

APPALACHIAN  
sustainable  
DEVELOPMENT

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



# A LETTER FROM THE CEO

As I reflect on 2023, I am struck by how deeply agriculture continues to shape the lives, opportunities, and futures of the people we serve. This past year, ASD made remarkable progress in every aspect of our work—supporting farmers, expanding food access, building workforce skills, educating young people, and nurturing the small businesses that keep our region vibrant. Even through funding transitions, staffing shifts, and the everyday challenges that come with running community-centered programs, the pulse of possibility remained strong.

Across ASD, our teams strengthened programs that make real, tangible differences in people's lives. We expanded educational offerings like Ask an Agroforester, welcomed 500 children into joyful garden-based learning through Learning Landscapes, and continued to build essential skills and career pathways through Groundwork, where graduates earned more than 80 certifications and achieved 100% job placement.

At Appalachian Harvest, we continued to champion our region's farmers by providing market access, training, food safety certifications, and school partnerships that brought fresh, local food to more than 20 schools. We also celebrated meaningful wins such as the successful completion of multiple federal audits and inspections—the kind of behind-the-scenes work that builds trust and opens new doors for growers.

When I look across all of these efforts, a clear picture emerges: our region's food and agriculture system is getting stronger because of the people who make it happen—farmers, educators, partners, donors, and the many community members who show up, even when showing up is hard.

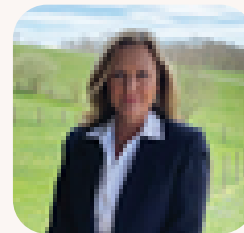
One of the most exciting moments of 2023 was something that represents where we are headed next. In late 2022, we closed on 17+ acres in Bristol, VA, with a dream of building a comprehensive agriculture campus to serve the region. Early this year, we had an intensive, two-day charrette with Arcadis IBI Group to determine the structure and ag space layouts for the campus. And later this year, we officially launched the quiet phase of our Capital Campaign, with a goal to raise \$14 million to build this remarkable place. It is a bold vision—and it is exactly what our region deserves.

Together with our partners and supporters, we are building a regional food and agriculture system that uplifts people, respects the planet, and creates meaningful, profitable opportunities for generations of Appalachians.

Thank you for being part of this journey.



Kathlyn Terry Baker  
CEO



CEO Kathlyn Terry Baker signs the property documents for Singingwood Lane.

# OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

Since 2020, ASD has been working to fulfill a five-year strategic plan designed to strengthen the agriculture and food systems of Central Appalachia. That plan includes:



**Build the capacity of the local agriculture and food systems**

**Promote regenerative agriculture practices**

**Support the entrepreneurship ecosystem**

**Grow the regional food and agriculture workforce**

**Model equity in the food and agriculture system**

# OUR 2023 IMPACTS

The impact of Appalachian Sustainable Development in 2023 reflects continued progress toward resilient local food systems, thriving farmers, and healthier communities through food access.

Produce sold & distributed for regional farmers

**\$4.2 MIL**

Cumulative total: \$36.5 million

Pounds of food grown by our backyard gardeners

**11,735**

Cumulative total: 159,669

Acres of forest land conserved through forest farming since 2018

**618**

Cumulative total: \$6.7 million

Pounds of produce donated to area food pantries

**790,380**

Cumulative total: 123,950

Food boxes donated to people in need

**31,513**

Cumulative total: 133,263



# WE'RE BUILDING A CAMPUS TO SUPPORT AGRICULTURE IN CENTRAL APPALACHIA

We are raising \$14 million to build an expansive agricultural campus on our 17+ acre property at 17444 Singingwood Lane in Bristol, VA. The campus will be a place where we champion agriculture by teaching people how to grow in ways that are more innovative, efficient, sustainable, profitable, and just.

A place that gives rise to new agriculture and food businesses, more efficient and successful farms, and a stronger regional workforce, all while providing better access to nutritious food and the resulting positive health outcomes.

Agriculture has the power to transform Central Appalachia. That's why, since 1995, ASD has been a quiet but driving force in economic development, supporting growers, food access, workforce development, and sustainability.

Our mission is to build a thriving regional food and agriculture system that creates healthy communities, respects the planet, and cultivates profitable opportunities for Appalachians.



