

The logo for Daniel B. Sobel Friendship House is a circular emblem. It features a stylized white house silhouette with a chimney on the left and a door on the right. Inside the house, the text "DANIEL B. SOBEL FRIENDSHIP HOUSE" is written in white, with "DANIEL B. SOBEL" on the top line, "FRIENDSHIP" on the middle line, and "HOUSE" on the bottom line. The entire logo is set against a dark blue background.

Friendship House



WALK4FRIENDSHIP

2025

Boca Raton, Florida



Dear Friends,

What a defining year this has been for Friendship House.

Thanks to your ongoing support, we have continued to grow in both reach and purpose—serving over 70 families annually and building a community where individuals with special needs and their families feel supported, included, and connected.

As we reflect on the past six years, one thing is clear: the need continues to grow—and so must we. We are now at a point where the organization has the ability to scale and reach even more families. But growth at this level requires intention, structure, and the resources to sustain it.

This year, we increased our annual budget by nearly \$100,000, laying the groundwork for what's ahead. We recognize that to fully meet the need in our community, we must grow to an annual budget of \$350,000–\$400,000—what will allow us to expand our programs, strengthen our infrastructure, and ensure that no family is left without support.

We also launched our first Tour de Friendship bike ride, bringing together 30 riders in a powerful show of unity and purpose. This milestone represents more than a new event—it's part of a broader vision to build sustainable growth and long-term impact.

Behind every step forward is your belief in this mission. Friendship House continues to operate with a deep sense of responsibility—maximizing every dollar while working tirelessly to build something that can last and grow.

We are not there yet. But we are on our way.

Thank you for being part of this journey and for helping us create a community where every individual is seen, valued, and never alone.

In sincere gratitude,

FRIENDSHIP HOUSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rabbi Sholom Kessler

Rabbi Moshe Denburg

Rabbi Zalman Bukiet

Volunteer Impact

We are continuously growing our volunteer base. What began with a handful of high school students has become a dynamic community of volunteers who bring heart and energy to everything we do. Most join through word of mouth, school service referrals, or social media, and each receives an orientation to learn about our programs, participants, and how to build meaningful, respectful connections.

This year, we've also seen increased involvement from volunteers aged 18 and older—including young professionals and retirees—whose presence adds energy, deeper relationships, and essential support to our expanding programs.

Volunteers often share how their time at Friendship House leaves a lasting impact. Many describe how the connections they build shape their perspective, deepen their understanding of inclusion, and open their hearts in unexpected ways:



"Friendship House is an amazing organization that creates a great impact not only on the children, but also on the volunteers. The experience has given me the opportunity to connect with many people and bring joy to their lives. I always have a good time when I volunteer and look forward to coming back. The impact I've experienced will stay with me for the rest of my life."

