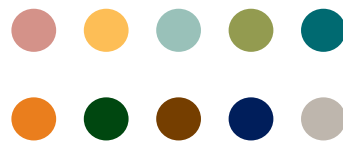




ASIAN COUNSELING  
and REFERRAL SERVICE

# THE ONGOING JOURNEY FROM SAFE HARBOR TO SOLID GROUND



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## ANNUAL REPORT 2025

A report on the power of community  
and what it takes to protect it.

WE DID NOT  
PULL BACK.  
WE LEANED IN.

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“ For the communities ACRS serves,  
2025 has brought challenge after  
challenge. What has sustained us is  
the community around us.

ACRS made a deliberate choice: not  
to wait or pull back, but to expand.”

*Kendee Yamaguchi*



# LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

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Dear Friends,

For the communities ACRS serves, 2025 has felt like bracing against an unrelenting tide — each wave harder to meet than the last. The COVID-19 pandemic was devastating, but it came with emergency resources, a shared sense of urgency, and hard-won lessons in resilience. What is happening now is different: a deliberate unraveling of the structures immigrant and refugee families have long depended on. Federal policies have threatened food assistance, health coverage, and legal protections. Immigration enforcement has cast a shadow over daily life, which is felt in our food bank lines, our elders' programs, and the classrooms where our youth learn and grow. These are not incidental effects. Vulnerable communities—like the A&NH/PI, immigrant, and refugee families ACRS serves—have been thrust into the crosshairs.

What has sustained us is the community around us: neighbors showing up for one another, advocates refusing to stand down, and supporters like you making it possible to meet this moment with more, not less. ACRS made a deliberate choice: not to wait or pull back, but to expand. More food on the table. More avenues to seek help. More voices in the rooms where decisions are made. And because we have learned not to wait for the worst to materialize, more preparation for what is still coming.

In the pages that follow, you will meet the people who remind us why this work matters: neighbors who came to us in need and stayed to give back; elders who found belonging alongside services; young people who walked into the state capitol and changed the conversation; and individuals who refused to be defined by the barriers in their path. Their stories are ACRS's story. And they are yours, too, because none of it happens without a community of support.

Safe harbor is where people land. Solid ground is what we collectively build beneath them. Thank you for helping us do both.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kendee Yamaguchi". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Kendee Yamaguchi  
CEO, Asian Counseling and Referral Service (ACRS)

## Vision Mission

Hope, Opportunity,  
and Voice for All

ACRS is a social justice organization that promotes the health and well-being of Asians and Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders (A&NH/PIs) and other communities by providing and advocating for responsive community-based services.

# WHO WE ARE:

Asian Counseling and Referral Service (ACRS) has been a cornerstone of A&NH/PI, immigrant, and refugee communities in the Pacific Northwest for more than five decades. Today, our 315 staff collectively speak 40 predominantly A&NH/PI languages and dialects, delivering a nationally recognized model of culturally responsive, community-based care across the full spectrum of human services and behavioral health.

Our mission drives everything: grounded in a commitment to social justice, ACRS provides services that advance the health, well-being, dignity, and empowerment of Asians and Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders and other communities experiencing disparities in health, human services, and education.

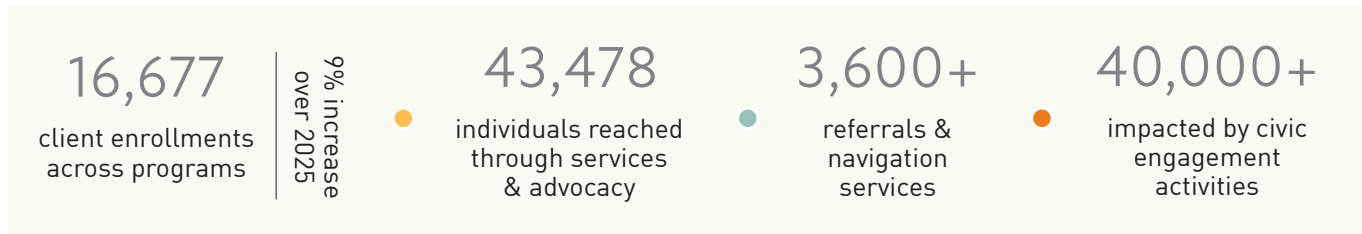
The staff who drive our mission are not simply service providers, but trusted neighbors, cultural bridge-builders, recognized community leaders, and often the first and only source of stability for families navigating fear and uncertainty. Many know personally what it means to navigate complex systems in an unfamiliar place and how it feels to find a hand extended to help. That shared lived experience is at the heart of all our work.

