



Making a Difference Where Nonprofits Are Concerned

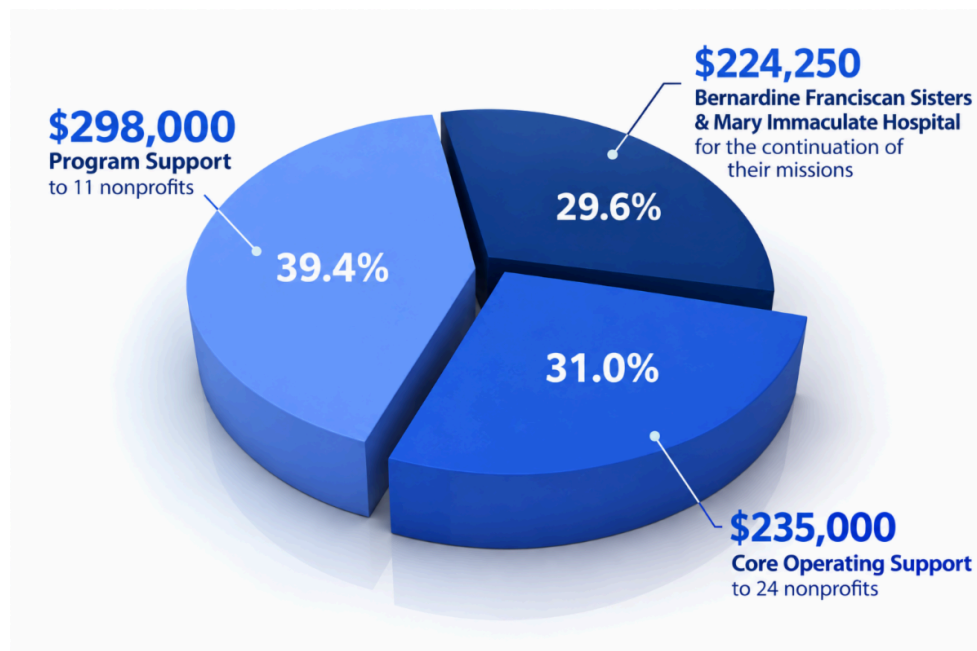
Year in Review • 2025-2026

Mission

To further the work of the Bernardine Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis by financially supporting and promoting their charitable works as well as works related to the healthcare, education, and human service needs of the Virginia Peninsula.

Vision

To improve human conditions on the Virginia Peninsula by funding and assisting nonprofit organizations that address the needs in our community, especially as they relate to the poor and the disadvantaged.



In its 2025-2026 fiscal year, the Foundation invested more than half a million dollars in nonprofits* serving our communities and strengthening lives across the Virginia Peninsula and beyond.

Additional support was provided to the Bernardine Franciscan Sisters for the continuation of their charitable works in the USA, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Liberia West Africa, and Mozambique Southeast Africa. The Foundation also provided funding to Mary Immaculate Hospital which was founded by the Bernardine Franciscan Sisters.



In 2025-2026, local nonprofits benefited from more than 1,000 hours of pro bono professional support through the Foundation's partnership with **Catchafire**. Through this partnership, nonprofits are matched up with skilled professionals who provide their skills and expertise at no cost to the nonprofits. Projects have included strategic planning, marketing and communications plans, human resource manuals, and more.



A total of \$47,002 was provided in ongoing education and set-aside funds to 26 local nonprofits.

The **ongoing education funds** enable nonprofit staff to participate in continuing education and professional development opportunities.

The **set-aside funds** are provided to help nonprofits with emergency requests related to buildings or equipment.



The Foundation continued to offer **workshops** free of charge to local nonprofits. Dozens of leaders and their staff attended workshops on human resources, endowments, succession planning, and more.

In addition, the **Legislative Breakfast** and **Faith Forum**, held in partnership with The United Way of the Virginia Peninsula, welcomed dozens of community leaders representing local businesses, nonprofits, churches, and government entities.

Executive Director and Development Professional Coffees also continued throughout the year, as part of a joint initiative of the *Peninsula Nonprofit Partnership*, which includes the Foundation, The United Way of the Virginia Peninsula, the Virginia Peninsula Chamber of Commerce, and the Peninsula Community Foundation. Through this Partnership, nonprofits continue to have access to networking opportunities, grant opportunities, and other resources to support their work in our community.



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Retired President, Eastern Virginia Shred-it

Administrative Staff

Sister David Ann Niski
Executive Director

Christy Hopkins
Assistant to the Executive Director

The Foundation's Staff and Board of Directors attended various events throughout the year in support of local nonprofits and their valuable contributions to our community.



Executive Director, Sister David Ann Niski, and Dr. Karen Brown, CEO of NATASHA House



Board Treasurer, Nhu Yeargin, and representatives of Commonwealth Catholic Charities



Board Member, Joan Hoerle, and Katie Morgan, Executive Director, Youth Volunteer Corps of Hampton Roads.

*Nonprofits Awarded Funding in 2025-2026



“HELP is grateful for the many ways that the Bernardine Franciscan Sisters Foundation continually advocates for the excellent work being done by nonprofits throughout the Peninsula. The Foundation’s granting allows us to ensure that life-saving services are available for our homeless neighbors. And the Foundation’s work doesn’t stop at grant support—the investment in continuing education and training, relationship building, and advocacy for our causes on many different levels of the community makes the Foundation a true partner in our work.” (Pictured with Sister David Ann Niski is Matthew Stearn, Executive Director of HELP.)



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Follow us to stay up to
date on our work to
support local nonprofits!