



# ANNUAL REPORT

---

2020-2021





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# WHAT WE DO

Gulfcoast Legal Services (GLS) focuses on ensuring those who need it most have access to justice. COVID-19 has heightened this need. Our four substantive units – family law, immigration, financial stability, and housing – work together to provide clients with comprehensive legal care in a trauma-informed and client-centered way.



## OUR MISSION:

Gulfcoast Legal Services, Inc. (GLS) is a regional 501(c)3 non-profit organization providing free, comprehensive civil legal aid through counsel, advice, representation, advocacy, and education for vulnerable individuals and families in the Greater Tampa Bay area.

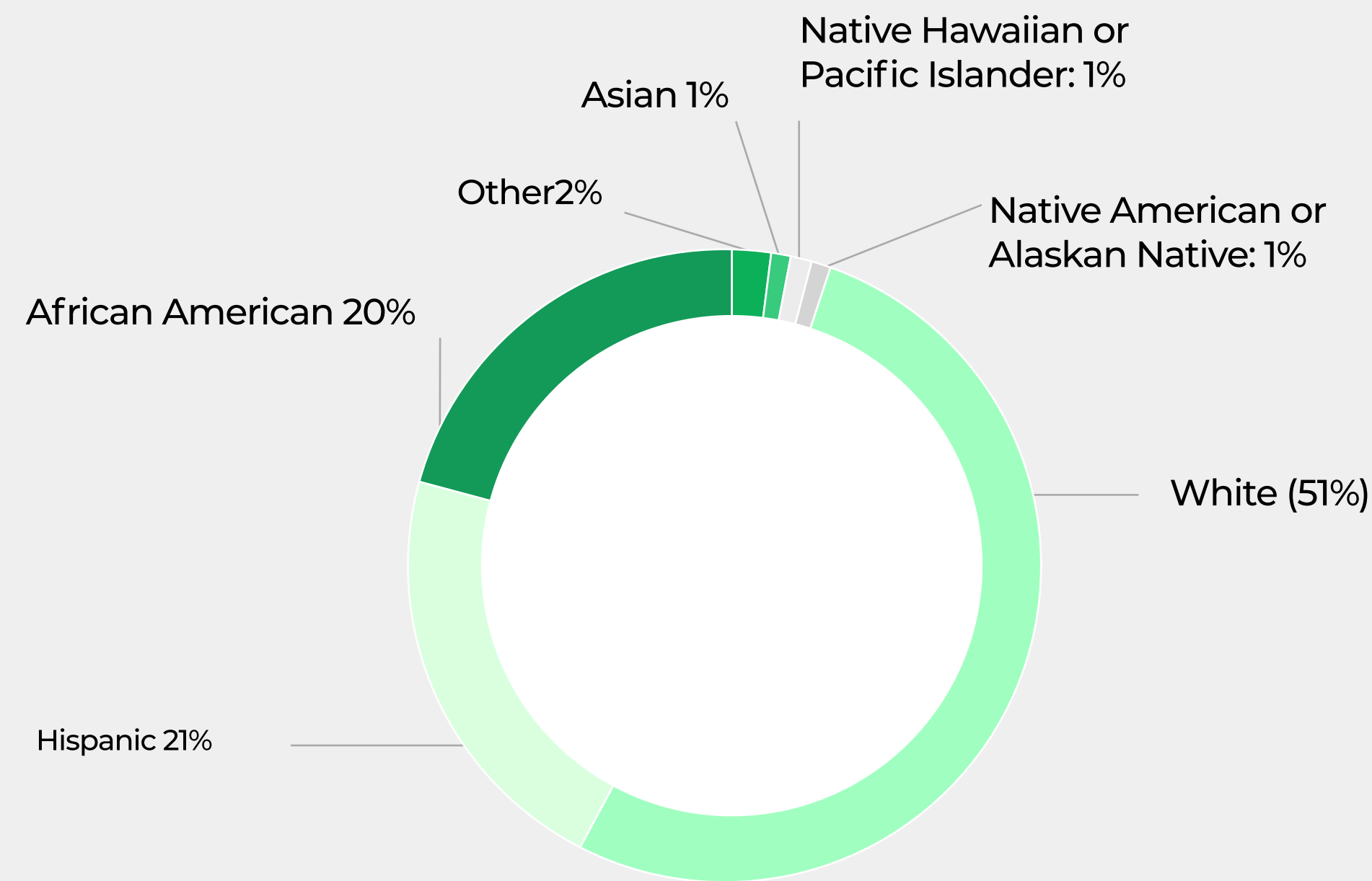
## CLIENT QUOTE:

