



STRONG WOMEN  
STRONG GIRLS

# FY21 Year in Review

SEPTEMBER 1

AUGUST 31

2020 – 2021



# About SWSG

## WHAT IS SWSG?

Strong Women, Strong Girls (SWSG) is a multi-generational mentoring organization that connects professional women, college women, and elementary school girls. Our programming delivers an out-of-school experience that promotes positive development by taking a preventative approach to combat declines in adolescent girls' self-confidence. SWSG was founded in 2000 as a student group at Harvard University and has since flourished in both Boston and Pittsburgh, where it expanded in 2006.

## HOW DOES SWSG WORK?

Girls in grades 3–5 throughout the Boston and Pittsburgh regions participate in 20 weekly, after-school sessions where they learn about strong local and historical women and engage in skills-building activities. Local college women volunteers, supported by SWSG staff, facilitate sessions with the girls guided by a robust curriculum based on female role models. In turn, our college women mentors are mentored by professional women, known as Strong Leaders, who provide personal and professional guidance.

# Core Values

## BE ACCOUNTABLE

SWSG operates with transparency and integrity.

## EXPECT QUALITY

SWSG pursues excellence and innovation.

## FOSTER RESPECT

SWSG honors and supports diversity and inclusion.

## BUILD COMMUNITY

SWSG values and promotes partnership and collaboration.

## EMBRACE DISCOVERY

SWSG nurtures learning, creativity, development, and fun.

# The 6 Cs of Positive Youth Development

SWSG uses the 6Cs, a nationally recognized youth development framework, to structure our mentoring curriculum. Through the lens of the 6Cs, we can better understand and foster healthy outcomes among young people and promote positive self-identity and leadership capability. Participants in SWSG gain skills in:

## CONFIDENCE

Strong girls recognize their inner strengths to dream and do.

## COMPETENCE

Strong girls know how to get things done.

## CHARACTER

Strong girls embrace their individuality.

## CONTRIBUTION

Strong girls know how to make a positive difference.

## CARING

Strong girls show kindness and care for others.

## CONNECTION

Strong girls value community and service.

# A Lifelong Impact

## WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM SWSG?

"This program really helped me build confidence and reinforce my friendships with the girls that i did the program with. I loved the fun activities we got to do like the jump rope field day, or just the times we got to write in a our journals to reflect on the week. It was really empowering to learn about female role models as well. It really gave me the assurance that I can accomplish anything in life.

~ 2013 participant, current high school student

## HOW, IF AT ALL, DID SWSG INFLUENCE YOUR PERSONAL, ACADEMIC, OR PROFESSIONAL LIFE?

"SWSG connected me to some of my best friends during college. I connected with a community of young women who cared about the same things I did. It gave me the opportunity to explore my own identity as a woman and to think about how to encourage young girls to embrace what it means to be a girl and how to create their own definition for girlhood. In my professional life, I have carried with me the idea of building up other women and seeking out female mentors and mentees in my career."

~ 9-year SWSG Alumnus

## HOW, IF AT ALL, HAS YOUR PARTICIPATION IN SWSG HELPED YOU AT YOUR CURRENT STAGE OF LIFE?

"It is the reason I got into medical school because it is the reason I had the confidence to pursue medical school. Without Swsg I wouldn't have applied (or likely gotten) my first clinical job. I also made lifelong friendships. These friends have been supportive and encouraged me to pursue my goals. They are still my closest friends."

~2019 Graduate

## Our Mission

Strong Women, Strong Girls empowers girls to imagine a broader future through a curriculum grounded on female role models delivered by college women mentors, who are themselves mentored by professional women.

## Our Vision

Every girl and woman will realize her inner strengths to dream and do.