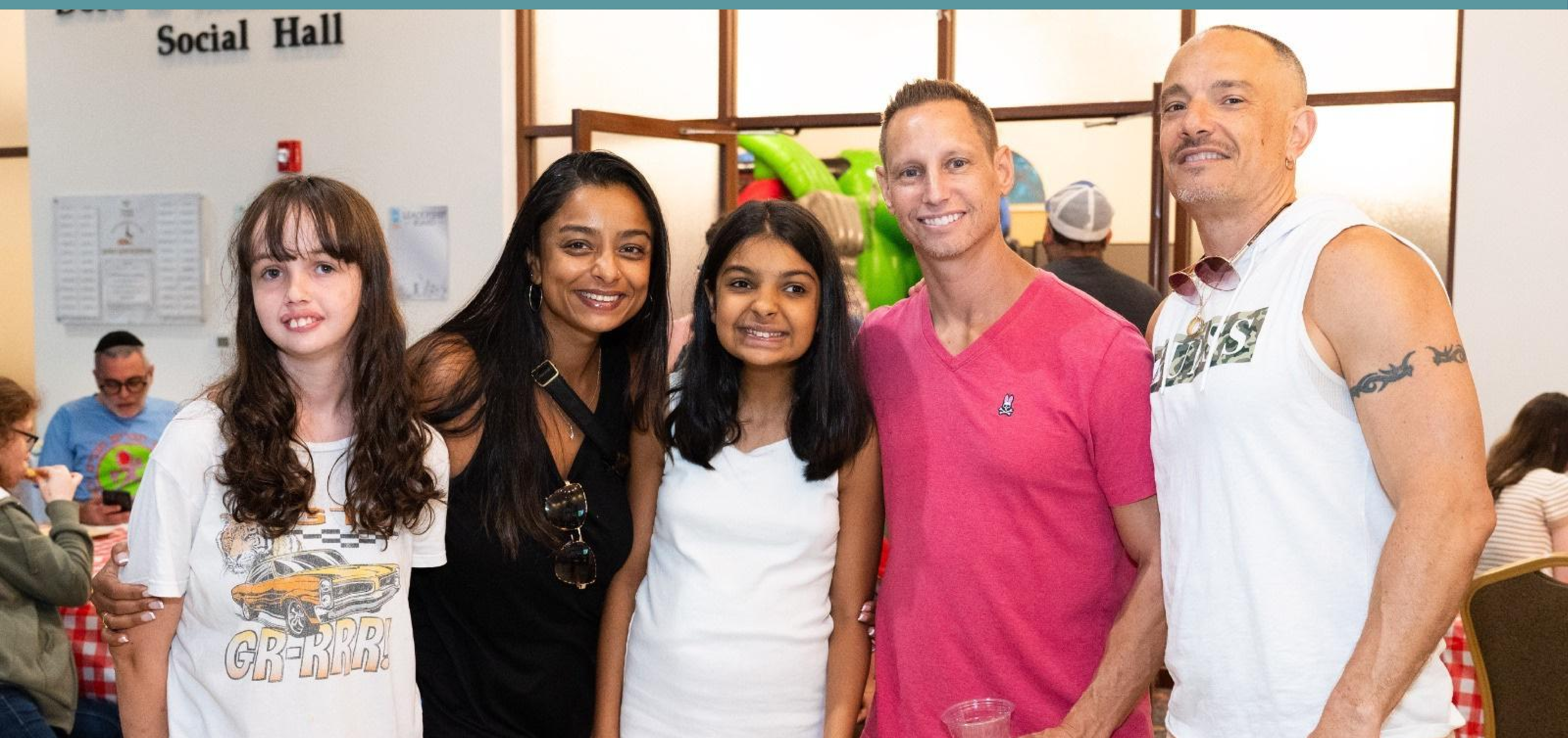
AVA GOODWICH · FH VOLUNTEER

"I've been volunteering with Friendship House, and Rabbi Kessler has a wonderful connection with each person. The young adults I work with all bring something to the table—friendship, comfort, and bonding. They support each other. For me, it's an infusion of positive energy. It's important to give back, but you receive so much in return."

KIM WALTUCH · FH VOLUNTEER

Research shows that youth who are involved in their community through volunteering are less likely to engage in risky behaviors and tend to perform better in school.

Friendship House is proud to provide these meaningful and rewarding opportunities for our high school volunteers.



Why is Friendship House so important to our community?!

CDC research from 2015–2017 found that 17% of children aged 3–17 have a developmental disability—a number that continues to rise. But beyond the data lies a deeper truth: children with special needs are often left out of everyday social experiences and friendships, leading to real isolation.

At Friendship House, we believe these children have special souls. When we create space for them to belong, we're not only changing their lives—we're transformed as well. Their presence uplifts families, volunteers, and the broader community.

Social connection is essential for every child's development, yet it's often out of reach due to barriers in access, support, and understanding. Parents face this reality every day—caring around the clock, often without help.

Friendship House exists to meet this need—not just through programs, but through connection, inclusion, and community. A place where every child is celebrated, and every family is supported.

IMPACT SNAPSHOT

70+

FAMILIES SERVED

80+

VOLUNTEERS

34

CORPORATE SPONSORS

2

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

50+

EVENTS

520

DONORS



Sunday Circle ran twice monthly from 2–4 PM and served 17 participants.

