



SPACE OF HER OWN

ANNUAL REPORT
FISCAL YEAR 2015

JULY 1, 2014- JUNE 30, 2015

Message from our Board President

Elizabeth Scott, PhD



Serving as the Space of Her Own (SOHO) Board Chair is both inspiring and humbling.

My time with SOHO has been inspiring because I have had the opportunity to meet so many wonderful volunteers who are passionate about working with our youth. It has been humbling because the responsibility for assuring that our organization both meets the needs of our community and is positioned to do so in the future can feel overwhelming. This year, we have achieved great success through the hard work and dedication of our staff and volunteers, including the launch of a newly developed Life Skills Curriculum, continued implementation of our nationally recognized Quality Based Membership model, the expansion of our community partnerships and the launch of our Space of Her Own - Arlington program. Internally, we have streamlined our program policies and procedures and worked hard to shore up our operational processes. We are proud to have done this work through mostly volunteer labors of love, making SOHO one of Alexandria’s most cost-effective nonprofits!

Getting to know the remarkable youth served through our programs, watching them grow, helping them face challenges and learning from their experiences has deepened my commitment to this wonderful organization. I look forward to working with my Board colleagues, our dedicated staff and our volunteers to help a very strong SOHO continue towards a bright future.

I’d like to personally thank each person who has impacted our organization this year for your collective work and inspiration. The hundreds of volunteer hours and the gift of your precious time, the sharing of your talents and expertise, and your continued financial support is important to our ongoing success.

We, the Board and our staff, are looking forward to another bright year and thank you for your part in helping us make a difference in our community and in the lives of the youth we serve.

With gratitude,

Elizabeth Scott, PhD
Board Chair
CEO/President Brighter Strategies

PROGRAM UPDATES

“WE DELIGHT IN THE BEAUTY OF THE BUTTERFLY, BUT RARELY ADMIT THE CHANGES IT HAS GONE THROUGH TO ACHIEVE THAT BEAUTY.” - MAYA ANGELOU, ATTRIBUTED, THE BUTTERFLY’S DAUGHTER

In the past year, Space of Her Own, Inc. has improved its program capacity in a number of areas. With the help of program staff, a 2nd year Americorps VISTA and numerous motivated volunteers, the program was able to develop the following:

LIFE SKILLS CURRICULUM

Former AmeriCorps VISTA Ashley Snyder, MA, developed an engaging and standardized Life Skills curriculum for Space of Her Own, Inc. which includes gender-specific lessons designed to meet the unique needs of SOHO girls and boys.

QUALITY BASED MEMBERSHIP

SOHO has been participating in a research initiative designed to ensure Best Practices for mentoring based on the Elements of Effective Practice. This year, SOHO completed membership requirements to become a partner with the Virginia Mentoring Partnership.

3RD YEAR VISTA

In June 2015, SOHO was awarded its third and final Americorps VISTA to continue building program capacity and ensure the success of all elements of development initiated by VISTAs from previous years.

MENTORCORE

SOHO acquired the online mentor/mentee tracking database, MentorCore, to increase program support to mentoring matches. Since 2013, staff has developed the use of the resource, specifically to track relationships and outings in the first and second program years.

SOHO CLUB

SOHO provides programming to increase rates of match retention beyond the initial program year. Mentors and mentees are provided with monthly themes and activity suggestions to encourage their relationships. SOHO also hosts at least two annual events for the SOHO Club.

NEW PARTNERSHIPS

SOHO has partnered with community organizations to enrich the learning experiences of SOHO youth. Organizations include Home Depot for carpentry instruction, NOVA Community College for photography lessons, PGAL architecture firm for a design and engineering field trip and group sessions with the Women in Science and Engineering at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

SOHO’S MISSION



Space of Her Own, Inc. (SOHO), and its brother program, Space of His Own, is an award-winning Northern Virginia 501 (c) (3) charitable organization committed to helping youth from low-income families avoid delinquency, live healthfully, communicate openly, progress academically and give back to others in order to lead fulfilling lives.

