



# 2025 Impact Report



## A hub of support and empowerment

Since 1983, Santa Maria has been dedicated to serving individuals and families in need through comprehensive programs, compassionate outreach, and transformative partnerships.

We are delighted to share with you some of the stories of what we have accomplished so far in 2025 and our vision for the future.

### table of contents

---

From the Executive Director • P 2

---

Impact & Financials • P 3

---

Looking Ahead; Who We Are • P 4

---

Rising to the Occasion • P 5

---

What it Will Take • P 6

# IMPACT AND OPPORTUNITY

Every day at Santa Maria Urban Ministry, I see the best of our community on display. I see it in the resilience of our guests. I see it in our volunteers, who offer hospitality and respect to those we serve. I see it in our staff, whose creativity and compassion transform challenges into opportunities. And I see it in the role Santa Maria plays in our community—a place where dignity is honored, families are strengthened, and everyone is welcome.

This year, we have begun building on that spirit with new programs designed to create lasting, transformative opportunities—initiatives that empower individuals and families to reach a point where they no longer need our services.



From expanded education and skills development to neighborhood-based outreach, these efforts reflect our belief that transformation is possible when people have the tools, support, and relationships they need to thrive.

We are also rising to meet the unique challenges of our day by finding new ways to make food support more accessible and by providing training and resources that help protect our community.

You make this work possible. Through your generosity, compassion, and active support of our shared mission, you provide daily support for daily needs. You are Santa Maria. Together, we will continue to help families today—while we empower a stronger, more connected community for tomorrow.

¡Juntos Podemos! Together We Can!

LOUIS POWELL,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# 2025 IMPACT THROUGH SEPTEMBER



**26,239** people provided with fresh vegetables, fruit, bread, and other staples



**\$227,717** returned to our community through VITA in State and Federal tax refunds



**60+** adults enrolled in ESL & work language learning programs



**2,349** bag lunches, **4,692** sandwiches provided to people experiencing homelessness



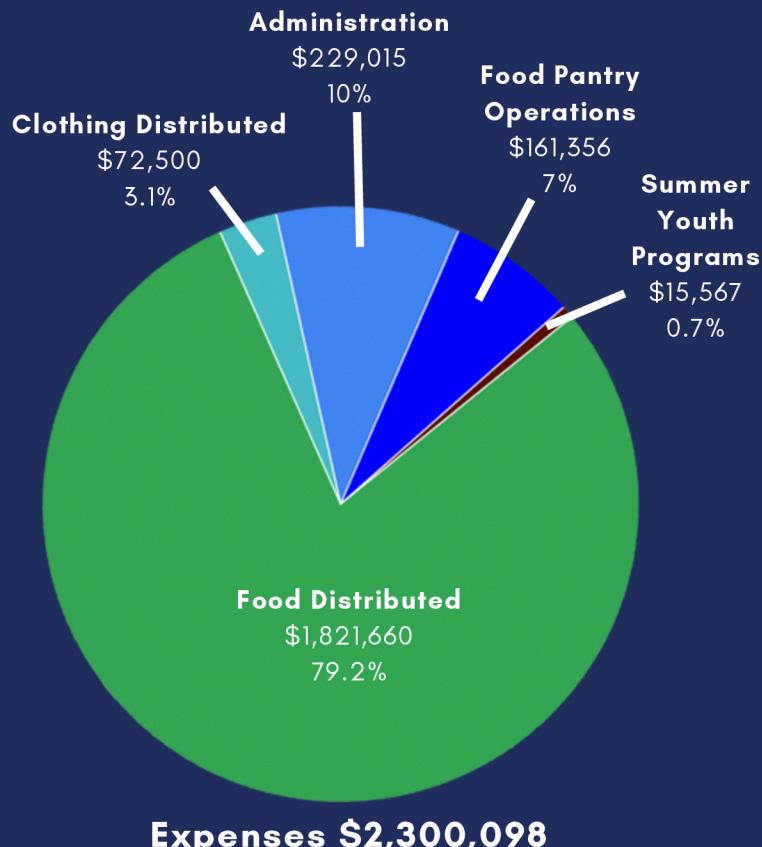
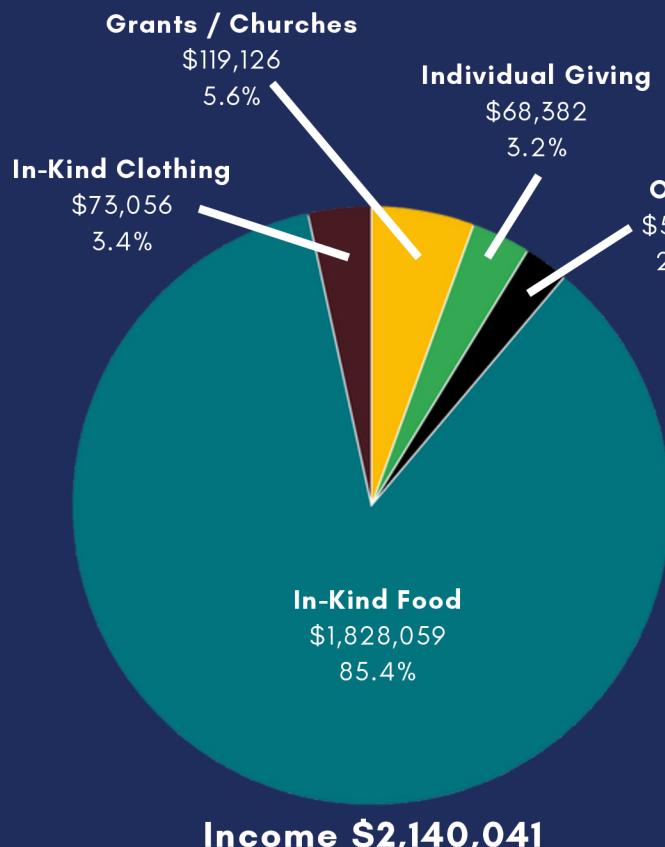
**12,872** hours given by volunteers to make our work possible