## Our Boston Mentoring Sites

**39 SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY CENTERS**

**15 NEIGHBORHOODS**

**2 SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

Argenziano Community School

Benjamin Brown School

Curley K-8 School

Dudley St. Neighborhood School

East Somerville Community School

Eliot School

Elizabeth Peabody House

Everett Elementary

Gardner Pilot Academy

Hennigan Boys & Girls Club

Hurley K-8 School

Hyde Park YMCA

Jackson Mann K-8 School

JFK Elementary School

King K-8 School

Mary Lyon School

Mason Elementary

Mendell Group A

Mission Grammar School

Nazzaro Community Center

Phineas Bates Elementary

PJK Elementary

Josiah Quincy Elementary

Red Oak Community Center

North Shore Schools

Sarah Greenwood K-8 School

Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy: Columbia

Saint John Paul II Catholic Academy: Lower Mills

Somerville YMCA

St. Columbkille School

St. Joseph School

Trotter Elementary

UP Academy Dorchester

Warren Prescott K-8 School

West End House Boys & Girls Club

West Somerville Neighborhood School

Winship Elementary

Winthrop Elementary School

Yawkey Boys & Girls Club

## Our Reach

**251**

Girls Enrolled in SWSG

**285**

College Mentors

**71**

Professional Women

**39**

Virtual Mentoring Sites

**7**

University Chapters

**27,000+**

Volunteer Hours Contributed by College Mentors

## Our College Chapters



Northeastern University



## About SWSG Boston

SWSG Boston serves the Greater Boston community and serves as the organization's headquarters. Our work is situated within the context of historically marginalized communities impacted by racism, sexism, classism, ableism, and more. Women in Boston are the majority-minority.

- ◆ 52.1% of the city's population is women and girls, 34.6% of which are between the ages of 20-34.
- ◆ People of color make up 55.1% of the population in Boston. Yet, Boston is one of the most segregated cities in the USA.
- ◆ 69.7% of women in poverty in Boston are non-white, while only 54% of all women in Boston are non-white.

## Our Program in Action



The FY21 curriculum included another year of inspiring and empowering role models. The Girlforce curriculum was all about interest and career exploration. Youth in the program had the opportunity to identify their interests and discuss and explore options such as college and beyond. With our vision for every girl (and woman) to realize her inner strength to dream and do, this year's curriculum allowed us to share the variety of options mentees have for the future, as they embrace their strengths and interests.

Some of this year's role models included:

- Mariama White-Hammond, a Reverend who is working to bring awareness to climate change and build healthier communities.
- Autum Peltier, a 15 year old water activist who teaches us how to value differences.
- Malala Yousafzai, an advocate for girl's education access.

## Program Highlights

- This year, Boston re-launched the Strong Leaders program. Through this program, we matched 68 college mentors in a 1:1 mentoring relationship with a professional woman.
- SWSG also re-designed our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging training sessions for mentors to focus on community and cultural context with the goal of improving our DEIB practices.





# Our Pittsburgh Mentoring Sites

- 34 SCHOOLS & COMMUNITY CENTERS
- 15 PITTSBURGH NEIGHBORHOODS
- 7 SCHOOL DISTRICTS

ACH Clear Pathways  
ALEC Allentown  
Aliquippa Elementary  
Arlington Elementary  
Arsenal Elementary  
ASTEP  
Avalon Elementary  
Barrett Elementary  
Beechwood Elementary

Bellevue Elementary  
Brookline Elementary  
Carmalt Elementary  
Center of Life - Fusion  
Colfax Elementary  
Dilworth Elementary  
Environmental Charter School  
Faison Academy

Greenfield Elementary  
Homewood-Brushton YMCA  
Liberty Elementary  
Linden Elementary  
Park Elementary  
Phillips Elementary  
Propel Homestead  
Roosevelt Elementary  
Spring Hill Elementary  
Sto-Rox Elementary

Thelma Lovette YMCA  
Urban Pathways Charter School  
Westwood Elementary  
Whittier Elementary  
Wilkins Elementary  
STEAM Academy  
YMCA Spencer / South Park  
YMCA Allegheny

## Our Reach

**257**  
Girls Enrolled in SWSG  
**343**  
College Mentors  
**115**  
Professional Women

**34**  
Virtual Mentoring Sites  
**6** College Chapters  
**19,463**  
Volunteer Hours Contributed by College Mentors

## Our College Chapters



## About SWSG Pittsburgh

Strong Women, Strong Girls arrived in Pittsburgh in 2006 with just one college chapter and one program site. By 2019, we have grown to encompass six universities and colleges and 40 program sites, serving more than 1,150 women and girls each year.