## 2025 IMPACT AT A GLANCE

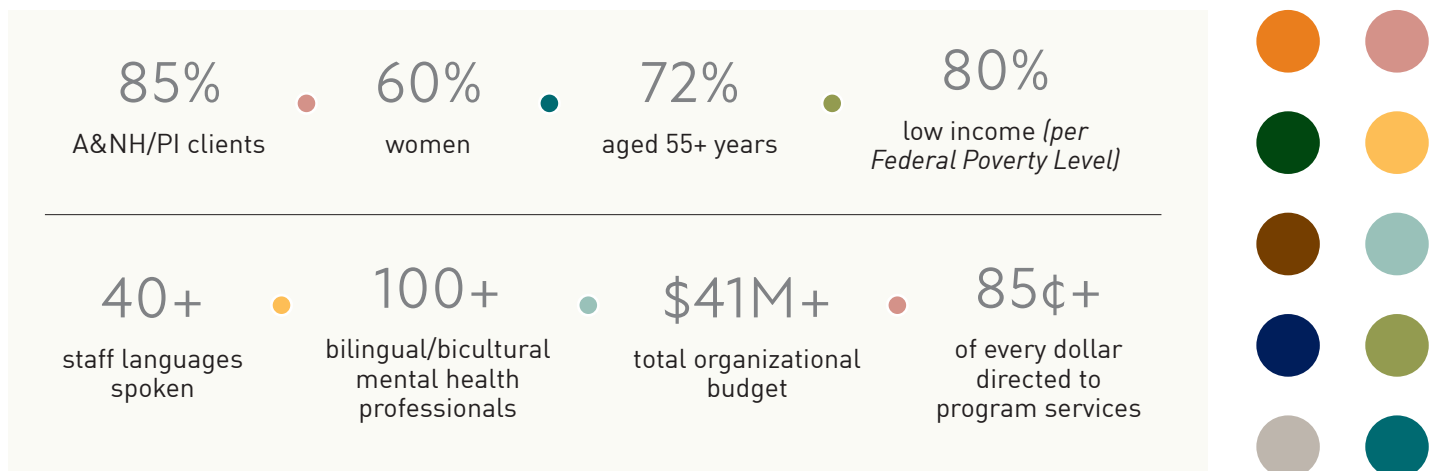
### BY THE NUMBERS

ACRS is one of the largest multiservice nonprofits serving A&NH/PI, immigrant, and refugee communities in the Pacific Northwest. In 2025, that reach deepened across every dimension of our work.