# WHY DOES CENTRAL APPALACHIA NEED AN AGRICULTURE CAMPUS?

- **1 in 8 families is food insecure in Appalachia.**

That means every 8th house on your street, every 8th family in your place of worship, and every 8th worker at your business has no idea where their next meal is coming from.

- **The number of farms is declining.**

Appalachia lost nearly 30,000 farms and more than 1.8 million acres of farmland between 2007 and 2017, significantly outpacing the national rate.

- **Poverty, hunger, and unemployment.**

Central Appalachia is among the highest in the nation on average poverty, hunger, and unemployment. We are surrounded by food deserts. Yet, incredibly, Appalachia is home to some of the most fertile land in the nation.

For a more detailed explanation watch CEO Kathlyn Terry Baker's "Why a Campus" video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GLBS1jjlKqY>



# LEARNING LANDSCAPES

Learning Landscapes continues to cultivate far more than gardens—it cultivates curiosity, confidence, and a sense of belonging. While the program teaches children about agriculture, it also helps them become attentive, engaged citizens who appreciate their surroundings, make healthy choices, and practice being fully present.

The young people who participate in Learning Landscapes bring extraordinary energy to each site. Some arrive ready to sprint, climb, or explore the moment they step outdoors, and that enthusiasm is not only welcomed—it is essential.

The freedom to discover, investigate, and share small moments of joy with peers and adults is a central part of their growth. At our Boys & Girls Club sites, for example, students eagerly connected through hands-on play, spontaneous piggyback rides, and shared experiences in the garden.

Their exuberance in this safe space and support they receive through the program make those moments deeply meaningful.





# IN 2023,

Learning Landscapes continued to expand its reach and impact. Children found joy in tending their gardens, trying new foods, and building positive relationships with each other and with the natural world.

## 2023 Key Impacts:



Together, these accomplishments illustrate a growing network of gardens—and a growing community of young learners—rooted in exploration, discovery, and joy.

# AGROFORESTRY

Agroforestry is an integrative land-management approach that intentionally weaves trees and shrubs into crop and livestock systems to generate economic value, strengthen environmental resilience, and support thriving communities.

Because these systems can be complex, our team of Agroforesters fields a steady stream of inquiries, from site design and species selection to tree protection, marketing, and more. If one producer has a question, we know many others are likely asking the same.

To meet this need, ASD's Agroforestry department launched Ask an Agroforester, a new virtual webinar series introduced in 2023. Designed to deliver practical, research-based insights directly to growers, each session features a deep-dive presentation followed by a live Q&A with leading experts in the field.

The response was clear: demand for accessible agroforestry knowledge is growing. In its inaugural year, Ask an Agroforester offered seven webinars, reaching 202 live attendees and an additional 3,573 viewers on YouTube—extending evidence-based guidance to producers across the region and beyond.



To explore the full series, visit the Ask an Agroforester playlist on our YouTube channel.



# 2023 AGRO HIGHLIGHTS

Among the many milestones we celebrated this year, several standout achievements emerged within our Agroforestry initiatives. Noteworthy highlights include:

20

Agroforestry site visits conducted

1,182

People trained on agroforestry

618

Acres conserved under agroforestry best practices

18

Producers awarded financial assistance for agroforestry implementation



## GROWER SPOTLIGHT

David Wallace, owner of Reeds Valley Farm, is a grower with the Appalachian Harvest Herb Hub. We asked him what he liked most about growing through the Herb Hub and here's what he said:

*"Appalachian Harvest Herb Hub has given me the options and help I needed to get started growing medicinal herbs. Without the Herb Hub, diversifying my farm to increase my revenue would not be possible! I am so thankful to ASD for giving me the opportunity to constantly evolve my farm into a more sustainable and profitable business."*

- David Wallace

# GROUNDWORK

Groundwork provides paid, on-the-job training supported by a comprehensive professional development curriculum.

Rooted in ASD's mission to strengthen Appalachian agriculture and the regional local-food economy, Groundwork is designed to create pathways toward long-term stability by addressing the individual and systemic barriers that limit workforce participation.

Through access to education, essential resources, and strategic market and partner connections, Groundwork equips participants with the tools they need to succeed—whether pursuing employment, launching a business, or entering agricultural entrepreneurship.

Despite a challenging year marked by the conclusion of several major grants and significant staffing transitions, 2023 was one of Groundwork's most impactful years to date.