“We would not be able to stay in our home without this help. I hope you realize how huge this is for single parents like myself. We would literally be in a homeless shelter without this assistance. I just cannot thank you all enough.”

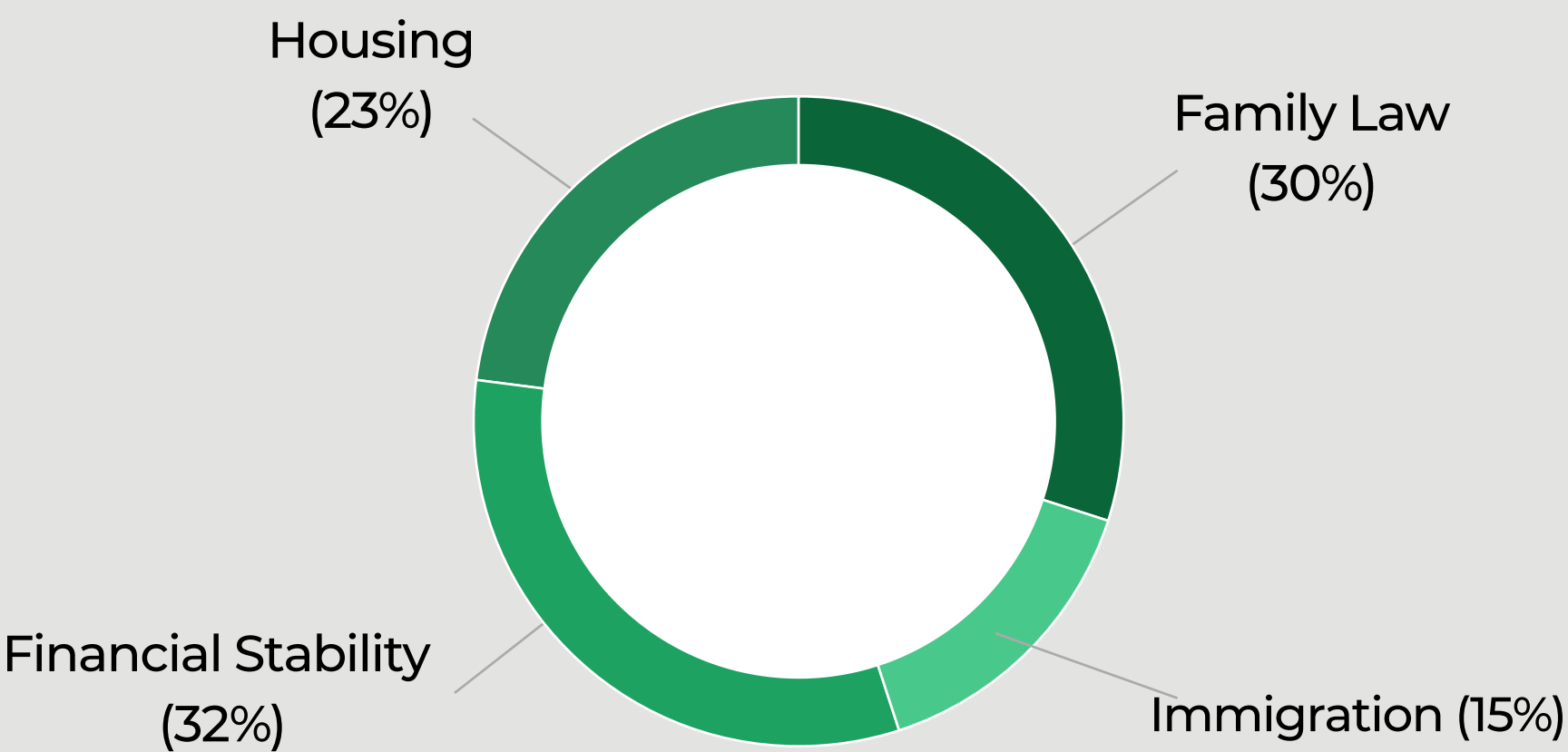


# OUR IMPACT

## CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS:



## CASE BREAKDOWN BY UNIT:



Total Number of Individuals Helped: 8663

CLIENTS WITH DISABILITIES: 26% • CLIENTS EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: 37% • AGE 60 AND OLDER: 31%



# HOW WE HELP

## CLIENT STORY

“Ana” came to the U.S. when she was a child. She attended school, excelling in her classes, and married her high school sweetheart, who she also had children with. Ana’s husband changed dramatically soon after they were married. He started physically abusing her and she worried he would also hurt her children, so she came to GLS for help. Our family law unit provided advice on her divorce and our immigration team worked with her on a VAWA self-petition and green card. They were with her every step of the way, from getting her driver’s license to getting a job.

Eventually, Ana moved away from her husband and settled in a new area. She continued to be very proactive, emailing her attorney with updates and questions about what she needed to do to help her case be successful. After three years of waiting, her VAWA self-petition and green card were approved. Ana was free to move on with her life without fear of abuse, violence, or being separated from her children.



51

Volunteers

4221

Volunteer Hours

194

Outreaches Attended

5,718