### REACH & ACCESS



### COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT



# PART I • SAFE HARBOR

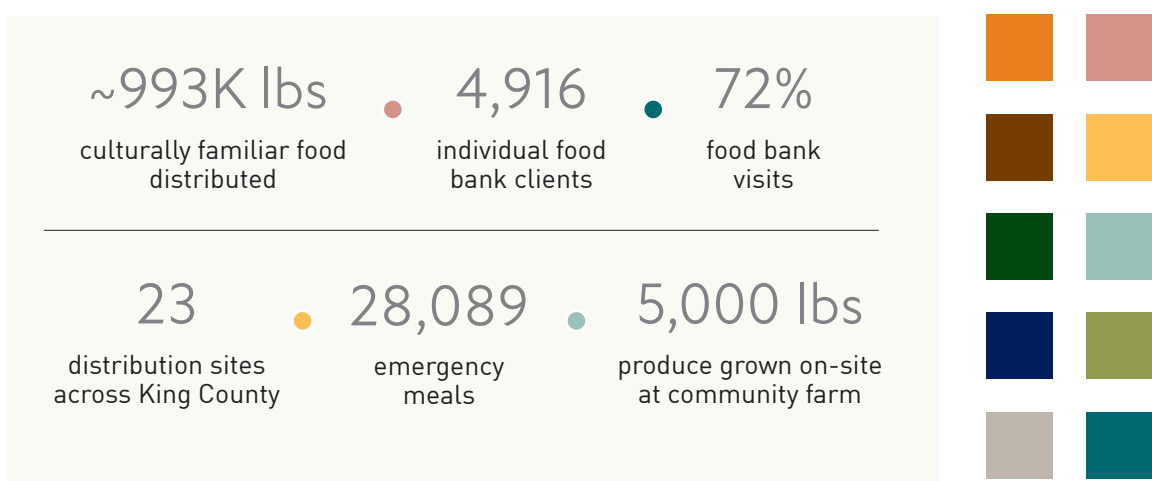
## THE DOOR STAYS OPEN

When the systems families depend on become unreliable, ACRS endeavors to be a constant. Safe harbor is not one program or one building, but a net stretched across our own holistic services and woven together with the work of peer agencies committed to the same communities. In 2025, that safety net faced intentional attacks designed to fray it, but it held.

### FOOD SECURITY & NUTRITION

Last fall, the food bank's lines started wrapping around the building before the doors opened. For weeks after word spread about the disruption to SNAP benefits, families who had never come to a food bank before stood beside longtime clients to wait for the same thing: certainty in an uncertain season.

What sets ACRS's food programming apart is cultural intentionality: rice, tofu, A&NH/PI produce and food staples— foods that make a meal feel more like home than charity. When our South Seattle location wasn't accessible enough, we met people where they were, and a pop-up distribution in Kent served more than 300 neighbors in a single afternoon. Because access means both keeping doors open and ensuring they aren't out of reach.

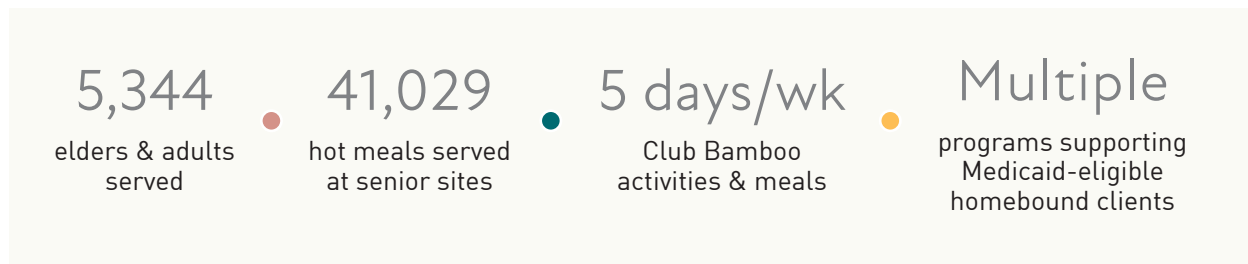




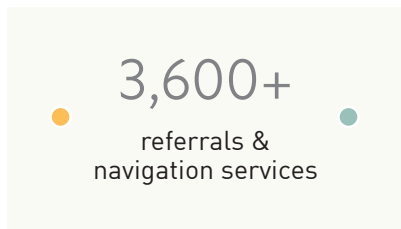
## SERVICES FOR SENIORS AND THEIR FAMILIES

For ACRS’s elders, safety is inseparable from dignity — the dignity of staying in your own home, being cared for by someone who speaks your language, and not having to choose between managing a chronic illness and maintaining your independence. Our Aging and Adult Services team spans case management for Medicaid-eligible homebound clients, and care coordination for those managing chronic conditions, as well as transition support for adults returning home from hospitals or long-term care regardless of insurance status.

For many elders in Club Bamboo, safety also means belonging — the Lunar New Year celebration, the Christmas gathering, the rhythms of a community that refuses to let its most vulnerable members disappear into isolation. Five days a week, Club Bamboo opens its doors to older adults for meals, Tai Chi, ballroom dancing, ESL classes, art, and the irreplaceable medicine of community. In a year when fear pressed in from every direction, these were lifelines.



## FINDING YOUR BEARINGS



Before someone can access services, they often need help understanding what they are eligible for, where to look, and who to trust. ACRS’s Community Navigator program exists for exactly that moment.

Navigators assess needs, clarify eligibility, and connect individuals to services within ACRS and across the network of peer organizations patching the same fraying safety net. Housing is the most common external referral; food bank, employment, and behavioral health are the most frequent internal pathways. Many clients aren’t immediately enrollable in a formal program, but they don’t leave empty-handed. Navigation is its own form of care: a hand extended when someone is trying to find their footing, helping chart a course through waters that are rarely calm.



## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

Our behavioral health teams served more than 3,500 individuals, including adults navigating complex mental health needs, children whose school years have been shadowed by family uncertainty, and individuals in substance use recovery working toward stability. Care delivered by people who share their clients' language, their foods, their understanding of what home feels like, while weaving Eastern and Western modalities together.

## ADULT MENTAL HEALTH

For A&NH/PI, immigrant, and refugee adults, mental health care is hard to access in the best of circumstances — language barriers, cultural stigma, trauma histories, and a system not built with them in mind all compound the challenge. ACRS's Behavioral Health Program exists to close that gap, with a team of therapists, psychiatrists, psychiatric nurses, and peer specialists who speak more than a dozen Asian and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander languages. This is safe harbor: not just a roof and a meal, but the experience of being seen by someone who understands your world.

2,472

adults in behavioral health care

24/7

crisis intervention services

## RECOVERY SERVICES

Recovery is a practice and a continuum. ACRS's Recovery Services program served 511 individuals in 2025, providing a continuum of care that meets clients where they are: beginning to seek help, managing ongoing recovery, or rebuilding after a setback. Delivered in multiple languages and integrated with ACRS's mental health services when needed, the program ensures that clients with co-occurring needs receive whole-person care without having to navigate two separate systems to get it.

511

individuals in recovery services

Integrated

with adult mental health for co-occurring care

Continuum

of care from early intervention to ongoing support



## CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Safe harbor for young people looks different than it does for adults. For children and adolescents navigating mental health challenges, ACRS provides clinical care in school, in community, and via telehealth — individual and group therapy, psychiatric evaluation and medication management, and family counseling, all delivered by counselors who share their clients’ cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

But clinical care is only part of what young people need: ACRS’s youth development programs create spaces where A&NH/PI youth can explore who they are —not despite their identities, but because of them. Each program meets a different community of young people where they are: high schoolers building leadership and career pathways, middle schoolers finding sisterhood and cultural grounding, and LGBTQ/QTBIPOC youth accessing affirming spaces to process their identities and develop their voices. Across all three, the throughline is the same: young people seen, supported, and given the tools to lead.



“ These programs don’t just serve young people — they tell them something that matters: you belong here, exactly as you are. In a year when that message was harder to find in the world, ACRS made sure they heard it from us. ”

## WHAT BECOMES POSSIBLE WHEN YOU FEEL SAFE

Basic needs met. Fear reduced. The door reliably open. From that foundation, acute crises subside and something else becomes possible: people can begin to build. To pursue legal permanence. To develop economic footing. To grow into civic life. Part II of ACRS's story is about that next layer — the roots that people put down when the ground beneath them is stable enough to hold.

### PUTTING DOWN ROOTS

For many ACRS clients, citizenship provides the anchoring for greater security, a stronger voice, and the freedom to participate more fully in the community they already call home. For one client, that journey took years of persistence.

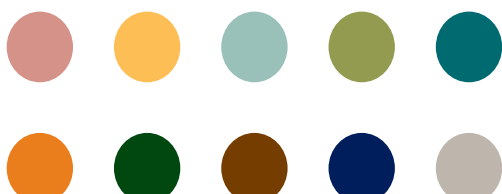
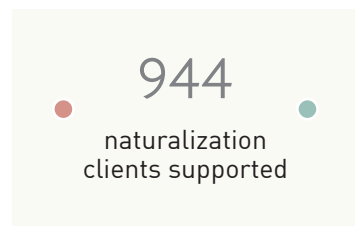
The test was not designed with her in mind. It assumed formal education, English fluency, and years of exposure to the history and civics being tested. Three attempts. Three years. And with ACRS beside her, she passed.

In 2025, citizenship is not just a milestone, but a form of protection. In a year when immigration status felt more precarious than ever, becoming a citizen was an act of self-determination— a claim on belonging that no one could easily erase, even as the definition of safety kept shifting.

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Becoming a citizen did not change her story, but it secured it. She reached for every tool available to protect herself and her family.

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## BUILDING ECONOMIC FOOTING

For many of ACRS's clients, economic mobility begins with language. So we start with ESL instruction and digital literacy and progress to resumé preparation, job readiness training, and pre-apprenticeship exposure. These are not abstract programs, but specific tools that help someone move from survival to sustainability.

In 2025, ACRS provided job readiness training to 594 participants and digital literacy courses to 120 clients — most living below the poverty line and navigating layered barriers including transportation, childcare, and limited English proficiency. For each of them, the question is not whether they are capable, but whether the support structures exist to meet their capability. ACRS endeavors to lay that foundation.

