

The SAM Initiative Completes Annual Giving Cycle with \$350,000 in Grants to Seven Local Nonprofits

Giving Circle Tops \$2.5 Million in Grants Since 2014

The SAM Initiative recently completed its annual 2021-2022 giving cycle, donating a total of \$350,000 to seven grantees. SAM is a giving circle, started by Los Angeles philanthropist and nonprofit strategist Mindy Freedman. SAM's mission is to passionately pool charitable dollars to fund and support programs committed to driving social change and promoting non-profit sustainability. SAM is fueled by Freedman's personal motto: "We can do far more together than we can alone." Since its first giving cycle in 2014, SAM has granted more than \$2.5 million to local nonprofits.

The three primary areas of focus this past cycle were supporting nonprofit organizations that work in educational equity, at-risk youth, and mental health, with an expanded focus on social enterprises. Social enterprise nonprofits are organizations that operate businesses in order to generate revenues and fulfill their missions.

The local nonprofits that received grants this year are:

- [A Place Called Home](#) was granted \$80,000 for education, wellness, and arts programs for 700 underserved youth in South Central LA, helping to bridge the technological gap exacerbated by the pandemic.
- [Bridge Builders LA](#) was granted \$75,000 to empower young men of color through their elementary to high school mentorship program, teaching values and strategies to thrive in our community.
- [Piece by Piece](#) was granted \$65,000 to support residents of South Los Angeles and Skid Row who have experienced homelessness by providing free mosaic art workshops as a path to earned income.
- [EmpowHer Institute](#) was granted \$55,000 to empower marginalized girls and young women through mentoring, training, and education.
- [Mychal's Learning Place](#) was granted \$35,000 to provide job training and employment opportunities to young adults with developmental disabilities.
- [MADE by Downtown Women's Center](#) was granted \$20,000 to support women experiencing homelessness by providing them with training and employment opportunities through their three businesses: gift shop, resale boutique, and cafe.

- [NeuroTalent Works](#) was granted \$20,000 to support individuals on the autism spectrum so they can find gainful employment based on their skills and interests.
- SAM also hosted an event for [KidSave](#) that raised awareness and \$150,000.

For the third consecutive year, SAM engaged students from Wildwood Schools' Wildwood Institute for Social Leadership (WISL). WISL consults with local nonprofits and organizations in order to define and address social issues. WISL members conduct community and field research, resulting in both deep understanding and concrete plans to create positive change. Sixteen students actively participated in SAM's entire due-diligence process for this past cycle. The collaboration with WISL emphasized SAM's commitment to the community by including local youth perspectives as they work to improve the lives of women, children, and families in Los Angeles through engaged philanthropy.

"At a time when so many individuals feel powerless to make a difference, SAM unites us for a collective purpose: to impact the world together," proclaims Jonathan Zeichner, founder of A Place Called Home.

"It's been another powerful year for SAM, especially coming out of the throes of the pandemic. Our members continue to be generous with their time, their commitment and resources," says Founder and President Mindy Freedman.

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[About The SAM Initiative](#)

The SAM Initiative serves as a catalyst to improve the lives of women, children, and families in Los Angeles through engaged philanthropy. As a giving circle, SAM members believe that through collaborative giving we can do far more together than we can do alone. As of 2022, SAM has given more \$2.5 million in grants to the community. For more information, visit www.saminitiative.org and on social media [@thesaminitiative](#): [Instagram](#) & [Facebook](#)