Individuals Seen At Outreaches



# EMERGING ISSUES

## EVICTION PREVENTION AND EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE:

The pandemic exacerbated the housing crisis. In December of 2020, credit rating agency Moody's estimated that 12 million renters would owe an average of \$5,850 in rent and utilities as a result of unemployment and lost income. The Aspen Institute estimated that 30-40 million Americans (roughly 1 in 10) could face eviction, partially caused by a lapse in federal benefits. Eviction prevention legal services combined with Emergency Rental Assistance quickly became one of the most important services for community members to avoid homelessness.

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:

In 2020, more than 2,000 people were killed in domestic-violence-related shootings in the U.S. Women who are preparing to leave their abusive partners are in the most danger, as either threats of separation by the partner or actual separations are most often the precipitating events that lead to murder. GLS continued to see alarming rises in cases requesting assistance addressing domestic violence.

“We are seeing more clients leaving their abusive partners because they have been able to use stimulus relief and housing protections to escape domestic violence. Previously, many of these same clients were in a situation of being trapped – be it by pandemic concerns or the patterns of economic abuse that hold so many victims captive.”

– Jena Blair, Deputy Director of the Family Law Unit



# ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

## BOARD LEADERSHIP

**BOARD  
PRESIDENT:**

Kristen Adams, Esq.

