

# JOURNEYS OF HOPE



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# OUR MISSION

## MISSION

To empower underserved youth, families, and communities in Washington DC by sharing the hope of Christ through compassionate action, caring relationships, and racial reconciliation.

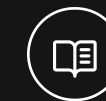
## VISION

To help build communities of compassion and joy where underserved children, youth, and families flourish through holistic, wrap-around support and practical resources.

## VALUES



We envision a community of racial and class reconciliation where mutual respect and authentic fellowship provide a place of healing and joy.



We envision all children and youth thriving in every way through academic support, character-development, and arts and recreation.



We envision adults engaged in gainful employment and moving out of the cycle of poverty.



We envision families being strengthened, children and youth becoming healthier and safer, and loving relationships flourishing.

# JOURNEYS OF HOPE



**F**or nearly 30 years, Little Lights has been a source of compassion and empowerment for underserved children, youth, and families in Washington, DC. Little Lights began inside my parents' Tae Kwon Do studio in uptown DC on 14th Street, NW. From small beginnings, Little Lights has committed to sharing the compassion of Jesus with youth and families in Washington, DC.

Many lives have been touched, impacted, and changed in these past 30 years, including my own. I am forever changed by the students, adults, volunteers, donors, and staff who have been a part of this ministry. It has truly been a journey of hope.

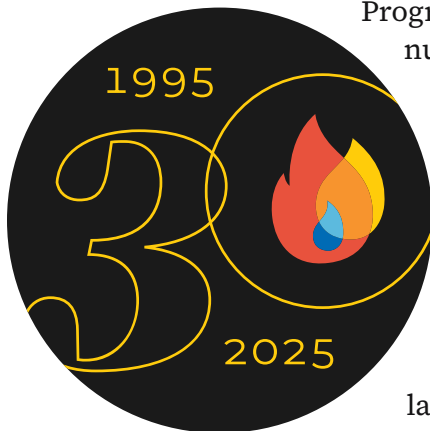
In this report, you'll read about students, youth, and adults whose journeys with Little Lights demonstrate the growth, resilience, empowerment, and transformation that is possible through holistic, multi-generational work.

2024 was a crucial year for Little Lights. Our College and Career Program continued to grow and strengthen as we expanded the number of college students we serve to 14. This meant dedicating more staff time and resources to provide tutoring, emotional and social support, and practical administrative support.

Our after-school, summer, and mentoring programs continued to impact the lives of 180 younger students who face daily challenges presented by the reality of poverty and life after the pandemic. We also employed 38 members of the community to provide much-needed staffing for our youth and adult programs as well as the Clean Green Team, our landscaping social enterprise.

Little Lights diligently prepared for a **major expansion in 2025** by acquiring space and raising funds for this significant endeavor. As we mark our 30th anniversary in 2025, we are extremely grateful for God's faithfulness and the generosity of our supporters and partners for a tremendous 2024. Thank you for being part of our journey.

Peace and Blessings,  
Steve Park



“As we mark our 30th anniversary in 2025, we are extremely grateful for God’s faithfulness and the generosity of our supporters and partners for a tremendous 2024.”  
*Steve Park*



# JOURNEYS OF GROWTH



Over the past 30 years of ministry, Little Lights has evolved and grown to meet the needs of the students and families we serve. A major area of growth over the last five years has been the creation and expansion of our College and Career program.

Seeing the need to provide ongoing support for students throughout the college and post-grad process, we started this program with the goal of increasing college admission and retention. This last year, we have seen this program continue to grow with 14 students in college and 10 young adults we're supporting in workforce programs. This program is changing futures as we support and equip students for success in the years to come.

As Little Lights and our programming grows, so do the students and families we serve. Over the last year, we've seen Jamyia, a college student, grow immensely. In high school, Jamyia struggled academically and socially and after graduating she took a year off because she wasn't sure about her college prospects. After working part-time with Little Lights during Summer Lights, our College and Career team worked with Jamyia to help her discover what colleges were a good fit for her. With the help of Little Lights staff, she enrolled at University of the District of Columbia in Fashion Merchandising and is now thriving. Jamyia has always been responsible and professional, but as we've worked with her over the last year, it has been amazing to see her growth in writing skills, initiative, and self-confidence.

