



**Mano en Mano**  
HAND IN HAND  
Annual Report **2021**





Since Mano en Mano was founded in 2005, countless hearts, minds and hands have supported us to grow, learn, and evolve. 2021 was another year of unprecedented growth for us as we said goodbye to pillars in our leadership, welcomed both new and familiar faces into different roles, and continued to expand and deepen our services. We opened Rayitos de Sol Bilingual Childcare, welcomed new families to Maine through Welcome Home Downeast LLC, and continued to support our community through the COVID-19 pandemic.

With growth comes change, and some of the biggest changes in 2021 include updating our mission and vision statements, adapting our programming to meet community needs resulting from the pandemic, and saying 'goodbye' to Ian Yaffe, our Executive Director of over 10 years. In March, Ian transitioned away from Mano en Mano to pursue a new role at Maine Department of Health and Human Services. In his absence, we welcomed Juana Rodriguez Vazquez into the role of Executive Director.

We hope you enjoy and find inspiration while reading about the many ways Mano en Mano and the community leaders we work with have impacted the State of Maine in 2021. Whether you are a community member, volunteer, ally, partner, donor, staff, board member, or somebody just getting to know Mano en Mano for the first time as you read this, please remember that this work is just the beginning and you have a vital role to play in advancing our mission and working towards justice.

In solidarity and with gratitude,



*Juana Rodriguez Vazquez*

Juana Rodriguez Vazquez  
Executive Director



*Adan Delgado*

Adan Delgado  
Board of Directors Chair



## A Stronger Mission & Vision

In 2021, with the support of community members, staff and board members, Mano en Mano redefined and sharpened the organization's mission and vision to adequately reflect our work and long-term goals for the future. One of the most important changes was increasing the scope of the vision: from Downeast Maine to the entire state of Maine.

**MISSION:** Work with farmworkers statewide and immigrants in Downeast Maine to empower them to thrive.

**VISION:** A stronger, more inclusive **Maine** where the contributions of diverse communities are welcomed, access to essential services, education, and housing are ensured, and social justice and equity are embraced.



The Community Advocates share a laugh. This team does outreach to individuals and families living in the camps during the blueberry harvest.





*Mano en Mano staff members Laura Thomas and Cindy Tosca set up a heat lamp for the Welcome & Resource Center in Cherryfield during the wreath season.*

# COVID Response

In 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact the health, well being, and livelihoods of community members across Maine. With the surge in new variants including Delta and Omicron, Mano en Mano worked across all of our programs to support community members to stay safe, access vaccine services and education, and provide emergency support to individuals and families who had received a positive diagnosis.

In order to keep community members safe, Mano en Mano continued to reimagine our traditions and implemented a socially distanced Drive-Thru style Mother's Day and La Posada events. We also continued to develop our services and implemented new strategies to support our community including: hiring six bilingual (Spanish/English) Vaccine Navigators, organizing vaccine clinics, and managing a quarantine shelter to provide housing for individuals who tested positive for COVID.

Here are some of the key elements that Mano en Mano implemented as part of our COVID-19 Response:

### Quarantine Shelter

Mano en Mano ran a quarantine shelter in Bangor to provide a safe place to stay for seasonal workers who had tested positive for COVID-19. It first opened in summer 2020 and closed March 2022. The shelter served hundreds of individuals and their families.

### Estamos Aquí Fund

The Estamos Aquí Fund was a mutual aid fund designed to support immigrants and farmworkers in Maine with financial challenges associated with COVID-19. Started in 2020, as of May 1, 2022 the Estamos Aquí Fund has successfully redistributed a total of **\$613,358**, which has supported a total of **2,991 individuals** across the state of Maine.

### Vaccine Navigators

With support from the Health Resources and Services Administration and the National Alliance for Hispanic Health, Mano en Mano hired six bilingual (Spanish/English) Vaccine Navigators located throughout the state. Their goal was to establish and expand access to educational information and resources throughout Maine.

### Social Supports during COVID

Mano en Mano provided food, resources, and/or social support such as grocery shopping or enrichment activities for children who had to stay at home so that people could quarantine safely. Mano en Mano also supported **756 people** to receive COVID testing in 2021 and **768 people** to receive vaccines and boosters.