The creative mentoring organization provides preteen youth with one-on-one volunteer adult mentors to foster social, emotional, academic and creative enrichment. Youth engage through visual arts, carpentry and life skills classes, are provided with nutritious meals and learn civic responsibility through community service. Mentors work with mentees to transform their bedrooms at the end of the initial program year, a lasting reminder of the endeavor to build bright futures.

MENTOR ONE CHILD, CHANGE TWO LIVES

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

COST EFFECTIVE ON A SHOE-STRING BUDGET

Space of Her Own, Inc. prides itself on its ability to maintain three programs through careful planning and thoughtful spending. SOHO fully supports 3 programs – 34 youth and 34 mentors - with \$96,000*. This provides approximately 200 hours of services to each child at a cost of just \$13 per hour.

We concentrate our efforts on maximizing services to SOHO youth, which include supplies for art projects and room renovations, nutritious meals, costs for program managers and mentor recruitment and training to ensure excellent mentoring relationships. Other expenditures include program Governance & Operations and Communications & Marketing, both of which are supported by unpaid volunteers.

*Program Expenditures for FY 2014-2015 do not reflect what is spent on the fourth SOHO – Old Town program, which supports another 12 mentor/mentee pairs. The Art League independently fundraises for all SOHO – Old Town expenses.

When contributors donate to SOHO Inc., they are donating to three highly cost-effective programs.

IN-KIND DONATIONS

Each year, generous members of the Alexandria community provide in-kind donations to support room renovations, events and other program operations. We have estimated that SOHO received \$1,200 of in-kind donations in FY 2014-2015.