# 2023 ACHIEVEMENTS



100% job placement: Every Groundwork graduate secured full-time, family-sustaining employment within three months of completing the program.



80+ certifications earned: Participants completed more than eighty career-ready certifications through our partnership with adult education providers.



4 businesses launched: Graduates created four new ventures, including a value-added product line and a fully operational farm.






19 graduates: Nineteen participants met the required hours and completed the full Groundwork program.

These metrics reflect a program that not only offers training but also catalyzes meaningful, lasting opportunity.



## SUCCESS STORIES

Groundwork's impact is most clearly seen in the accomplishments of its graduates:

-  Michael launched his own farm using supplies secured through program partnerships all while obtaining a full-time driving position.
-  Juniper established her own farm and simultaneously secured a full-time job in agricultural employment during her program participation.
-  Robert earned his Certified Nurse Aide license and acquired start-up capital to begin a beef farming operation with his brother.

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Beyond these individual achievements, Groundwork also supported broader community initiatives.

The launch of Healthy Tazewell brought together ten regular participants, and early 2024 marked the installation of the new Abingdon Greenhouse, expanding hands-on training capacity for the seasons ahead.

Together, these milestones demonstrate Groundwork's growing role in building a stronger, more resilient workforce—one that is rooted in opportunity, supported by community, and equipped for the future of Appalachian agriculture.

# WINTER BUSINESS INTENSIVE

The Winter Business Intensive remains a cornerstone of Appalachian Sustainable Development's commitment to strengthening the region's small business ecosystem. Designed for early-stage and growing entrepreneurs, the program provides a supportive environment where participants gain practical skills, build meaningful connections, and access expert guidance to advance their businesses.

In 2023, 16 entrepreneurs enrolled in the program, participating in targeted sessions focused on business planning, financial management, marketing strategy, and operational effectiveness. Beyond technical knowledge, the Intensive cultivates peer learning and collaboration, fostering confidence, innovation, and a shared sense of purpose among participants.

While the program continues to be highly valued, participant retention remains an opportunity for growth. Evening class schedules can present challenges for entrepreneurs balancing work and family responsibilities, particularly those with young children. In response, ASD is exploring adjustments to improve accessibility and ensure more business owners can fully benefit from the experience.

Despite these challenges, the Winter Business Intensive delivers lasting impact. Each cohort represents an investment in local entrepreneurs — equipping them with the tools, networks, and resilience needed to grow sustainable businesses and contribute to a more vibrant regional economy.

# F.A.R.M

## (FARMER AND RANCHER MENTORING)

Designed to build practical skills and deepen agricultural knowledge, F.A.R.M. aims to support participants in advancing their careers, strengthening local food systems, and contributing meaningfully to regional resilience.

One notable achievement this year was the dedication demonstrated by the interns who entered the program. Twenty-two interns enrolled, and while completion proved challenging, one intern successfully finished the full program from start to finish—a milestone that reflects both individual perseverance and the program's capacity to support committed participants.

At the same time, the completion rate underscores an important area for growth. Understanding the barriers that affected retention will help shape future improvements, ensuring the program can better meet the needs of aspiring farmers and maximize its impact across the region.

Despite these challenges, the foundation laid this year highlights promising potential: with continued development, the program can become a meaningful resource for the agricultural community and a powerful catalyst for farmer success at all levels.



# FOOD ACCESS, FOOD SAFETY

The Appalachian Harvest Food Hub continues to play a central role in strengthening food security across the region. Since the onset of COVID-19, the food hub has led local efforts to distribute food boxes and respond to urgent community needs—work that remains essential today.

The Appalachian Harvest facility consistently meets rigorous standards, successfully passing all health and safety inspections as well as annual organic audits.

Each year, Appalachian Harvest provides training to 75–150 farmers, with at least 65 participants obtaining food safety certifications and/or organic certification.

This capacity is especially important for supporting small family farmers as they navigate complex certification requirements and organic regulations.

The broader challenge facing the region's agricultural economy remains unchanged: while every sector of the food system has seen increases in compensation since 2005, farmers themselves have not.

Rising labor and input costs, combined with stagnant wholesale pricing from large-scale buyers, create an unsustainable burden. Encouraging farmers to continue investing in certifications and trainings—essential for market access—requires ongoing advocacy, partnership, and new solutions.