# Access & Advocacy

The Access & Advocacy Program provides spaces for community members to come together to dismantle barriers to the resources they deserve in the language they can access. We bridge the gaps in access to medical, legal, financial, and language services and fulfill basic needs like warm winter clothes or food. Community members determine their needs and we respond with comprehensive services that center the individual and their agency. We ensure all immigrants & farmworkers gain equitable access to the essential services and resources they need to live and thrive in Maine.

2021 was a year of transition for Mano en Mano. In the Access and Advocacy program, we hired a new program director and our first year-round Haitian Creole speaking staff. We were able to transition back to the office and begin providing in-person support again. We continued to support our community through the COVID-19 pandemic and began offering community-based testing from our office. The feedback from the community as part of the re-envisioning process helped us stay focused on what the community really needed.

**2,250**

Access & Advocacy encounters

**81%**

of all encounters occurred in a language other than English including: Spanish & Haitian Creole

## Welcome & Resource Center Partner Organizations

Maine Seacoast Mission, Maine Mobile Health Program, Healthy Acadia, ILAP, Preble Street, Goodwill, and MaineNeeds

**2,602**

people accessed food and clothing



## Welcome & Resource Centers

Mano en Mano continues to support seasonal workers arriving to Downeast Maine for blueberry and wreath seasons. It is estimated that about **2,300-3,500** workers arrive annually to the Downeast area during the wreath making season alone. Welcome and Resource Centers bridge the gap to provide access to transportation, language support, and other essential services including food, clothing, legal, and medical support.

Long-term relationships based on mutual trust and respect were essential to making these centers a success. We received feedback from community members saying: *"Venimos de Texas anteayer, y hace mucho más frío aquí en Maine. Gracias por apoyarnos con los abrigos y mantas."* *"We came from Texas the day before last, and it is much colder here in Maine. Thank you for supporting us with the coats and blankets."*



With support from the Good Shepherd Food Bank, community members and Mano en Mano staff organized a culturally nourishing food distribution in Cherryfield, Maine.



## Get to Know Our Vaccine Navigators



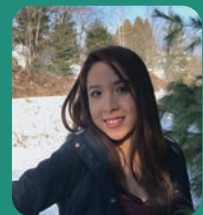
"I became a vaccine navigator because I wanted to be able to help stop the pandemic in our community. My happiness comes from serving others, and I am ready to continue helping my Hispanic brothers and sisters that come to the state of Maine."

- Valeria Vallejo



"I'm excited to expand my teaching experience to include vaccinations to help people make the best decisions for themselves based on quality sources of information. I can provide information about when and where people can get vaccinated around the state."

- Mandi Anderson



"I am excited to work in this new program because I want to help others get the vaccine and I am really hoping we can make a change in our community."

- Deysi García Ortiz

## Access & Advocacy Program Story

# COVID-19 Vaccine Navigators

In 2021 Mano en Mano worked statewide to provide support to families and individuals accessing vaccine support and services.

With support from the Health Resources and Services Administration and the National Alliance for Hispanic Health, Mano en Mano hired six bilingual (Spanish/English) Vaccine Navigators located throughout the state. Their goal was to establish and expand access to educational information and resources throughout Maine, and support people in making their decision to get vaccinated against COVID-19.