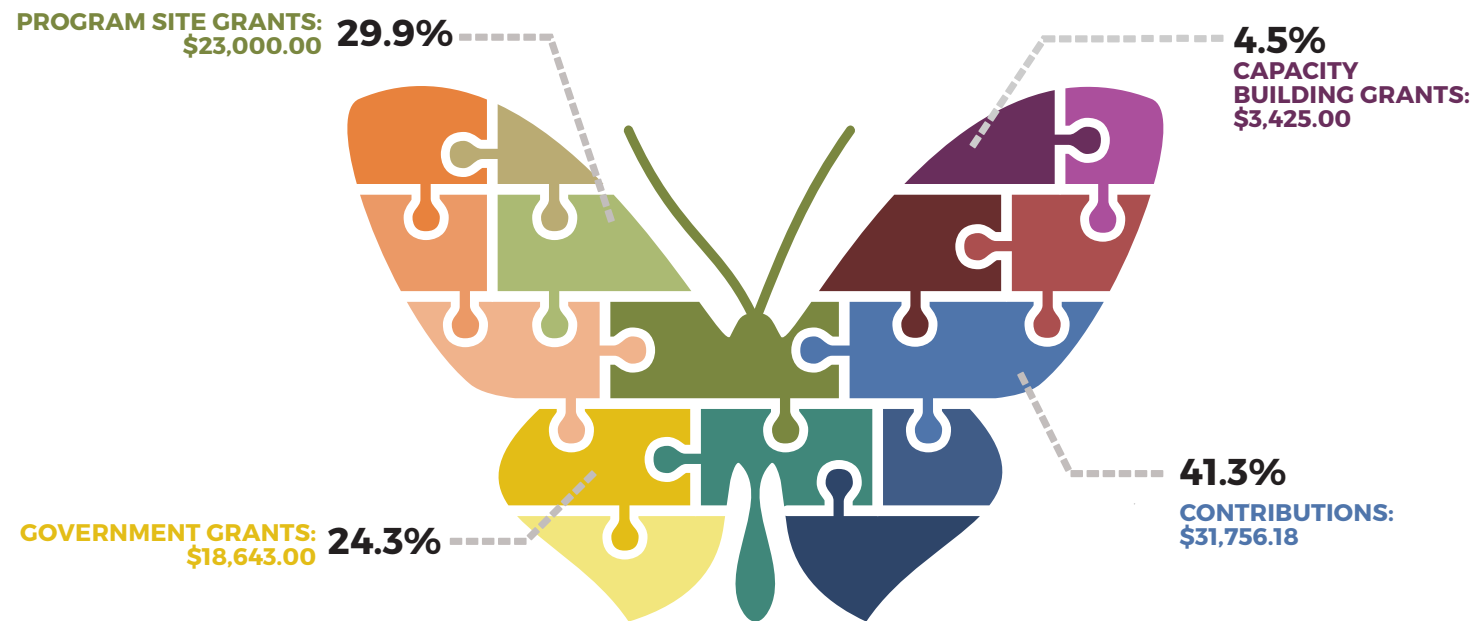
PROGRAM INCOME

Total Income for Space of Her Own 2014-2015 Fiscal Year: \$76,824.18

A balance of \$34,684.00 carried over to FY 2014-2015, and SOHO raised nearly \$77,000 that same year. SOHO had increased fundraising efforts in FY 2013-2014 in anticipation of the launch of the 2014-2015 SOHO – Arlington program, which resulted in the carryover balance.

Grants: \$45, 068.00

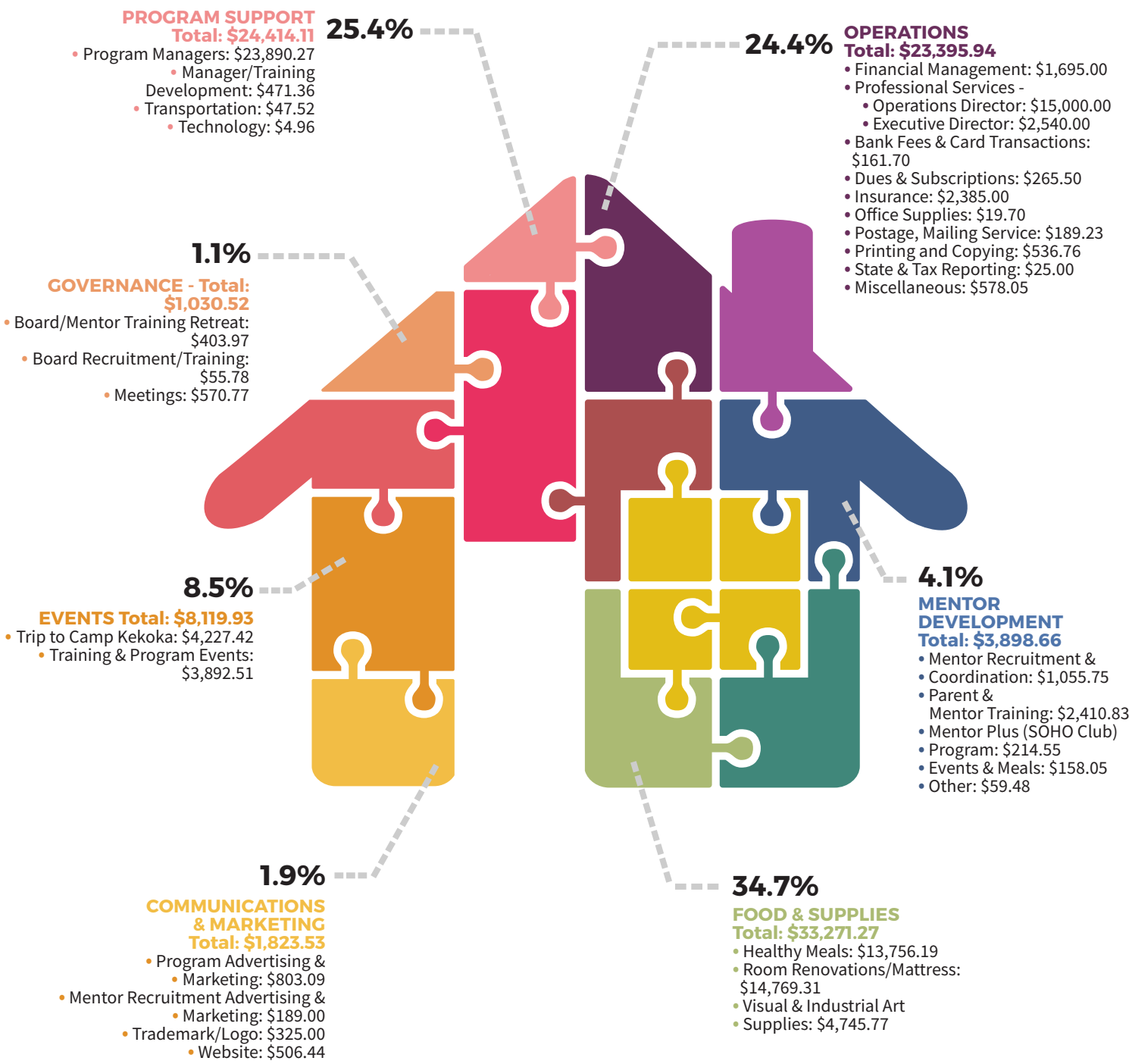
Contributions (Donations, Spring2Action and corporate aid): \$31,756.18