368K+

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS SECURED IN 2024

22+

HOURS A WEEK OF TUTORING FOR OUR COLLEGE STUDENTS IN 2024

94%

OF K-8 STUDENTS INCREASED OR MAINTAINED THEIR MATH ASSESSMENT SCORES IN 2024

We've also seen growth – in both big and small ways – with our Homework Club students. Lexi has attended Homework Club with her older sisters and nephew for multiple years and had a pattern of being closed off to adults, responding to questions with one word or giving no response at all. This year, we have seen her growing into her own and being more open and joyful with others. Her personality shines through more and more.

87%

OF K-8 STUDENTS INCREASED OR MAINTAINED THEIR READING ASSESSMENT SCORES IN 2024

Another Homework Club student, Ranigha, has shown immense growth in her reading and spelling skills. One day, after getting 100% on her practice spelling test, Ranigha proudly shared, "I used to be a really bad reader, but now I'm much better at it and really enjoy reading." Sophia, her Site Leader replied, "You are! You're one of the best readers at our site – you've worked hard and grown a lot." It is a deep joy to witness these instances of growth in our students and to encourage them in their ongoing development.

# JOURNEYS OF RESILIENCE

**M**any of the students and families we work with are navigating complex and challenging circumstances, often without the resources or support needed to thrive. Despite these barriers, time and again we have seen our community respond with resilience, continuously adapting to changing circumstances, working hard, and dreaming bigger for themselves.

Looking back on her life, Ronada, a former Little Lights student, sees resilience throughout her story. Growing up in Potomac Gardens,

**“The dream was given to me. It gave me hope and purpose, and so I took it. With this dream spoken over me, I felt seen and began to see myself differently.”**  
*Ronada*

Ronada was aware of the discrepancy between her neighbors living in the row houses of Capitol Hill, and her life behind the gates of Potomac Gardens Public Housing. Despite the inequity of these circumstances, she knew she was smart and had a brighter future ahead. Her mom was a strong, supportive, and engaged parent, desiring the best for

her children. She found many activities to keep her children engaged and challenged, including having them participate in Little Lights where Ronada and her siblings joined the Little Lights choir, attended Homework Club, and participated in summer camps.

As an academically gifted high school student, Ronada knew that college could be in her future and found herself at the beginning of a journey – culminating in the completion of a dream she wasn’t yet fully aware of. One day, a teacher said to Ronada, “I see you with a Dr. in front of your name one day” and thus, a dream to get her PhD was born. “The dream was given to me,” said Ronada. “It gave me hope and purpose, and so I took it. With this dream spoken over me, I felt seen and began to see myself differently.”

**“This accomplishment is truly a testimony to resilience and a deep belief in self and knowing that anything is possible.”**  
*Ronada*



Ronada continued to persevere, taking things one step at a time, balancing deep gratitude for the opportunities she was given and self-determination and hard work to achieve success. Now, after years of schooling, Ronada has achieved this dream with a PhD in English Writing and Rhetoric, sharing, “This accomplishment is truly a testimony to resilience and a deep belief in self and knowing that anything is possible.”

When asked what she would say to current Little Lights students, Ronada said “When you’re surrounded by hardship, it’s difficult to dream. It’s hard to imagine you can be something different than where you come from. But, it’s ok to have dreams bigger than yourself and not know how they’re going to come true. Just continue to work towards them, and take each opportunity one step at a time.”

# JOURNEYS OF EMPOWERMENT

38

COMMUNITY MEMBERS  
EMPLOYED BY LITTLE  
LIGHTS IN 2024

250

ADULTS VISITED THE  
FAMILY CENTER IN  
2024



**R**esidents of public housing are an integral part of the Little Lights staff. By prioritizing hiring from within the communities we serve, we are helping to create more financial opportunities and provide employment training so adults can be empowered to pursue future career success.

Shondra and Jasmine are two current part-time staff members who are gaining valuable workforce experience through employment at Little Lights.

Since Shondra was five years old, Little Lights has been an important part of her life. As a young student, Shondra attended our afterschool academic enrichment programs, performed with the choir at various Little Lights events, and grew in relationship with her mentor, Anna.

“Little Lights gave me a safe place to come when I didn’t want to be home or outside - they kept me out of a lot of trouble. Mary and Steve were very helpful and caring,” said Shondra.

After graduating high school, Shondra was unsure of her next steps. With the help of the College and Career Program, she explored

various workforce programs and career options, while also working as a Program Assistant at Little Lights. Through this experience, she ultimately learned that her true passion was working with kids.