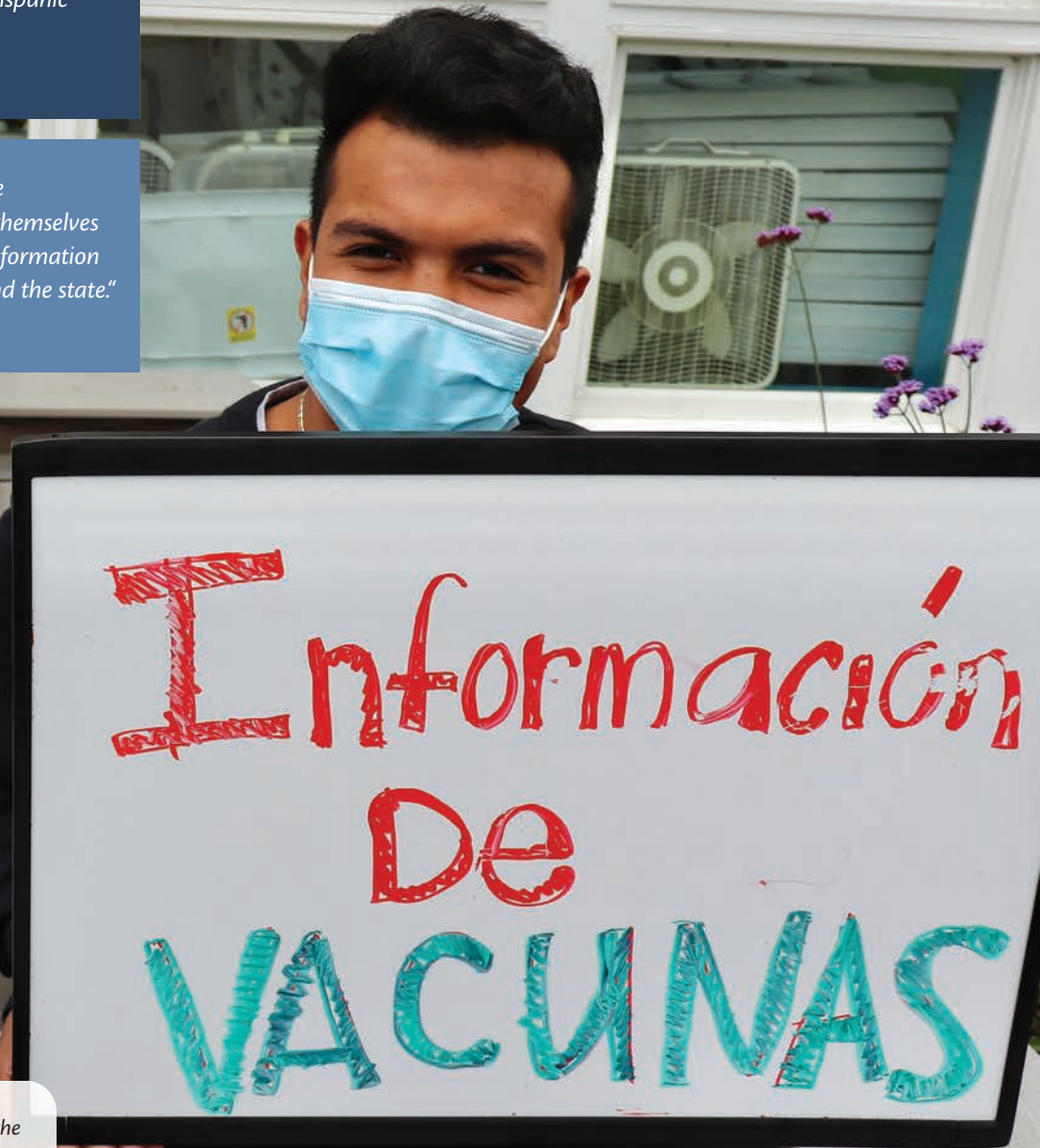
The team worked to serve the Spanish speaking population of Maine, and to provide information, language assistance and other services to break down the barriers people may face when seeking vaccine services. In addition to language interpretation, the vaccine navigators can also provide transport to and from vaccine centers/clinics, help schedule appointments at health centers statewide, and answer questions people may have about the vaccine.

From Southern Maine, to Aroostock County, the team of 6 navigators worked alongside local clinics, businesses, and healthcare centers to provide services and education and were able to provide vaccine education and information to **7,647 individuals and support 768 people to get vaccinated.**

**768**  
people received  
COVID-19 vaccine

**9,301**  
people received  
vaccine education  
through Vaccine  
Navigator and Access  
& Advocacy teams

**756**  
COVID tests  
provided



Vaccine Navigator, Rodrigo Zamora, at the Wreath Welcome & Resource Center during the 2021 wreath season, provides information about vaccines and COVID safety.