While it offers much-needed respite for parents, its heart lies in creating a joyful, inclusive space where children and teens with special needs can build friendships and feel truly at home.

Each session brought something new—from hands-on activities like pizza-making and art to unforgettable moments like dancing in a drum circle or meeting a live alligator. But what made Sunday Circle most special was the time spent with volunteer buddies—connections that offered not just support, but real friendship, trust, and joy.



WHAT ONE OF OUR FAMILIES SHARED:

"My son Jordan has been part of Friendship House for a few years now, and he absolutely loves it. It gives him a sense of community where he can make friends and truly enjoy himself. The staff is patient, thoughtful, and genuinely care about the children. We are so grateful to have this organization in our community."

LORI SOLODKIN *FH Parent*

Young Adult Club (Y.A.C) was offered 6–7:30 PM twice monthly and served 28 participants.

Designed for young adults with special needs, the program creates a welcoming space to build friendships, enjoy shared experiences, and connect with peers and volunteers in a relaxed, supportive environment.

This year's gatherings included everything from miniature golf and chef-led culinary nights to bowling outings and restaurant dinners. Whether trying something new or just enjoying time with friends, each session offered participants a chance to unwind, bond, and feel part of something meaningful. We're especially grateful to *Jon's Place* and *Century Grill* for sponsoring meals that made these evenings even more special.



"Our son, Chris, struggled with social anxiety and often felt isolated. After joining YAC, everything began to change. Within months, he became more outgoing, more confident, and started forming real friendships. This program has brought our family a sense of connection, support, and hope."

LINDA PRENTICE *FH Parent*

Sports Circle was offered weekly from 4–5 PM and served 14 participants.

This after-school program gives children with special needs the opportunity to stay active, build confidence, and enjoy movement in a supportive, social environment. Paired with high school volunteers and guided by an experienced coach, participants receive encouragement both on and off the field.

This year focused on developing basic soccer skills, practicing teamwork, and building healthy routines—including guided cooldowns to help participants reset and recharge. More than just a game, Sports Circle creates space for growth, connection, and fun through the power of play.



WHAT ONE OF OUR FAMILIES SHARED:

"Our son, Josh, has been attending Friendship House programs for the past two years. He especially enjoys Sports Circle and spending time with friends. As a family, we've built meaningful connections with other families through these experiences."

NANCY KOILES FH Parent





Family & Holiday Events were held throughout the year and served 50 families.

These gatherings bring families together for seasonal celebrations in a warm, inclusive environment—creating space for connection, joy, and community. From outdoor events to community BBQs, each gathering offers a place where parents connect, children play, and families feel part of something meaningful.

These moments have become a highlight for many, fostering friendships, support, and a lasting sense of belonging. We are grateful to the **Jewish Federation of South Palm Beach County** for their partnership in making these events possible. This year also marked the launch of **Brighter Birthdays**—bringing celebrations directly into the homes of children with special needs.

WHAT ONE OF OUR PARTICIPANTS SHARED:

"I participate in several Friendship House programs, including Sports Circle, Sunday Circle, and Family & Holiday Events. I enjoy being part of Friendship House because I can be myself, spend time with friends, and be part of a community where I feel comfortable and included."

JACOB FARKASH *FH Participant*

Program Outcomes

86%

OF PARENTS REPORT A REDUCED LEVEL OF STRESS BY THEIR CHILD'S PARTICIPATION IN FH.

91%

OF PARENTS REPORT FH PROVIDES THE SUPPORT THEY VALUE.

100%

OF PARTICIPANTS REPORT FEELING MORE CONFIDENT ABOUT BEING ABLE TO MAKE FRIENDS.

94%

OF PARENTS AND VOLUNTEERS REPORT THE SOCIALIZATION SKILLS OF PARTICIPANTS HAVE IMPROVED.

100%

OF VOLUNTEERS REPORT IMPROVED SENSE OF PURPOSE.