5,344  
elders & adults  
served

41,029  
hot meals served  
at senior sites

5 days/wk  
Club Bamboo  
activities & meals

Multiple  
programs supporting  
Medicaid-eligible  
homebound clients



## WE WILL NOT BE LEFT OUT OF THE DECISIONS THAT SHAPE US



Safe harbor keeps people alive. Roots help them grow. Solid ground — civic power, advocacy, a voice in the decisions that shape their lives — is what makes it permanent. The third dimension of ACRS’s work is the one that moves upstream: not just responding to what happens to our communities, but working to shape what happens next.

### YOUNG VOICES IN THE ROOM THAT MATTERS

They arrived at the capitol with prepared testimony and something harder to teach: the conviction that their voices belonged there. These were young people who had come through ACRS’s youth development programs — seen, supported, and given the tools to lead.

Standing before state lawmakers at Legislative Day, they named what was at stake for their families and communities. They spoke about food access, immigration fear, and what it means to grow up in a community constantly asked to justify its right to exist. Their presence in that room underscores the self-advocacy ACRS champions in its youth participants and the empowerment we envision for all our clients.

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They went to the capitol because they understood exactly how the system was failing them and decided that was worth saying out loud. Most young people in their position would have had every reason to stay quiet, but they bravely spoke truth to power.

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# ADVOCACY AT THE SCALE THE MOMENT DEMANDS

40,000+  
reached through  
outreach & advocacy

Some of the most important work we do in a given year won't be felt until the next one.

The many threats facing A&NH/PI, immigrant, and refugee communities in 2025 are federal in origin, but they land locally.

ACRS has long partnered with the Asian Pacific Islander Coalition of Washington (APIC), which was founded after federal welfare reform stripped public assistance eligibility from non-citizens. APIC has spent the last quarter century building the statewide infrastructure to fight back: seven chapters across Washington, a collective voice at the legislature, and deep roots in the communities most affected. When federal policy shifts, APIC helps us understand how it is playing out not just in our backyard, but across the state, and builds the collective power to respond at the level where implementation actually happens.

In 2025, ACRS extended that advocacy to a national scale and forged a new partnership with the Asian Pacific Islander American Health Forum (APIAHF)— ensuring the impact on real families is documented, named, and brought to bear in federal rooms where decisions are made.



Direct services keep people safe today. These partnerships help shape tomorrow.

## BUILDING THE BRIDGE BEFORE ANYONE HITS THE EDGE

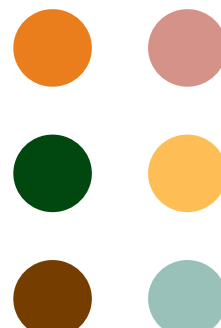
We have seen what happens when systems fail without warning and when families depending on a program find out it is gone the moment they try to use it. That is a harm we can sometimes prevent, if we are paying attention and moving early enough.

Starting in late 2025, as proposals like H.R. 1 threaten to significantly reduce Medicaid access for low-income individuals, ACRS began identifying community members who could be affected and building support strategies before the disruption arrived. We are not waiting for the cliff to appear. We are building the bridge.

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Anticipating harm is an act of care. It is also a form of power — the power to protect people before they need rescue.

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# FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

# WHERE YOUR INVESTMENT GOES

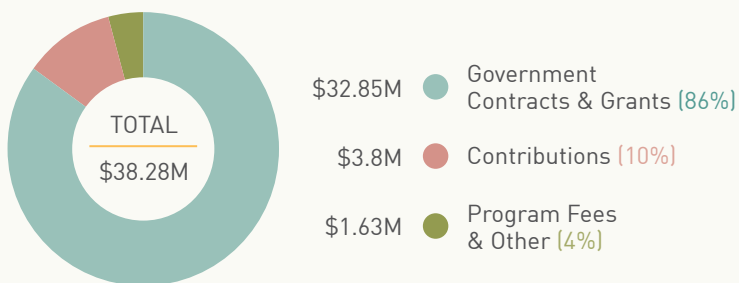
ACRS is a \$40M+ organization — but the number that matters most is not the budget. It is the proportion of every dollar that reaches a person in need. More than 85 cents of every dollar ACRS spends goes directly to programs and services. The remainder sustains the infrastructure — the systems, staff support, and organizational capacity — that makes reliable, high-quality care possible.