# Rayitos de Sol Bilingual Childcare

2021 marks the opening of Mano en Mano's newest program: **Rayitos de Sol Bilingual Childcare**. Mano en Mano officially opened the center on January 19, 2021 in Milbridge, with the core mission of providing bilingual Spanish and English childcare that centers the languages and cultures of the students we serve. Since Rayitos de Sol opened its doors, the center has acted as a bridge, connecting families from different backgrounds so that language and culture are valued and appreciated by our whole community.

Opening the center during the COVID-19 pandemic was a challenge, but our team and community showed great trust, dedication, and creativity and we were able to keep our team and community safe while providing care to children and families. We reached our operating capacity of 12 students all under the age of 4.

Some of our first year highlights include: planting (and eating!) veggies and fruits from the Rayitos de Sol garden, winning "Best Overall" float at Milbridge Days, learning how to cook by making tortillas, salsa, cookies, and pizza, and taking trips to the Milbridge Wellness Park in our 6-child stroller!

We look forward to continuing to celebrate the unique identities and languages of all students and families we work with. We will continue to provide spaces that honor and serve each child wholly, uplifting their individuality, linguistic skills, and cultural heritage.

## Perspectives from Rayitos Parents

*"Lo que me más ha gustado es que primero que nada el trato que le dan a mi hija y a mi. Y que es un lugar donde les enseñan español y ingles, y que es bilingüe."*

*"What I have most liked is that first and foremost, the way they treat me and my daughter. And that it's a place where they teach Spanish and English, and that it's bilingual."*

- Maria Ruiz, madre de Mia/Mia's mom

*"The staff is amazing. I really love that Julian is exposed to many different traditions and he even sings in Spanish at home!"*

- Stephanie Moore, Julian's mom



# Celebrating Identity

In 2021 during Latinx Heritage Month, students at Rayitos de Sol celebrated by continuing to focus their curriculum around celebrating the unique culture and languages of our community. Teachers focused the students' literacy work around books incorporating important Latinx leaders, and students got active while learning traditional Mexican folk dances and making pan dulce and tortillas.

While this month brings awareness to the importance of celebrating identity and culture, the team at Rayitos de Sol is working to make this appreciation a year-long occurrence.

*"At Rayitos we don't just celebrate our community for a month, we celebrate our identities year-round! We believe it is important for children to see their language and culture appreciated and uplifted everyday, and for all children to learn how to celebrate cultures outside of their own."*

- Juana Rodriguez Vazquez, Executive Director and Rayitos de Sol Childcare Director

15

families served through Rayitos de Sol in 2021

9

families receive childcare subsidies and support

\$5.00 to \$7.00

more per hour that Rayitos staff earn compared to the average child care provider wage in Maine

16

children ages 1-4 years old enrolled at Rayitos de Sol

5,400

meals provided to children





# Housing

Safe, affordable housing continues to be a significant challenge for community members. 2021 saw major increases in real estate prices, limited inventory of homes for sale, and the continuation of rental units being difficult to find. Mano en Mano's housing program was created to help the community address these challenges.

The **Housing Barrier Removal Fund** allocated the remainder of the available housing grants to support community members ability to purchase homes or repair the homes they already own. 24 grants for down payment assistance were awarded and 16 for home repair. In 2021 the down payment assistance supported the purchase of eight homes and and completion of nine home repair projects.

**Welcome Home Downeast LLC** has continued fundraising to support the purchase and renovation of single family homes to make available to rent with the option to buy within 5 years. This program is designed to support families that are new to Washington County who desire to live here permanently. The first home was completed in November with two additional homes identified and under contract before the end of 2021.

Mano en Mano took over management responsibilities at **Hand in Hand Apartments** in August. This means that tenants and prospective applicants now work directly with Mano en Mano's staff rather than an outside management company. This change is helping Mano en Mano deliver on its goal of making the apartments a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment where families' voices are heard and respected.