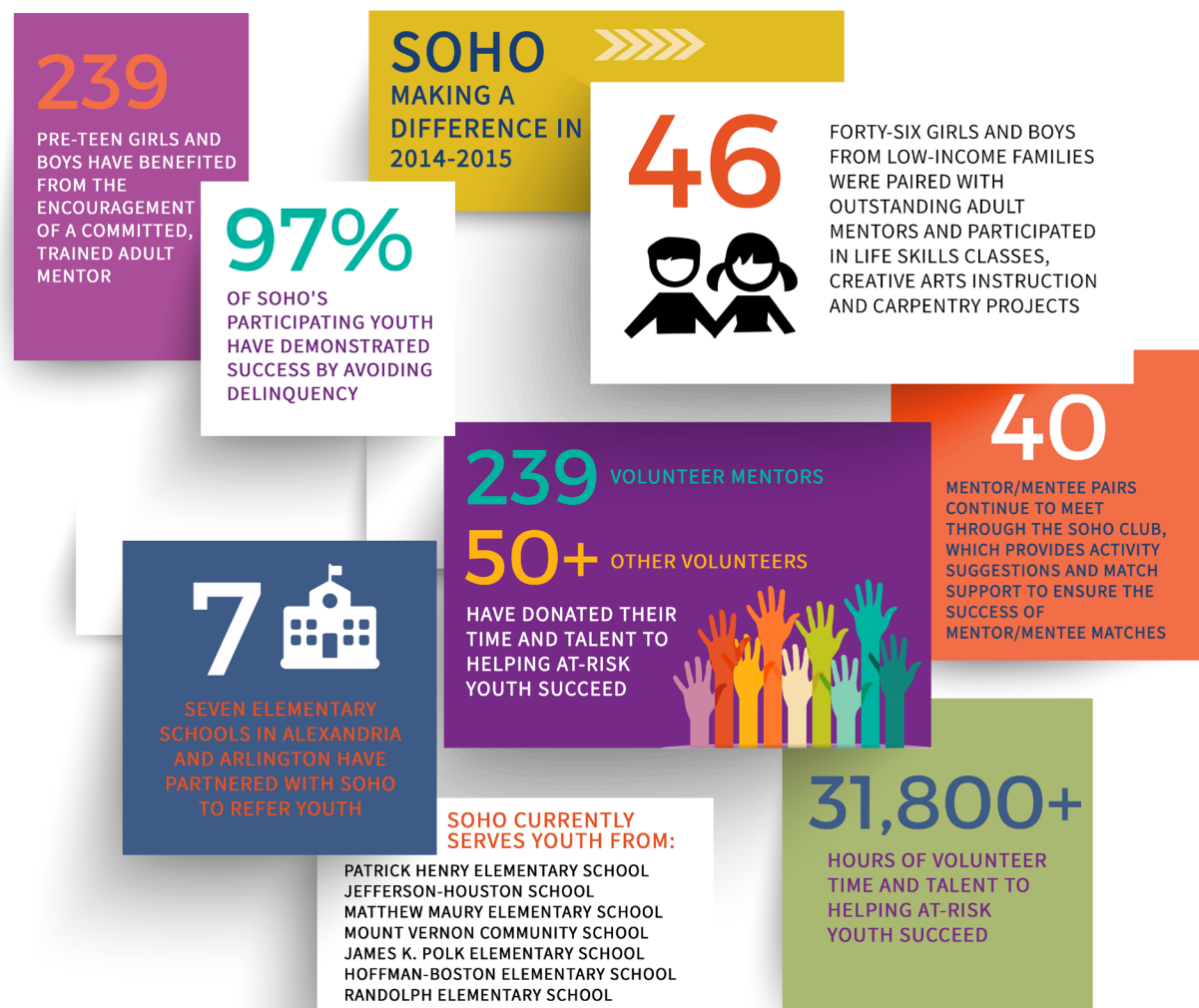
PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