In 2025, ACRS made strategic investments in data systems and organizational infrastructure to ensure we can serve more people, more effectively, in the years ahead. A planned operating deficit reflects those investments in intentional growth.

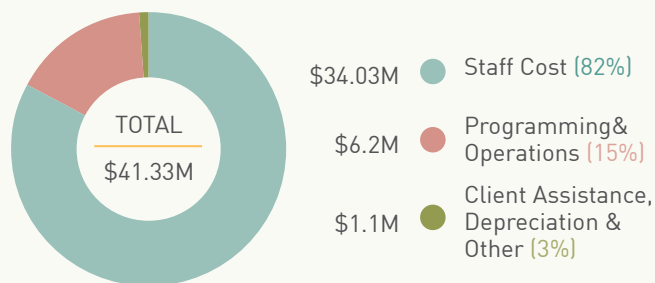
## TOTAL ASSETS AT CLOSE OF 2025:

# \$36.8M

### REVENUE BY SOURCE



### EXPENSE BY CATEGORY



*A note on sustainability: ACRS is actively building long-term financial resilience through diversified revenue development, operational efficiencies, and strengthened philanthropic partnerships. This year's budget reflects a deliberate choice: when our community is struggling, leaving resources untouched is not prudence. We believe in deploying what we have fully, in service of the people who cannot afford for us to hold back. Your support is part of what ensures we can keep showing up, without interruption, as we build toward a stronger financial future together.*



# THANK YOU

## THE CREW THAT KEEPS US MOVING

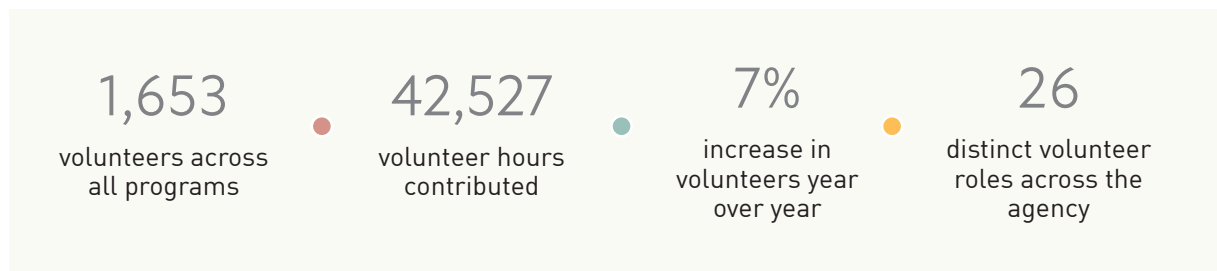
No harbor holds without a crew, and the ACRS crew includes thousands of volunteers, walkers, donors, and community members who show up because they understand what is at stake. This participation is the wind in our sails.

### FLAGSHIP EVENTS: WALK FOR RICE AND THE ACRS GALA

Each May, thousands of walkers gather at Seward Park for the Walk for Rice — many returning year after year to a 35-year tradition that raised \$301K for food security programming in 2025. Our annual Gala brings board members, corporate partners, and philanthropic leaders into the full scope of ACRS’s story through an evening of connection and celebration. Together, these events are more than fundraisers. They are expressions of who we are.

“ The Walk is not just a fundraiser. It is a reunion, a ritual, and a declaration — that this community intends to take care of its own. ”

In 2025, 1,653 volunteers contributed 42,527 hours — in food bank lines and Club Bamboo kitchens, at citizenship classes and community farm plots, in mock interviews and outreach tables. Many are former clients who came back to give what was once given to them. Together, the equivalent of more than 20 full-time positions: an extraordinary act of collective care.





# SAFE HARBOR IS POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF YOU

None of what you have read in these pages happens without a community of people who believe in it. These are not ACRS accomplishments, but shared ones.

In 2026, we move forward guided by three commitments: values-rooted, client-centered, and future-ready. That means responding without hesitation and preparing before threats arrive. It means holding firm against forces designed to divide, leaning into solidarity, and embracing the joy in this work alongside the urgency — the celebrations, the milestones, the moments of connection that remind us why it matters.

Safe harbor is where people land, and solid ground is what we build beneath them. We are grateful that you are building it with us.