**\$400,000**

total funds available through the Housing Barrier Removal Fund

**\$10,000**

grants available for families through the Housing Barrier Removal Fund

**23**

people have lived in the Hand in Hand Apartments this year



*This is the first home purchased by Welcome Home Downeast LLC during summer 2021. The home, located in Harrington, Maine, was renovated and made move-in ready for a family.*



## Housing Barrier Removal Fund by the Numbers

**40**

awards granted from the Housing Barrier Removal Fund in 2021

**63%**

of awards went to down payment assistance

**37%**

of awards went to home repairs

For Downeast Maine to be both socially and economically vibrant, people need to be able to **put down roots and make this area their home**. That's why the Housing Barrier Removal Fund was created: to ensure that all folks with ties to our community that want to stay are able.





## Housing Program Story

# Welcome Home

Shelby DeAngelis and her children are pictured inside of their new home.

## A Place to Call Home

In 2021 Welcome Home Downeast LLC welcomed a new family to the area! In November, the DeAngelis family officially became the newest residents of Harrington, Maine. They moved into the **first property purchased and newly renovated by Welcome Home Downeast LLC**. The home is located less than two miles from the local elementary and high schools.

The DeAngelis' new home is the first of **7 homes** that will be available for rent for families that have been part of the seasonal workforce. Families will have the option to purchase the home they are renting within 5 years.

### Interview with Shelby DeAngelis, Resident of the first home of Welcome Home Downeast

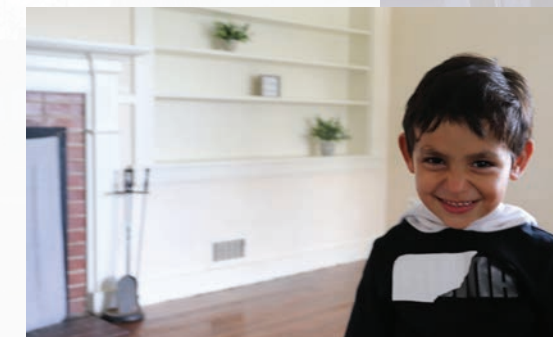
*"My main motivation for staying in Maine is definitely my kids. When I had my first child we moved to Florida, but have been coming up to Maine every summer to work during the blueberry harvest and then wreaths. Once the wreath season finishes in January, we head back to Florida and return in August.*

*It was really hard for my kids to start school here in Maine, and then leave for Florida and finish the year there. I started to notice they were falling behind. Another factor is that I have my family and their support here. My kids have cousins their age and the community is smaller including the schools. People and teachers care about your kids and how well they're doing.*

*I honestly feel like I won the lottery, and I am excited to see the program grow and for more families to have this opportunity. I love the house and the kids do too. I've rented before, but I never felt like those places were my home, but this place feels different. I am excited to start traditions and build a future for my kids where they feel like this is their home and that they belong."*

Welcome Home Downeast LLC is a subsidiary of Mano en Mano formed through a partnership with Sunrise County Economic Council (SCEC). The overarching vision of Welcome Home Downeast is to address the shortage of affordable, safe rental housing and provide a pathway to home ownership while simultaneously revitalizing residential town centers.

The DeAngelis family stayed in the home until early 2022. We are thrilled to have provided a home for their family, and are excited to share that we have welcomed new residents to the Harrington house in 2022.



Israel, also an MEP and BHS student, smiles wide during his family's move-in day.



# Maine Migrant Education Program

The goal of the Maine Migrant Education Program (MEP) is to provide support to migrant students and their families that qualify to compensate for educational disruption resulting from their mobile lifestyles. Mano en Mano implements the Maine Migrant Education Program across the entire state in partnership with the Maine Department of Education.

In 2021 we still saw some challenges with schools across the state as many adapted to hybrid models due to the pandemic, and others transitioned to in-person schooling. We offered tutoring for students in need and kept providing social emotional support among additional academic help. We did outreach throughout the state and explored other parts of Maine so that we could continue to find families and students between the ages of 0-20 to serve so that they experience less academic disruption, receive better support from their schools, and achieve their educational goals.