Total Expenditures for Space of Her Own 2014-2015 Fiscal Year: \$95,953.96

72.6% SERVICES TO YOUTH - Total: \$69,703.97
25.5% GOVERNANCE & OPERATIONS - Total: \$24,426.46
1.9% COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING - Total: \$1,823.53



SOHO MAKING A DIFFERENCE



SPACE OF HIS OWN SPOTLIGHT

MENTOR JOSHUA SPEAKS ABOUT HIS MENTEE, JOSUE

At the beginning of the year Josue was on the shy side. His mentor, Joshua, noticed that when they would go out together, he would not speak to strangers or even order at restaurants. With each subsequent outing, Joshua pushed Josue a little more to speak up, and his mentee slowly began to open up and find his voice. Josue displayed his newfound confidence at the SOHO end-of-the-year Community Celebration, where he spoke in front of a large group of friends, families, and supporters. Their bond has continued to strengthen since the close of the school year. During the summer, Joshua and Josue spent time together playing laser tag and bowling with other mentor/mentee pairs. Josue is comfortable asking his mentor for help with homework, and the two often take walks together during their outings. Joshua is proud of Josue, commenting that “he just needed a little encouragement, and I can see that he stands taller around others.”



A SUCCESSFUL FIRST YEAR FOR SOHO - ARLINGTON

SOHO-Arlington enjoyed a successful first year, serving 12 girls from Hoffman-Boston Elementary School and from Randolph Elementary. Art projects included refurbishing used chairs, personalizing mirrors, dying lamp shades and creating fabric memo boards. In the spirit of community service, girls created gift bags for patients at Children’s Hospital and wrote letters to military troops overseas.

- SOHO mentee Ivania presented at Arlington County’s Out Of School Time Conference about the developmental assets of youth and how SOHO addresses youth needs.
- SOHO mentor Marian has been tutoring her mentee, Jennifer, in math on a weekly basis.
- Arlington Public Schools Department of School and Community Relations created a video, Partners in Action – Space of Her Own (SOHO) featuring SOHO – Arlington. The video received an Award of Excellence from the Chesapeake Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association (CHESPRA). The video can be viewed on the Arlington County Public School’s “Partners in Action” web page: <http://apsva.us/partnersinaction>

NOVEMBER 14TH MATCH EVENT

This year, both Alexandria Space of Her Own programs joined together for a Match Event adventure when each child found out who her mentor would be for the remainder of the program. Weeks of anticipation and exploration culminated in the giddy arrival of mentors and mentees to the Torpedo Factory. Participants received a pink SOHO t-shirt and backpack filled with snacks, a boxed lunch, a rain poncho, information for the day’s events and \$20 for travel expenses.

Each girl received a card decorated by their soon-to-be mentors, some sparkled with letters made of glitter and others decorated with dancing butterflies. On the count of three, girls opened their cards, the room erupted into smiles and girls rushed to their mentors. Youth celebrated with hugs and squeals and reveled in their newly forged bonds.

Girls and mentors then traveled to the King Street Metro by foot or by trolley, and each child was given the opportunity to navigate the DC Metro. Their first stop in DC was the National Portrait Gallery. The pairs participated in a scavenger hunt at the Luce Foundation Center and then explored the rest of the 3rd floor. Everyone was encouraged to take selfies with their favorite portrait and upload them to social media.