### MENTORING FOR CHANGE

In the Fall of 2019, the City of Pittsburgh released its 2019 Gender Equity Commission report on Pittsburgh's Inequality Across Gender and Race. The results for our city paint a troubling picture of continued inequality:

- ◆ For every dollar White men make, Black women make 54 cents; AMNON (Asian, Multiracial, Latinx, Other, and Native American) women make 59 cents; and White women make 78 cents.
- ◆ Black women are more likely than any other adult population to live in poverty. In comparison to other similar cities, Pittsburgh falls short in terms of livability for Black women.
- ◆ Pittsburgh has more Black women out of the labor force than 97 percent of similar cities evaluated.

At SWSG, we know that a foundation of strong female role models and high-quality mentorship can change the landscape for girls and women. We provide young girls, at a formative period in their lives, with the tools, skills, and qualities to build the future – any future – they dream about.

Through mentorship, we're empowering girls and women to create a diverse pipeline of strong female leadership in and for the Pittsburgh region.

## Program Highlights

### Role Models In Residence (RMIR)

Despite using a virtual program model for the 2020-2021 program year, SWSG was still able to bring RMIR to six sites, reaching 26 mentees. Volunteer role models told their stories by presenting their own biographies to the mentees and leading activities focused on the areas of building confidence, self-care, and mindfulness.

As a result of the virtual model, field trips were not offered this year as is typical for program. However, mentees were able to see some of the role models in their workspaces, which added a unique level of exploration to see where they go to work each day!

- 80% of mentees learned about a new type of job from their role model.
- 80% of mentees liked the activity they did with their role model.
- 88% of mentees want more role models to visit them at SWSG.

### Mentor-Mentee Pen Pal Project

In the midst of pandemic-related challenges, not every program site was able to operate as normal this school year. Select sites were able to stay active with our new Pen-Pal Program, which allowed mentors and mentees to connect in writing and still build meaningful relationships.



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MONITORING, EVALUATION, & LEARNING

Throughout the 2020-2021 program year, we made strides in aligning our deepening our MEL practices across Boston and Pittsburgh. This included streamlining surveys for all for mentees, mentors, and Strong Leaders. During the virtual program year we completed training evaluations and end-of-semester surveys with mentors, pre and post surveys of mentees with an online survey, and an end of year survey with Strong Leaders.

Gender Inclusivity at SWSG

Strong Women, Strong Girls is an inclusive organization that believes girlhood is a personal experience for all.

We welcome anyone to join our community who is interested in our program and identifies as a girl or is gender non-conforming, nonbinary, agender, or transgender.



Our Reach:  
Boston & Pittsburgh

<b>508</b> Girls Enrolled in SWSG	<b>73</b> Virtual Mentoring Sites
<b>628</b> College Mentors	<b>12</b> College Chapters
<b>186</b> Professional Women	<b>43,000+</b> Volunteer Hours Contributed by College Mentors

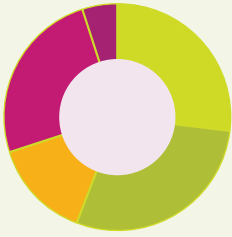
Our Community

We saw changes to the demographic makeup of our mentees and mentors during the year of virtual programming, leading SWSG to consider the obstacles to virtual participation for some and the benefits to others.