**VICE  
PRESIDENT:**

Bradley Muhs, Esq

**SECRETARY:**

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**TREASURER:**

Tracy Merry, CPA

**IMMEDIATE PAST  
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- Elise Winters, Esq.

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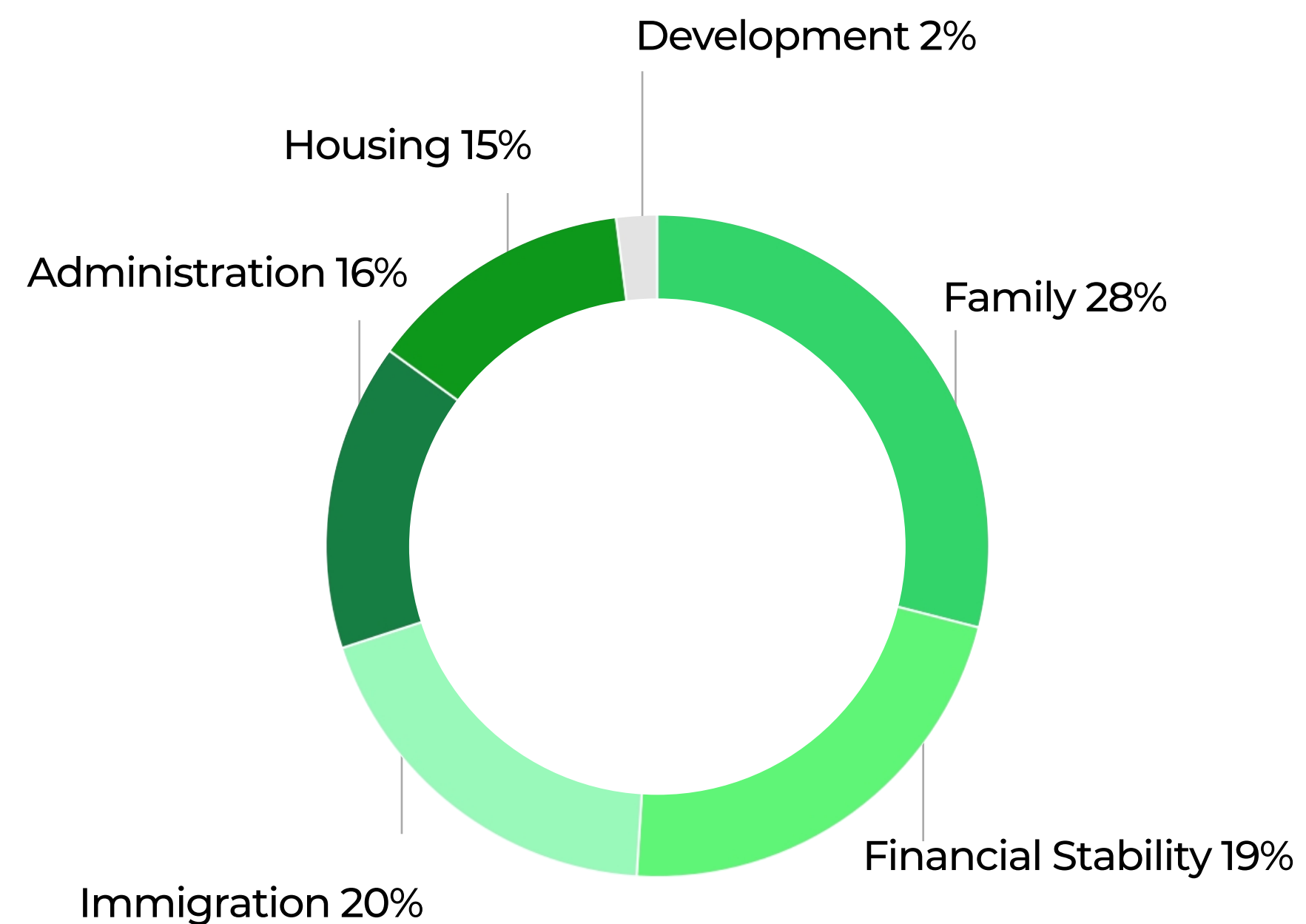
# FINANCIALS