Today, Shondra continues to play an important role in supporting students who attend our afterschool programs, just like she did as a child. She also helps to run our Family Center, a resource hub where adults can search for jobs, access high-speed internet, and receive practical assistance for them and their families.



For many years, Little Lights has partnered with the Marion Berry Summer Youth Employment Program to provide valuable job experience for DC youth. Through this program, Jasmine began working with Little Lights as a part-time academic tutor when she was 14 years old.

Through these summer work experiences, Jasmine developed a love of supporting kids academically, socially, and emotionally. Now an adult, Jasmine has embarked upon a career where she gets to serve kids every day.

“Little Lights gave me a safe place to come when I didn’t want to be home or outside—they kept me out of a lot of trouble.”

*Shondra*

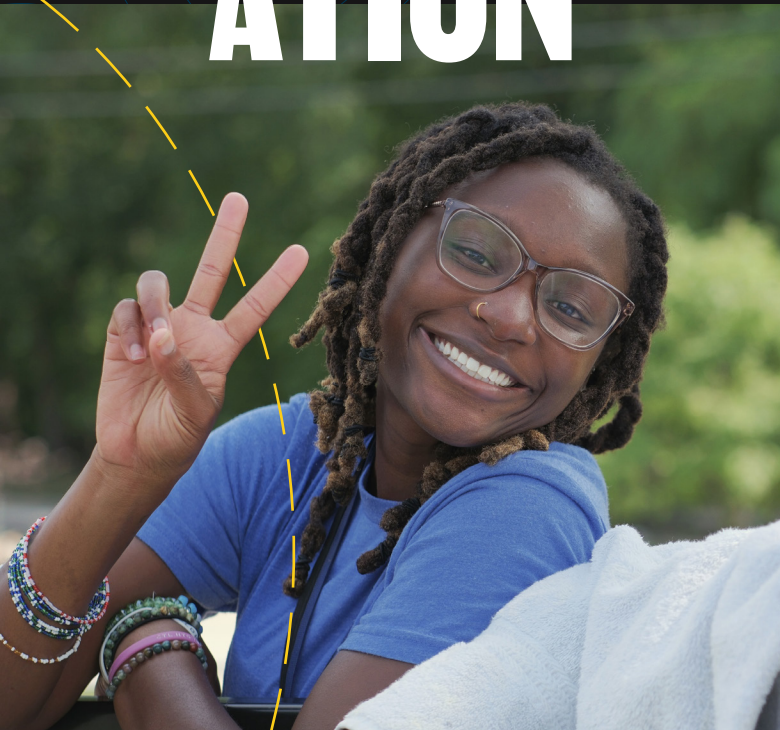
In addition to serving as the Program Coordinator at our Potomac Garden Center, she also works as an assistant teacher in special education classrooms in DC Public Schools.

“I appreciate the consistency of Little Lights.

Ms. Mary and Mr. Steve look out for you. They still care about the children very much,” said Jasmine.

Little Lights continues to give Jasmine and Shondra a safe and encouraging place to discern how their unique skills and interests can shape their career paths. We are thankful for Shondra and Jasmine’s dedication to supporting their community and we look forward to walking alongside them for many years to come.

# JOURNEYS OF TRANSFORMATION



**A**t Little Lights, we believe in the transformative power of authentic community, caring relationships, and mutual flourishing. When our supporters generously give their time, talents, and resources to Little Lights, our communities are strengthened and lives are changed. And in turn, our donors and volunteers find their lives greatly impacted by engaging with Little Lights's work.

Sade and Ricky epitomize what it means to invest deeply in the lives of their DC neighbors and in the mission of Little Lights.

After learning about Little Lights through her church, Sade felt inspired to get involved and began serving at various programs that Little Lights offers. Shortly after she began volunteering, Sade started to notice how impactful the consistency of Little Lights is for the communities we serve.

"If everyone loves this place so much that they want to keep sticking around, then clearly something great is happening there," said Sade.

It has been such a blessing to Little Lights that Sade chose to stick around too! Since 2022, Sade has served as a faithful volunteer to support Summer Lights, Homework Club, Saturday Program, and Girls Night. Some of her favorite memories with Little Lights's students include trips to the pool during camp and teaching them the fruits of the Spirit.

"Through consistency, [Little Lights] shows kids the love of Christ, whether that is helping them with homework or something else. It's been great to be able to consistently volunteer and see the students remember who I am. It is important for me to keep showing up and being super present," said Sade.