Boston

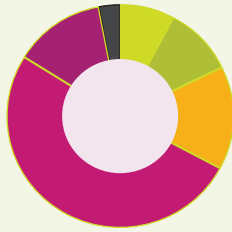
GIRLS' RACE

Latinx/Hispanic	17%
Black	32%
Asian	7%
White	30%
Multiracial	11%
Other	2%



MENTORS' RACE

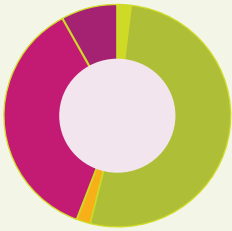
Latinx/Hispanic	10%
Black	11%
Asian	19%
White	29%
Multiracial	27%
Other	3%



Pittsburgh

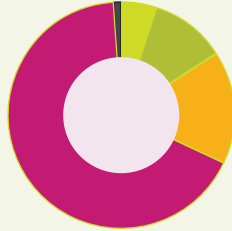
GIRLS' RACE

Latinx/Hispanic	2%
Black	39%
Asian	1%
White	46%
Multiracial	11%
Other	1%



MENTORS' RACE

Latinx/Hispanic	2%
Black	8%
Asian	18%
White	63%
Multiracial	7%
Other	1%



MONITORING, EVALUATION, & LEARNING

Our Impact

When evaluating the impact of our program on participants, SWSG uses a variety of methods to assess what mentees take away from their experience. Overwhelmingly, mentees advance in each of the 6C areas after a year in the program, and report having learned more about themselves, their strengths and talents, and role models.

Mentees were surveyed at the beginning and end of the program year using online / virtual methods.

WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE PROGRAM YEAR, MENTEES RESPONDED...



This year, over 600 college women mentors also experienced opportunities for growth, leadership, professional development, and civic engagement. They said:





# Supporting Our Mentees Through COVID-19

During the COVID-19 crisis, marginalized youth have been disproportionately impacted by higher rates of COVID infections, deaths in loved ones, food and housing insecurity, lack of access to technology and online learning, and increased stress. A recent article from The Chronicle of Evidence- Based Mentoring highlights that “marginalized youth are likely to bear the heaviest burdens of trauma and economic fallout” from COVID-19 (Astesano, 2020).

These are the girls that SWSG prioritizes--those who live in economically disadvantaged communities who attend school districts in need of our program. It is now more important than ever to provide socio-emotional support to girls being disproportionately impacted by this pandemic.

- **Black children make up about 20% of children losing a parent to COVID-19 (though they represent 14% of all children in the US), furthering the risk of trauma and depression (US Dept of ED, 2021). In addition, social isolation during the pandemic has led to a decrease in access to support from family, peers, and other role models (Society for Research in Child Development, 2020).**
- **In a May 2020 survey of elementary, middle, and high school girls, The ROX Institute for Research and Training found that 79% of girls reported feeling more lonely or isolated since the start of the pandemic, with 33% saying they feel much more lonely/isolated.**
- **In crisis situations when children are removed from school, they fall behind not just in academics but in critical social-emotional learning (Kamenetz, 2020).**

These statistics are staggering - but the solution is clear. SWSG is committed to starting our next chapter with a focus on being a part of that solution to support women and girls at this historic time in our lives! By participating in SWSG, even remotely, girls enter a community of peers and mentors in which they can identify and share their emotions (Character & Caring), give and receive support (Contribution & Connection), and foster strength and positive identity (Confidence & Competence), as well as the opportunity to build impactful relationships via weekly meetings.

Maintaining virtual programming throughout the pandemic was instrumental to providing opportunities for connection and consistency for mentees in SWSG. With most youth participating in school virtually for most of the year, we wanted to make sure SWSG could address some of the challenges brought on by the pandemic. At a time when connection was extremely difficult, SWSG offered programming via Zoom, which fostered connection amongst our community.