## What's an MEP service?

The Maine Migrant Education Program ensures that all eligible migrant students receive educational support services. **In 2021, staff provided 8,958 services, totaling 6,640 hours.**

*But what type of services does Mano en Mano provide?*

- Academic tutoring: virtual and in-person
- Aspirations counseling & assistance with college applications, financial aid, and scholarships
- Home visits and connecting families & students to health, food, and other resources
- Support for parents to understand the school system and advocate for their children's rights
- Educational field trips & college visits
- Connecting students with workplace readiness and job-training opportunities

**11**  
students graduated high school or obtained their HiSet in 2021

**309**  
students served statewide through Mano en Mano's MEP services

**6,640**  
hours of services provided to students and families in 2021



## Migrant Education Program Highlight

### Virtual Tutoring Student Becomes Featured Author!

This year, the Migrant Education Program continued to provide virtual tutoring support to students across Maine. These tutoring sessions provided both academic and social emotional support to students while adjusting to online and hybrid classroom settings.

One virtual tutoring student, Lea Martinez, became interested in storytelling and writing. During her tutoring sessions and in her free time, she wrote and illustrated her own books!

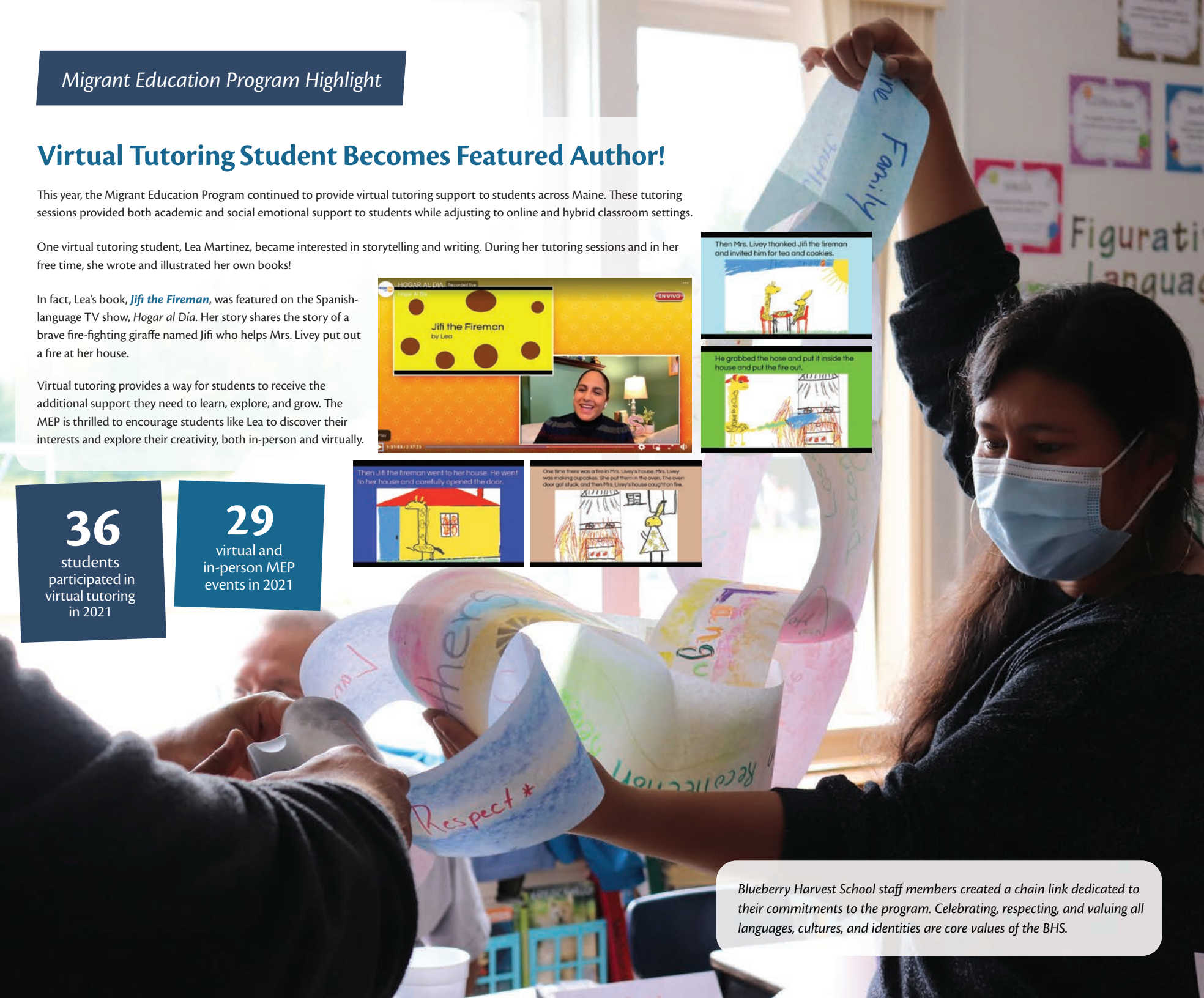
In fact, Lea's book, *Jifi the Fireman*, was featured on the Spanish-language TV show, *Hogar al Día*. Her story shares the story of a brave fire-fighting giraffe named Jifi who helps Mrs. Livey put out a fire at her house.