ASD's food box program has helped bridge this gap by purchasing farmers' "seconds," offering an additional revenue stream and incentivizing continued participation in safety and quality programs.

## 2023 HIGHLIGHTS & SUCCESSES



Leadership recognized: ASD's Robin Robbins was appointed to the Virginia Commission to End Hunger, reflecting the program's longstanding leadership in regional food security.



Excellence in compliance: Appalachian Harvest successfully completed the USDA Harmonized Audit, Food Defense inspection, and organic inspections, reaffirming its commitment to industry-leading standards.

Appalachian Harvest remains a trusted anchor in the regional food system—supporting farmers, strengthening certifications, and ensuring Appalachian communities have access to healthy, locally grown food.

# APPALACHIAN HARVEST

At Appalachian Harvest, sales play a critical role in expanding market access for local farmers. By connecting producers to larger regional buyers, the program helps bring fresh, local, nutrient-dense food to more consumers —strengthening both farm viability and community health.

It is a model where everyone truly benefits, and it reflects our commitment to being a brand with a larger purpose.

In 2023, Appalachian Harvest advanced this mission through several key initiatives. Through the Virginia Department of Education's CLPPP grant, we delivered farm-fresh products to more than 20 local schools, increasing students' access to nutritious, locally sourced foods.

We also expanded the availability of regional beef through Food Country's Duffield and Abingdon locations, generating over \$20,000 in wholesale sales and creating dependable outlets for area producers.



**Make 'em drool for dinner**  
with beef raised right here at home

- ✔ USDA Inspected
- ✔ Straight from farmers in Central Appalachia
- ✔ Lean, nutritious, high quality, and tender
- ✔ Sustainably and humanely raised
- ✔ Better for you and the planet

that's what we call  
**beefin' good!**



asdevelop.org



# HARVEST REALITY

As always, product availability remains an ongoing challenge in local food systems. Farmers may harvest more—or less—than anticipated, requiring the team to pivot quickly to market surplus products and source alternatives when quantities fall short.

Our ability to adapt in real time directly influences farmer income, buyer satisfaction, and the overall efficiency of the supply chain.

Despite these complexities, Appalachian Harvest continues to strengthen regional food access while advocating for fair, reliable markets for Appalachian growers. Through strategic partnerships and agile operations, we are helping local farmers reach more customers—and helping communities access food grown close to home.



# BOARD

## **Antoinette Goodrich**

Laughing Water Farm

## **Ben Casteel - Chair**

Program Coordinator for Agriculture  
and Natural Resources, Virginia  
Highlands Community College

## **Dirk Moore - Vice Chair**

Appalachian Center for Civic Life,  
Office of the President

## **Dr. Heather Champney**

Pediatric Physical & Obesity  
Medicine Specialist

## **Dr. Steven Hopp**

Adjunct Associate Professor  
Emory & Henry College

## **Dr. Theresa Burriss**

Appalachian Regional & Rural  
Studies Center at Radford University

## **Earl Gohl**

Former Appalachian Regional  
Commission Federal Co-Chair,  
Member at Large

## **Jake Harris**

Truist Bank

## **Janet Woolwine**

Entrepreneur  
Member at Large

## **Jason Willis**

Sam Brown Healthcare  
Communications, Traffic  
Director

## **Jim Baldwin**

Cumberland Plateau  
Planning District Commission

## **JoBeth Wright**

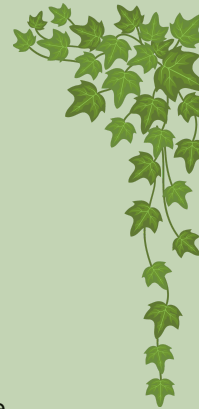
Community Development Analysis  
with Aetna Better Health of VA

## **John Gifford - Secretary**

Retired Attorney, Browning,  
Lamie, and Gifford, P.C.