*We are all Santa Maria.*

*A community is not simply made up of some of the people, it is all of the people.*

*We can fulfill our vision when we work together according to our means.*

## 2025 FINANCIALS THROUGH SEPTEMBER \*



\*Detailed financials are available upon request

# LOOKING AHEAD

Santa Maria Urban Ministry is building the next chapter of transformation together with our community. Future programs in Spanish Literacy, Financial Literacy, Computer Skills, and Interviewing Workshops will empower individuals to reach stability and independence. We also envision a new section of our Clothes Closet dedicated to interview and work attire—helping neighbors step into opportunity with confidence.

These programs will be developed in partnership with our community, ensuring that they reflect the real hopes and desires of the people we serve. Together, we're creating lasting change.

***“I still dream of learning English and working with children – it’s never too late.”***

*– Beatriz*



## We Are Santa Maria

### Our Mission

To help individuals and families achieve stability and transformation in their lives, ultimately influencing and uplifting the surrounding communities.

### Our Vision

The vision of Santa Maria Urban Ministry is to support permanent transformation for individuals who reach out to us for support – to feed the body, mind, and spirit by providing nutritious food, learning opportunities, critical services and meaningful ways to give back.



### Our Values

#### Community

We believe in the power of collaboration and collective action to support each other.

#### Dignity

We hold firm to the inherent dignity and worth of each and every individual.

#### Compassion

We engage with empathy, striving to understand our differences and meet people where they are.

#### Respect

We celebrate diverse backgrounds, cultures, wisdom, and experiences.

#### Integrity

We act with honesty, accountability, and transparency in all we do.

#### Empowerment

We provide resources and support that help individuals and families achieve self-sufficiency.

# RISING TO THE OCCASION

In challenging times, Santa Maria Urban Ministry stands ready to meet the moment with courage and compassion. We know that many families in our community face deep fears—about safety, stability, and the future. Together, we are rising to ensure that fear never keeps anyone from getting the help they need.

Our staff and volunteers are expanding access to food support through discreet delivery, neighborhood partnerships, and trusted outreach. At the same time, we are helping families protect what matters most—their children and their assets—by connecting them with resources, training, and information to prepare for the unexpected.

Every day, we work to ensure that our neighbors are seen, supported, and safe—no matter their circumstances.

***“Santa Maria didn’t just support us. It showed us what was possible. . . .***

***My girls studied in private schools, earned scholarships—and it all started with a food box.”***

—Patty



## Protecting Her Children: María Elizabeth's Story



***“I dream that one day I will be able to serve again in justice or security here in the United States [so] I can use what I learned: discipline, investigation, protection.”***

Because what has always defined me is this: a woman who protects, who serves, and who never stops fighting for justice and for her family.

My name is María Elizabeth Ruiz. I am 45 years old and the mother of three children. In Guadalajara, Mexico, I served as a police officer—one of the first women accepted into the force. Eventually, I joined the intelligence division, leading high-risk investigations that included rescuing missing children.

As my responsibilities grew, so did the dangers. After colleagues were ambushed and killed and my family began receiving threats, I knew I had to protect my daughters. In 2018, while visiting the United States, I made the painful decision not to return.

Starting over here was not easy—new language, no job, and a much quieter life after years of daily adrenaline. But I found strength in rebuilding: supporting my partner's photography business, studying English, and focusing on my children's future.



## WHAT IT WILL TAKE

The work ahead of us is bold—and it is necessary.

Creating real, lasting change means doing more than responding to need; it means building the programs, the systems, and the relationships that make transformation possible. To reach our goals, Santa Maria will need to expand our capacity through staffing and programming that directly support our community's safety, stability, and empowerment.

Right now, we face a \$160,000 shortfall in our annual budget. Bridging that gap will require both courage and commitment. Every dollar will help us strengthen essential programs, launch new initiatives, and ensure that our community continues to receive compassionate, consistent support.

We must also prepare for the possibility of purchasing more of the food we distribute—an increasing reality as demand rises and donated supplies fluctuate. Meeting this need will take additional resources and a shared commitment that no one in our community should go hungry.

These are big challenges, and they will take courage, resilience, and all of us working together. This is not easy work. It is essential work. **And together, we can! ¡Juntos Podemos!**

*Thank you!*



SANTA MARIA URBAN MINISTRY  
IS A 501(C)(3) TAX ID: 91-1811780