Virtual tutoring provides a way for students to receive the additional support they need to learn, explore, and grow. The MEP is thrilled to encourage students like Lea to discover their interests and explore their creativity, both in-person and virtually.



**36**  
students participated in virtual tutoring in 2021

**29**  
virtual and in-person MEP events in 2021



Blueberry Harvest School staff members created a chain link dedicated to their commitments to the program. Celebrating, respecting, and valuing all languages, cultures, and identities are core values of the BHS.



## Migrant Education Program Story

# Blueberry Harvest School

78

students enrolled in the Blueberry Harvest School

1,158

meals served to students, including breakfast, lunch, and snacks

78%

of BHS staff came from immigrant or First Nations families

Two students from the 11-13 age classroom compete in a race during Carnival Day, the final day of the BHS. Carnival Day featured special games, activities, prizes, snacks, and even a bounce house to celebrate the last day of our summer program.

# Creative Community

Each year the Blueberry Harvest School adopts a theme and focus based on feedback from parents and guardians. In 2021 the theme was 'Creative Community' and all teachers and student participated in activities and discussions designed to highlight and foster creativity in all its forms. Together we explored self-expression, problem-solving, and storytelling through art, language, music, writing, movement, and more.

Some of the ways that students explored creativity included: making collages, using new art materials and mediums, writing Zines, and meeting with professional artists including Blanka Amezcua and author Carlos Villacorta. Throughout the summer, students learned about the different ways to express creativity together.

## Turning Classrooms into Creative Communities

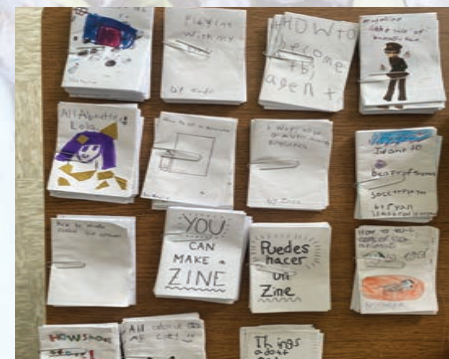
"Zine projects are designed to be open-ended and allow students to explore their interests, community connections, and the things that they are excited to learn about. Since Zines are designed to be shared, this project allows students to explore their own creativity, and share their ideas with friends and family. This encourages both personal creativity and inspires others to explore their creativity."

- Stefan Fink, 9-10 Classroom Lead Teacher

"I am from Mexico, and I have been influenced by Frida Kahlo who was a very powerful woman. I wanted to introduce them to her because she had lots of pain and difficulty in her life and her art reflects that. We all go through difficult times and I want to show my students that you can express some of those feelings that you experience through art."

I wanted my class to get to meet artists as well, because by exposing my students to people that have used their lived experiences to guide their work, they can feel empowered to celebrate their own unique identities. I hope that by seeing artists similar to them, that representation will encourage them to pursue their dreams."

- Francisca Smith, 11-13+ Classroom Lead Teacher





# Stronger Together

Mano en Mano and Maine Seacoast Mission staff load vans with food boxes to distribute to workers at labor camps during the blueberry harvest.