## **John Thompson - Treasurer**

Accounting Manager, Strongwell



## **Scott Wilson**

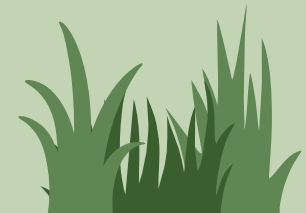
Sr. Project Manager/Associate  
Thompson & Litton, Inc

## **Stephen Collins**

Purchasing Manager, Hard Rock  
Hotel & Casino, Bristol

## **Trevor Hansard**

Owner & Veteran,  
Red-Tail Grove Farm



# OUR STAFF



**Kathlyn Terry Baker**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Morgan Bradley**  
Agriculture Education  
Program Manager

**Debbie Browning**  
Marketing Manager

**Amanda Bryson**  
Groundwork, Duffield

**Katie Commender**  
Director of Agroforestry

**Robert Cope**  
Regional Sales and  
Marketing Manager

**Sylvia Crum**  
Director of Communications  
and Development

**Lindsey Keen Felty**  
Outreach Manager

**Matthew Foster**  
Appalachian Harvest  
Truck Driver

**Heather Washam**  
Groundwork, Duffield

**David Gabbert**  
Ground work Tazewell  
Garden Supervisor

**Hannah Gibbs**  
Director of Workforce  
Development

**Roger Garrett**  
Appalachian Harvest Facility  
Manager

**Natasha Griffis**  
Grant Accountant

**Jessica Harless**  
Finance Assistant

**Dylan Johnson**  
Appalachian Harvest  
Truck Driver

**Adam Pendleton**  
Appalachian Harvest  
General Manager

**Shannon Joyce**  
Herb Hub Associate

**Michael Klarman**  
Veteran Program  
Manager

**Heather Wolford**  
Groundwork, Bristol

**Chelsea Lee**  
Operations Manager

**Kevin McNew**  
Appalachian Harvest  
Food Hub Assistant

**Della McGuire**  
Grant Writer

**Shannon Lenahan**  
Herb Hub Associate

**Alyssa Maring**  
Groundwork, Abingdon

**Brittany Woodby**  
Regional Sales &  
Account Manager

**Lisa K. Worley**  
Groundwork, Abingdon  
Garden Manager

**Juniper Joseph**  
Groundwork, Abingdon

**Machelle Ramey**  
Groundwork, Tazewell

**Casie Martinez**  
Groundwork, Abingdon

**Angie Vanover**  
Chief Operations Officer

**Josh Thompson**  
Groundwork Social  
Enterprise Manager

**Robin Suggs**  
Herb Hub Procurement  
Manager

**LeeAnn Vanover**  
Finance Assistant

**Emilie Tweardy**  
Agroforester

**Robin Robbins**  
Sr. Director of Food  
Access and Food Safety

**Jenni Roop**  
Agriculture Education  
Communications Manager

**Freddy Velasquez**  
Groundwork, Bristol

**Stesha Warren**  
Agroforester

**Ahron Null**  
Groundwork, Tazewell

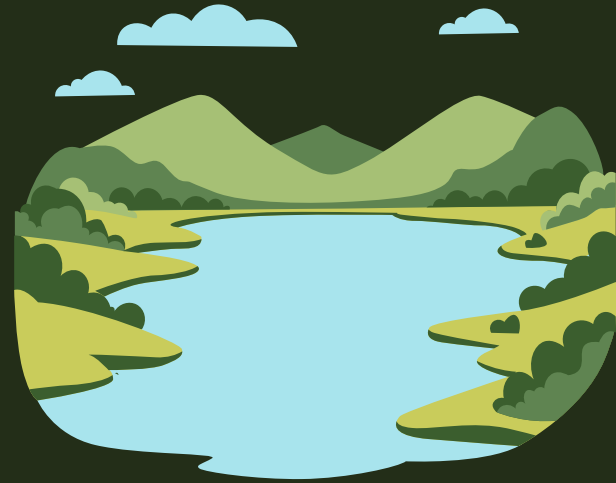
# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

LIABILITIES	2022	2023	2023 % of Total
Accounts Payable	\$407,968	\$771,980	66%
Notes Payable	\$303,312	\$359,252	31%
Other Liabilities	\$68,961	\$32,941	3%
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$780,241</b>	<b>\$1,164,173</b>	<b>100%</b>

ASSETS	2022	2023	2023 % of Total
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$655,785	\$544,185	33%
Receivables	\$403,232	\$154,531	10%
Fixed Assets-Net	\$917,809	\$926,075	57%
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$1,976,826</b>	<b>\$1,624,791</b>	<b>100%</b>