# Our Impact: SWSG Girls & Mentors

**The focus [of SWSG sessions] shifted to not just curriculum, but meeting girls where they are, whether that meant movement breaks or a space to chat and meet new friends.**

**-Site Facilitator**

**SWSG caused me to think about working with children in my future career (considering pediatrics), taught me advocacy skills, and broadened my understanding of social justice issues and societal inequities in ways that will be highly beneficial to my future work as a physician.**

**-2020 Graduate**



**My daughter enjoyed having people to talk with that was all about self-confidence building. I enjoyed the time she spent on the meetings because she was learning an aspect of life that schools don't devote much time on doing without being graded.**

**-SWSG Parent**



**It's made me realize how important it is to be an advocate for yourself and how hard work and willingness to learn can lead far in life. I think that I was able to realize my dream really early in life because of this program.**

**-2013 Program Participant, current college student**



# Thank you to our Generous Supporters!

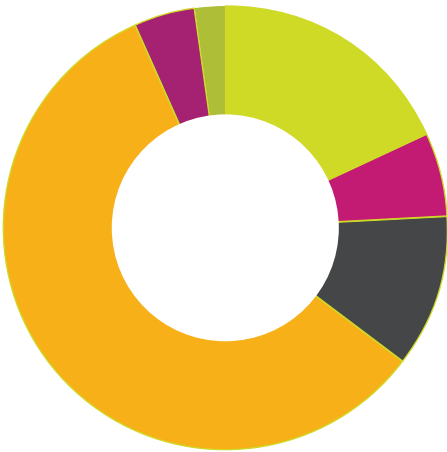
SWSG thanks every individual, company, foundation, and organization that donated funds or services during a challenging year for SWSG and most individuals in our communities. You made it possible for us to continue serving our mentees, mentors, and volunteers at a time when they most needed community.\*

## SWSG FY21 Board of Directors

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# SWSG Inc. Revenue & Expenses

<b>TOTAL REVENUE:</b>	<b>\$2,737,496.49</b>
FOUNDATIONS	\$636,957.75
CORPORATE	\$136,031.50
INDIVIDUALS	\$212,000.69
IN-KIND	\$1,228,996.62
EVENTS/OTHER	\$171,358.57
PPP LOAN FUNDING	\$352,151.36

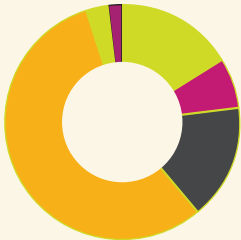


<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<b>\$2,325,640</b>
MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION	\$408,911
FUNDRAISING	\$285,200
PROGRAM	\$402,532
IN-KIND	\$1,228,996

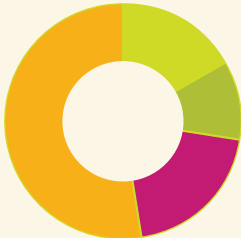


## SWSG Boston

<b>TOTAL REVENUE:</b>	<b>\$1,505,426</b>
FOUNDATIONS	\$334,893
CORPORATE	\$80,582
INDIVIDUALS	\$146,722
IN-KIND	\$673,522
EVENTS/OTHER	\$60,675
PPP LOAN FUNDING	\$209,030

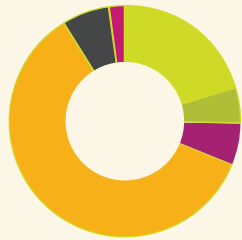


<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<b>\$1,325,278</b>
MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION	\$260,444
FUNDRAISING	\$167,839
PROGRAM	\$223,471
IN-KIND	\$673,522

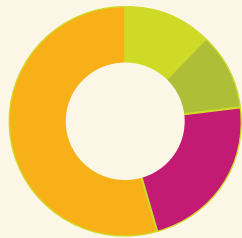


## SWSG Pittsburgh

<b>TOTAL REVENUE:</b>	<b>\$1,232,069</b>
FOUNDATIONS	\$302,064
CORPORATE	\$55,449
INDIVIDUALS	\$65,278
IN-KIND	\$555,474
EVENTS/OTHER	\$110,682
PPP LOAN FUNDING	\$143,121



<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<b>\$1,000,362</b>
MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION	\$148,466
FUNDRAISING	\$117,360
PROGRAM	\$179,061
IN-KIND	\$555,474







**STRONG WOMEN  
STRONG GIRLS**

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