiving, November 2025

Volunteers outside Delaney Hall, June 2025



Photographer and First Friends Volunteer Justin



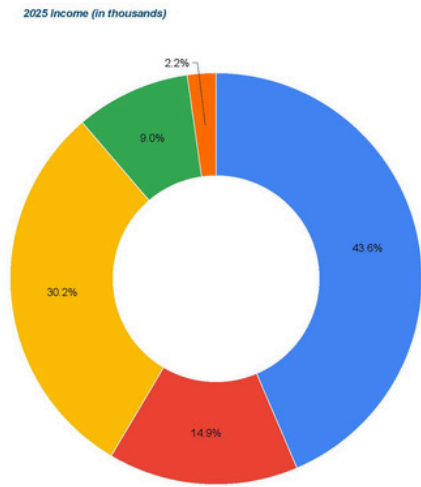
John, 2024 Volunteer of the Year, speaking at Spring Fest 2025

2025 Financials

2025 Income (in thousands)

■ Individuals:	\$227.09
■ Religious Organizations:	\$77.80
■ Foundations:	\$157.54
■ Grants:	\$47
■ Events & other:	\$11.73

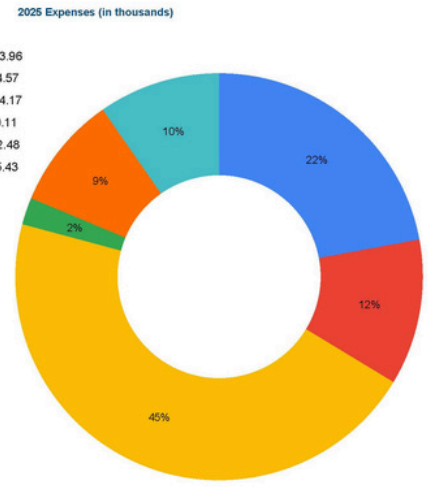
Total: \$521.14



2025 Expenses (in thousands)

■ Detained Friend Assistance:	\$103.96
■ Post-Release & Non-detained Assistance:	\$54.57
■ Immigration Bonds:	\$214.17
■ Advocacy:	\$10.11
■ Management & General:	\$42.48
■ Administrative & Fundraising:	\$45.43

Total: \$470.73



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Thank you for your extraordinary generosity in support of our immigrant Friends.

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\$25,000 - \$49,999

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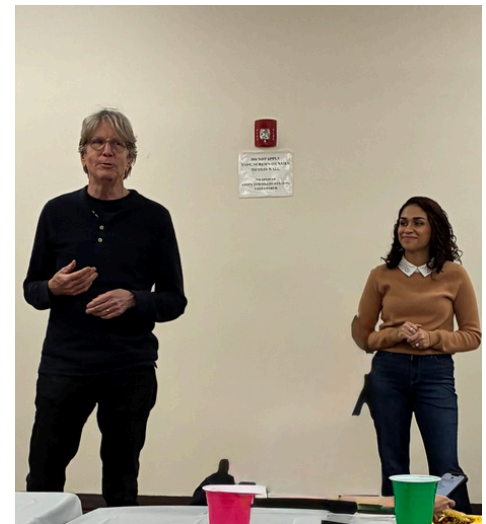
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 Samantha, Danielle, and
 Katy**



**First Friends Board President John
 and Program Coordinator
 Samantha at Friendsgiving 2025**

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**Volunteer Manager Danielle
& guest at Friendsgiving
2025**



**First Friends goes to Trenton -
March 2025**



"I am so grateful to First Friends for continuing to uphold the inherent humanity of immigrants while the rest of the country has lost its heart."
- Amy, volunteer of the year

First Friends Staff

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MESSAGES FROM FRIENDS

“It is with great emotion that I am writing you this letter following your gesture of love and high consideration...Your gesture is of great value to me because without knowing me, you have shown that there are people who still have generous hearts...” – Detained Friend who was able to reconnect with his wife and children after 7 months because of First Friends phone funding

“Thank you very much once again. I have no words to describe the gratitude I feel for all of you.” – Sister of a Friend who First Friends bonded out of detention and helped get home from Louisiana to New Jersey

“I truly appreciate the care, thoughtfulness, and attention you and your team have shown during this incredibly difficult time for our family. Your support means more than words can express.” – Partner of a detained Friend whose family received rental and grocery assistance from First Friends



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