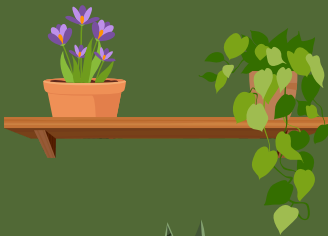
NET ASSETS	2022	2023	2023 % of Total
Unrestricted	\$ --	\$ --	0%
Temporarily Restricted	\$1,103,372	\$1,702,977	100%
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$1,103,372</b>	<b>\$1,702,977</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$1,883,613</b>	<b>\$2,867,150</b>	

# STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES



REVENUE	2022	2023	2023 % of Total	EXPENSES	2022	2023	2023 % of Total
Grants	\$2,228,394	\$3,085,751	73%	Program Services	\$2,874,372	\$3,203,870	89%
Donations	\$382,064	\$384,351	9%	General and Administrative	\$273,905	\$208,028	6%
Income from Enterprises	\$718,574	\$704,594	17%	Fundraising	\$88,915	\$176,984	5%
Other Income	\$55,376	\$25,830	1%	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$3,237,192</b>	<b>\$3,588,882</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$3,384,408</b>	<b>\$4,200,526</b>	<b>100%</b>	Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets	\$147,216	\$611,644	

**73%**  
GRANTS



**REVENUE BY CATEGORY**

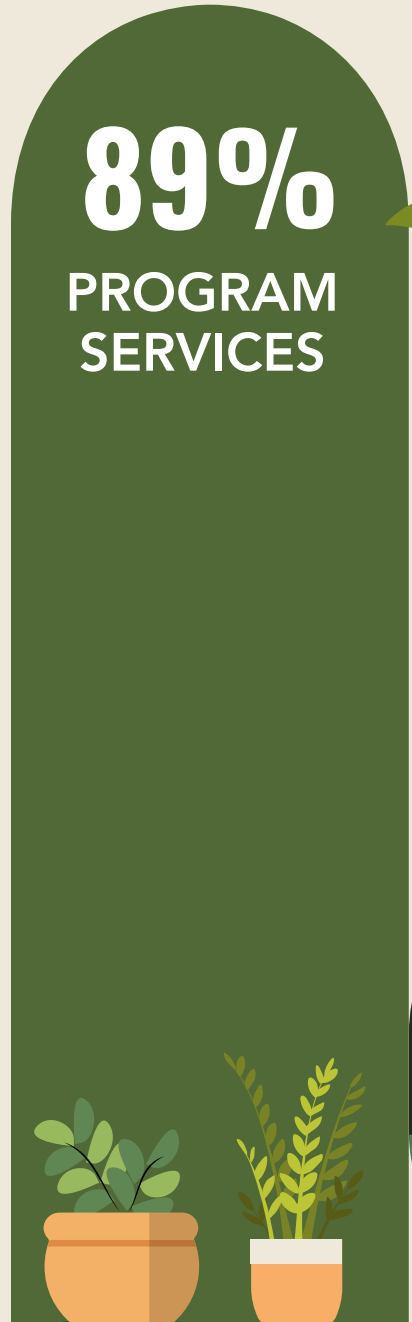
DONATIONS  
**9%**



**17%**  
INCOME FROM  
ENTERPRISES



**89%**  
PROGRAM  
SERVICES

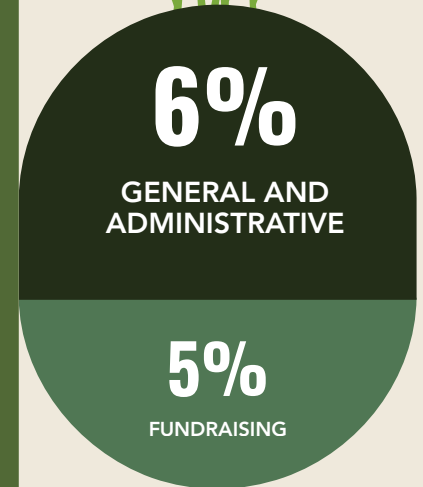


**6%**  
GENERAL AND  
ADMINISTRATIVE



**5%**  
FUNDRAISING

**EXPENSES BY CATEGORY**





# THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF OUR WORK

APPALACHIAN  
sustainable  
DEVELOPMENT

To learn more about ASD's mission  
visit our website [@asdevelop.org](http://asdevelop.org)