80%

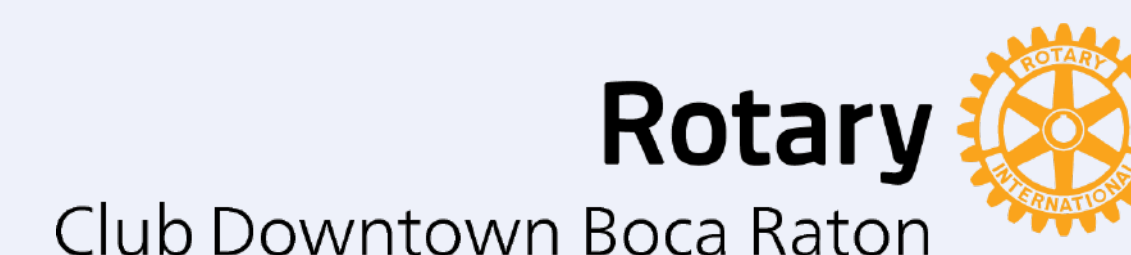
OF VOLUNTEERS FEEL NOTICEABLY MORE ENGAGED AT SCHOOL.

100%

OF VOLUNTEERS FEEL A NOTICEABLY MORE INCLUSIVE VIEW OF OTHERS.

Community Partners Impact

COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND SPONSORS HELP ENSURE FRIENDSHIP HOUSE IS SUPPORTED AND OUR MISSION IS BEING SHARED IN OUR COMMUNITY.