After the National Portrait Gallery, it was up to the mentees to navigate their way to the Marriott Hotel in the heart of DC. Once they arrived, girls and mentors munched on snacks during a hotel career presentation. The girls learned about the origins of the Marriott and about current careers within their global network of hotels. The woman of the hour was the hotel’s head chef Judy Vase, and the girls enthusiastically asked questions about her career and her favorite things to cook.

After a brief tour of the hotel, the two programs came together once again and shared the best moments of the day in a SOHO circle. One mentor said with a grin from ear to ear, “It was so great to see everyone’s smiles.”

Girls and mentors then returned to the Metro to head back to Alexandria. Though the sun was setting and girls were tired from their exciting day, all maintained wide smiles as the Metro resurfaced. When asked what her favorite part of the day was, one mentor responded, “The museum. It was a first for my mentee, and I liked seeing how much she enjoyed it.” When everyone disbanded, the sentiments were the same: it was a great day to start a future learning and growing together.

- Lily Rowny
SOHO Americorps VISTA Mentor Coordinator





HOW TO GET INVOLVED

“TRY TO BE A RAINBOW IN SOMEONE’S CLOUD.” - MAYA ANGELOU, *LETTER TO MY DAUGHTER*

JOIN SOHO AS A SPONSOR, FUNDER, MENTOR OR VOLUNTEER

The personal development of SOHO girls and boys is ensured by the generous time and contributions of SOHO supporters. SOHO is privileged to have such dedicated sponsors, mentors, artists, carpenters and guest speakers who help provide youth in need with social, emotional, academic and creative enrichment. The SOHO team extends a warm thank you to all supporters for their immeasurable impact on the lives of our SOHO girls and boys!

When you make a commitment to SOHO, you make a significant difference in the lives of youth most in need. Help a girl realize her potential; show a boy that, with a little encouragement, he is capable of setting life goals and realizing his dreams. **Support SOHO and open up a world of new possibilities.**

CONTRIBUTE TO SPACE OF HER OWN AND SPACE OF HIS OWN

The majority of contributions to Space of Her Own, Inc. are allocated to provide direct services to program youth. Donate to SOHO, and help transform the lives of our 5th grade boys and girls.

For more background information on SOHO, visit Guidestar, the leading charity service, or email soho@spaceofherown.org.

Make your contribution:

- Online through SOHO’s website, www.spaceofherown.org/donate
- By check, mailed to Space of Her Own, Inc. 520 King Street, Suite 100, Alexandria VA 22314

YOUR FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION WILL SUPPORT

- Outstanding mentor recruitment, training and retention
- Supplies for life skills activities and arts/carpentry projects
- Nutritious meals each week
- Room renovations that provide each girl and boy with a space of her/his own, including a new mattress, box spring and bedding. Room renovations are a lasting reminder of each SOHO youth’s circle of support and the dignity that every child deserves
- Program events that expose youth to new ideas and opportunities
- Ongoing SOHO Club events that promote long-term mentor/mentee relationships, academic enrichment and leadership development beyond the initial program year
- Exceptional program management
- Program governance, organizational development and continued capacity building

SOHO SUPPORTERS MADE IT HAPPEN

ACT for Alexandria & Spring2Action, Alexandria City Public Schools, Alexandria Court Service Unit, Alexandria Fund for Human Services, Alexandria Gazette, Alexandria Mentoring Partnership, Alexandria Seaport Foundation, Alexandria Times, American University, AmeriCorps VISTA, Arlington Public Schools, Blessed Sacrament Church, City of Alexandria, Corporation for National & Community Service, Crowell & Moring Foundation, Del Ray Artisans, Fox 5 (Mentoring Monday), Georgetown University, George Washington University, Good Shepherd Catholic Church, Home Depot, IVAKOTA Foundation, Jitasa, Maria’s Windows, Mason Hirst Foundation, MentorCore, Mentor, Inc., Northern Virginia Community College, PGAL Architecture, Rotary Club of Alexandria, RSVP Northern Virginia/Volunteer Fairfax, Search Institute, The Art League, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice, Virginia Mentoring Partnership, Volunteer Alexandria, Washington Post, Washington Forrest Foundation, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Women in Science and Engineering at the US Patent and Trademark Office and **other generous individuals from throughout the DC Metro Region**

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