## HOW WE ALLOCATE RESOURCES

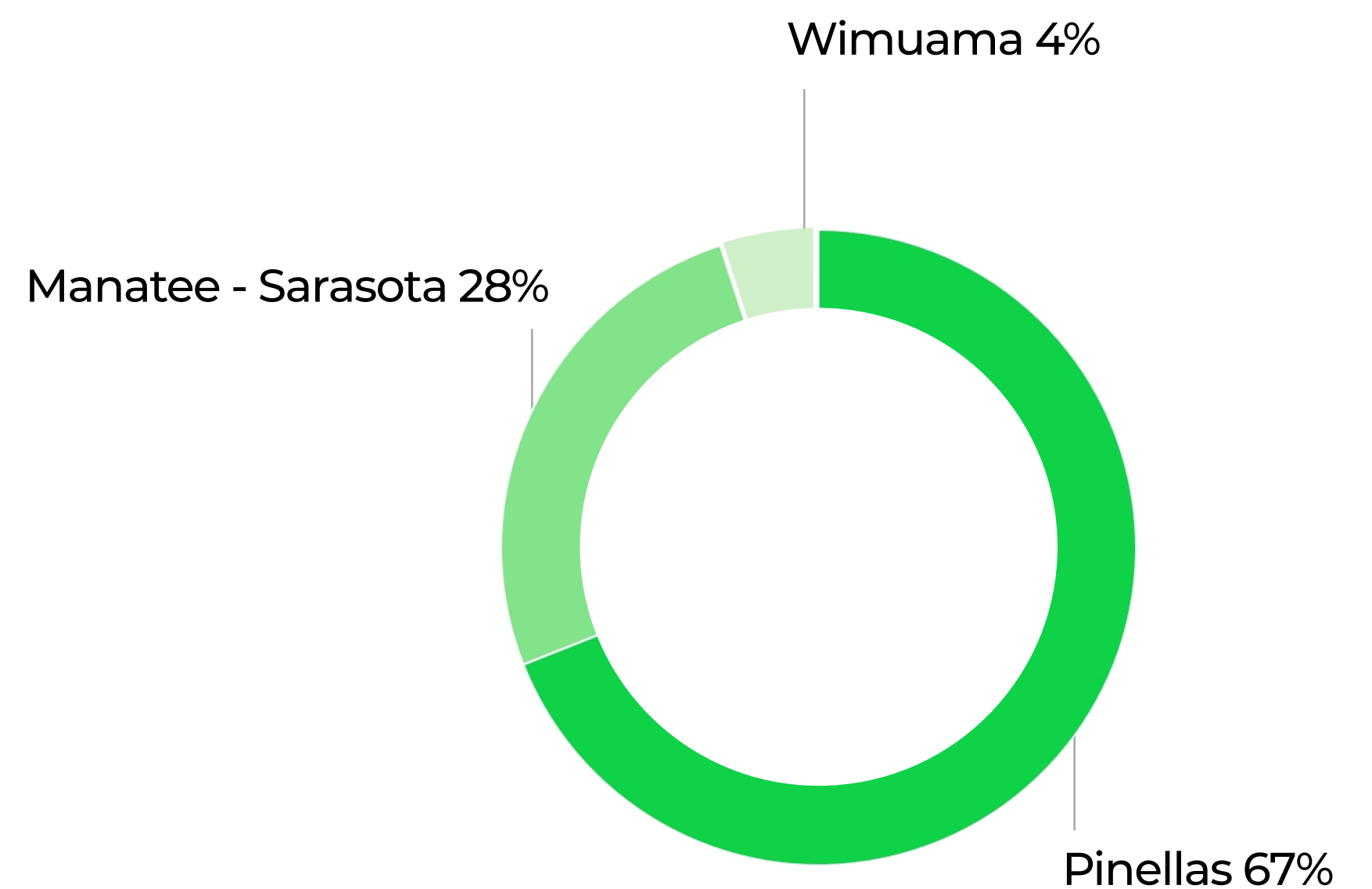


**Total: \$3,851,572**

### BREAKDOWN BY UNIT:



### BREAKDOWN BY OFFICE LOCATION:





## THANK YOU TO OUR GRANT FUNDERS

- Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas
- Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation
- City of Clearwater
- City of Largo
- City of St. Petersburg
- Community Foundation of Sarasota County
- Florida Bar Foundation
- Florida Department of Children and Families
- Florida Office of the Attorney General
- Florida Rural Legal Services
- Foundation for a Healthy St. Petersburg
- Gulf Coast Community Foundation
- Hispanic Outreach Center
- Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County
- Manatee Community Foundation
- Manatee County
- Patterson Foundation
- Pinellas Community Foundation
- Pinellas County
- Regions Bank
- Selby Foundation
- Senior Citizens Services
- Senior Connection Center
- United Way of S. Sarasota County
- United Way Suncoast
- US Department of Justice
- US Department of Treasury



## OUR SUPPORTERS

### THANK YOU TO OUR MAJOR DONORS

- Anonymous
- Alex and Eileen Rogachevsky
- Andrea and Colby Masterson
- Andrew Stinnette
- Janice A. Bolt
- Keith Bass
- Marguerite Thomer
- Neil R. Covert
- Teresa Ohmit
- Wendy Cox
- William Weller





# CONTACT US



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