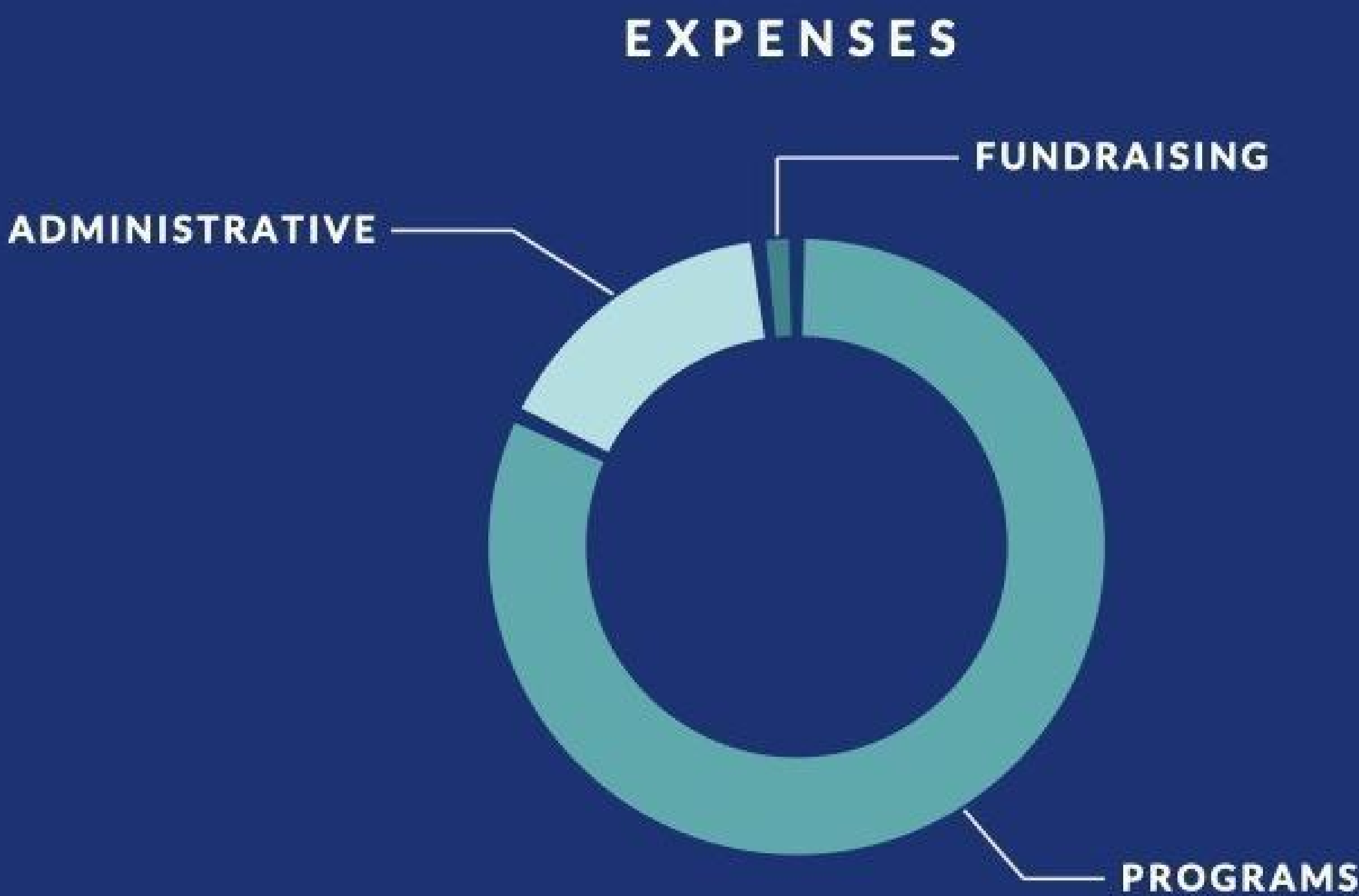
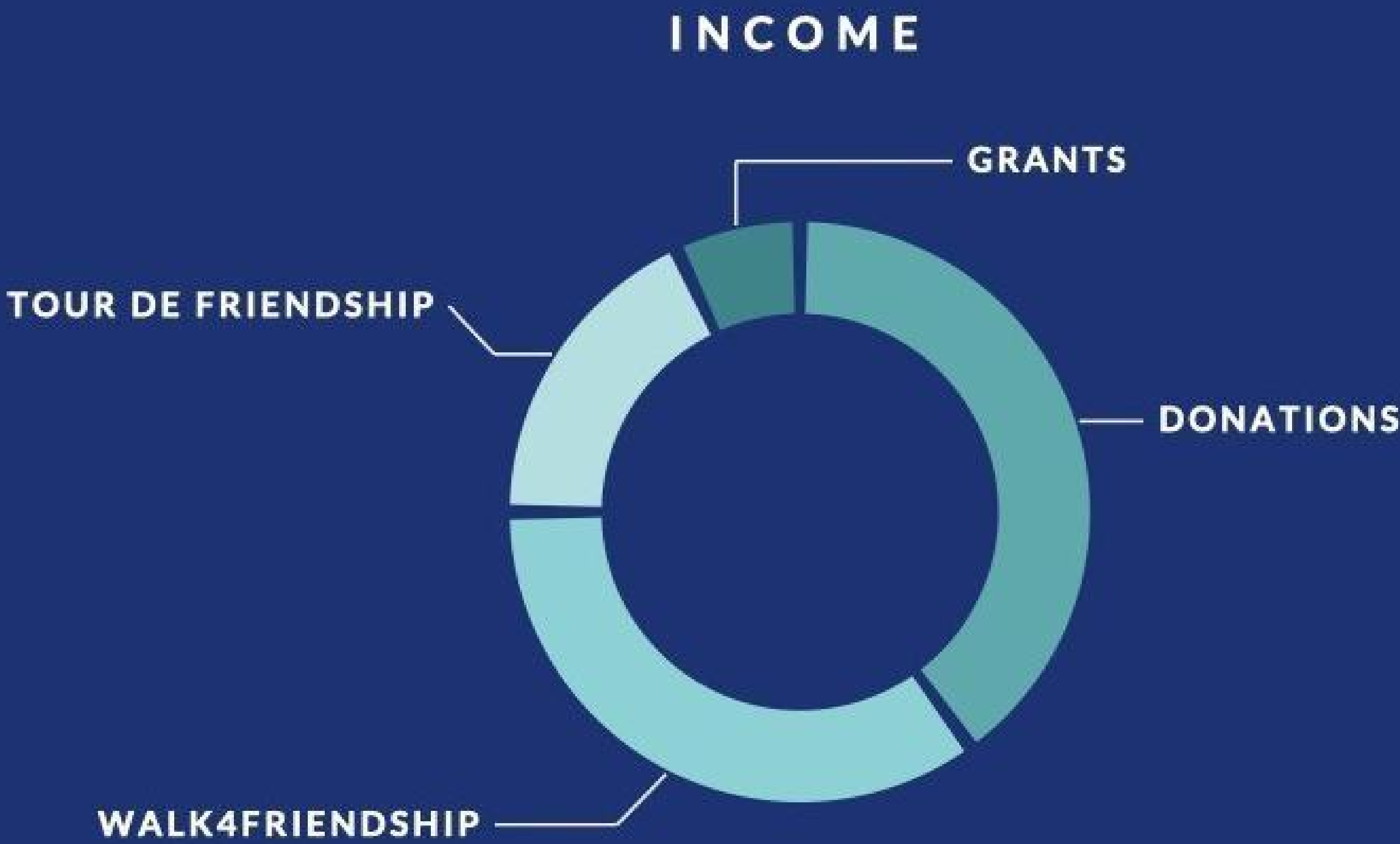