## FINANCES

The statements below are pending audit. Audited financial statements and copies of IRS Form 990 are posted at [www.manomaine.org/finance](http://www.manomaine.org/finance)

### CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2021

	<b>REVENUE</b>	
	Contributions	\$380,383
	Government Awards	\$1,753,806
	Grants	\$1,340,161
	Other Revenue	\$326,228
	<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$3,800,578</b>
	<b>EXPENSES</b>	
<b>Mano en Mano Programs</b>	Access and Advocacy	\$188,526
	COVID-19 Supports	\$538,872
	Housing	\$472,817
	Education	\$722,036
	<i>Total Mano en Mano Program Expenses</i>	<i>\$1,922,252</i>
<b>Fiscal-Sponsored Organizations</b>	Presente Maine	\$1,176,672
	TREE	\$236,911
	<i>Total Fiscal-Sponsored Organization Expenses</i>	<i>\$1,413,582</i>
<b>Operations</b>	Development	\$32,960
	Administration	\$567,320
	<i>Total Operations Expenses</i>	<i>\$600,280</i>
	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$3,936,113</b>

The difference in revenue and expenses is due to revenue earned in 2020 that was earmarked for use in 2021.

### Board of Directors

**Adan Delgado, Chair**  
Community Member

**Jasmine Francis**  
Community Member

**Andrea Mercado, Vice Chair**  
Lewiston Public Schools

**Hermila Vargas**  
Community Member

**Brian Dyer Stewart, Secretary**  
BDSWorks

**Silvia Paine**  
Community Member

**Melissa Denbow, Treasurer**  
Machias Savings Bank

**Jennifer Peters**  
Sunrise County Economic Council



# Gratitude

Thank you to the immigrant, indigenous, and farmworker communities that are at the center of our mission. Without your presence, ideas, and labor, there would be no Mano en Mano, and Maine would be a very different place.

Thank you to our staff, board of directors, partner organizations, foundations, and donors for all of your time, effort, ideas, resources, and dedication over the past year. Your collaboration and commitment makes our work possible.

## Join us

**VOLUNTEER.** We are always looking for dedicated individuals who can help carry out events, provide child care during Nuestra Voz meetings, and chaperone field trips with our Migrant Education Program. Learn more at: [www.manomaine.org/volunteer](http://www.manomaine.org/volunteer)

**DONATE** materials and clothing for our resource fairs, cooked meals for our family events or monetary contributions to keep our efforts going. Make a contribution at [manomaine.networkforgood.com](http://manomaine.networkforgood.com) or write to us at [info@manomaine.org](mailto:info@manomaine.org)

**FOLLOW** us on social media to stay updated with our latest news, events, and photos. Help spread the word about our work by liking and sharing our posts. Check us out at: [facebook.com/manomaine](https://facebook.com/manomaine)

**WORK** with us. We have a variety of seasonal and year-round positions. Check out our openings at: [mano-en-mano.breezy.hr](http://mano-en-mano.breezy.hr)

**FOR MORE WAYS TO GET INVOLVED, EMAIL US AT** [INFO@MANOMAINE.ORG](mailto:INFO@MANOMAINE.ORG)

## A Special Send Off



2021 marked a different kind of transition: saying goodbye to **Ian Yaffe, Mano en Mano's Executive Director from 2010 to 2021.**

Ian's leadership was crucial to the success of Mano en Mano and his visionary leadership will not be forgotten. During the past decade, Ian paved the way for Mano en Mano to grow into a statewide organization that has influenced the lives of countless individuals, families, and communities.

We are so grateful for all that Ian has done to build a culture of collaboration and inclusion within Mano en Mano. Ian made sure to continuously center community voices across all of our programs and projects.

There are never enough, or even quite the right words to describe all that you have done during your time charting the course for Mano en Mano. Ian, thank you for being the captain of our ship.



*A Blueberry Harvest School student enjoys her time outside at recess. The program focuses on social emotional learning and growth inside and outside the classroom.*





# Mano en Mano

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