We thank you for your
valuable partnership!

Financials

In 2025, Friendship House achieved several key financial and transparency milestones:

- Earned the 2025 Platinum Transparency Badge from GuideStar
- Increased revenue by 48.1%
- Grew expenses by 39.8% to support expanding programs
- Increased our donor base by 39%



ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

Friendship House's mission is to bring support, friendship, and connection to all individuals with special needs and those facing isolation.

Our vision is a community where people with special needs are included in every aspect of society and are provided with the support and opportunities to be successful and live happy, productive lives.

Friendship House is a non-profit organization recognized by the IRS • EIN # 84-4301912

LEADERSHIP

Rabbi Sholom & Itta Kessler



Co-founders, est. 2020

Rabbi Sholom and Itta Kessler established Friendship House in 2020, with a vision to provide friendship and support to individuals with special needs in the greater Boca Raton community. They take pride in helping make dreams a reality at Friendship House.

They envision a fully inclusive community where everyone is welcome and valued, and people of all abilities receive applause and encouragement. Rabbi Sholom, originally from Montreal, Canada, brings his rabbinical knowledge along with a generous and kind heart, always ready to welcome and reach out to others. Itta, a native of Boca Raton, has always been dedicated to fostering inclusivity in her community, one person at a time. **Together, they are committed to helping every individual find friendship, love, and a place to call home.**



2025 • A SIGNATURE EVENT —

Walk4Friendship

Our Walk4Friendship brought the community together for a powerful day of unity, inclusion, and celebration. More than just a fundraiser, the Walk continues to grow as a signature event—raising awareness for individuals with special needs while building a more connected and compassionate Boca Raton.

BRIGHTER TOGETHER

A day where every participant feels seen, celebrated, and supported.

Families, volunteers, and community members walk side by side—creating real moments of connection and showing what it means to come together with purpose.



WALK GROWTH MARKERS

\$115K
RAISED

900
ATTENDEES

30
CORPORATE SPONSORS



*One walk. One community.
One brighter tomorrow.*

— WALK4FRIENDSHIP



INAUGURAL RIDE • 60 MILES ON A1A —

Tour de Friendship

Our first-ever Tour de Friendship brought riders together for a 60-mile journey along A1A—riding with purpose to support individuals with special needs. More than just a ride, it was a shared experience of community, awareness, and connection.

RIDING WITH PURPOSE

60 miles of road, one shared destination.

Riders trained, fundraised, and rolled out together at dawn—then reunited at the finish for a BBQ and family celebration that brought everyone together off the road as well.



TOUR GROWTH MARKERS

\$56K
RAISED

30
RIDERS

4
CORPORATE SPONSORS



One road. One team.
One ride for friendship.

— TOUR DE FRIENDSHIP



Friendship House

We All Belong

FOLLOW US FOR UPLIFTING CONTENT & INSPIRATION

@BOCAFRIENDSHIP