418

INDIVIDUALS  
VOLUNTEERED IN 2024

26

INDIVIDUALS ATTENDED  
12-WEEK RACE LITERACY  
COURSE IN 2024

190

INDIVIDUALS ATTEND  
A RACE LITERACY  
EVENT IN 2024



"These experiences not only changed the way I saw the brokenness in the world, but also helped me see it through the lens of God's redemptive plan to restore wholeness."

*Ricky*

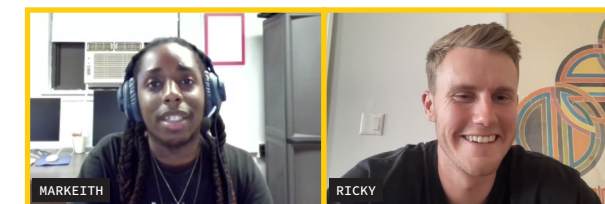
In 2018, Ricky was a recent college graduate, and found himself starting to lose his faith in God as he realized how intertwined the white American church was with racism. He enrolled in Little Lights' Race Literacy 101 course and was able to fully engage with issues of race and faith for the first time, despite having grown up in the church.

Ricky was so moved by his time in the class that he chose to serve as one of the course's small group facilitators in 2019 and 2020.

"These experiences not only changed the way I saw the brokenness in the world, but also helped me see it through the lens of God's redemptive plan to restore wholeness," said Ricky.

In 2022, Ricky joined Little Lights part-time as a graphic designer, producing various digital and print materials to

highlight our work, including the Annual Report you are holding right now. This creative collaboration continued through Little Lights when he was connected to Markeith, a student in the College and Career Program interested in the arts.



That summer, Markeith joined Ricky's design practice for an Art and Design Summer Internship. In this 4-week experience,

Markeith and Ricky did workshops to learn about typography, logo design, poster design, illustration, and design software and tools.

Little Lights is grateful to be part of Sade's and Ricky's stories of personal transformation. Thanks to the generous outpouring of energy, creativity, time, and love from volunteers like them, Little Lights continues to be a force for good in the community.

# PARTNERS

## COMMUNITY

11th Street Bridge Park  
 Banneker High School  
 Building Futures  
 Capital Area Food Bank  
 DC Central Kitchen  
 DC Unity and Justice Fellowship  
 DreamWakers  
 Dress Lab  
 Gonzaga College High School  
 Greater DC Diaper Bank  
 Guerrilla Gardeners  
 Hill Havurah  
 Hopkins Resident Council  
 Howard University Community and External Affairs  
 Howard University Student Organized Clubs  
 Initiative on Faith and Public Life  
 One Kind Act  
 Potomac Gardens Resident Council  
 SHARE Food Network  
 Shirley Chisholm Elementary School  
 St. Albans School  
 The University of Maryland Terps for Change  
 U.S. News & World Report  
 USAID  
 Washington Interfaith Network



## CORPORATE

B.Lin Catering  
 Chu Contracting  
 Colesville Dentistry  
 Deloitte  
 First Citizens Bank  
 First Republic  
 Fulcrum Properties Group  
 Ignite Coaching and Consulting  
 Kuya Ja's  
 SuprTEK, Inc.

## CHURCH & MINISTRIES

All Saints Church  
 Bridgeway Global Church  
 Chesterbrook United Methodist Church  
 Chinese Bible Church  
 Christ Central Presbyterian Church  
 Christ City Church  
 Christ Church Washington Parish  
 Christ Our Shepherd Church  
 Christian Reformed Church of Washington DC  
 Church of God of Prophecy  
 Church of the Advent  
 District Church

First Baptist Church of Glenarden  
 First Rock Baptist Church  
 Great Commission Community Church  
 Grace DC  
 Grace Capital City Church  
 Grace Community Church of Arlington  
 InterVarsity Christian Fellowship  
 Korean Presbyterian Church of Washington (Cornerstone)  
 Lord Jesus Love Presbyterian Church  
 National Community Church  
 National Presbyterian Church  
 Open Door Presbyterian Church  
 Passion City Church  
 Redemption Hill Church  
 Refuge Baptist Assembly  
 Restoration Anglican Church  
 The Church of the Resurrection  
 Union City Church  
 Washington Community Fellowship

## FOUNDATION

American Friends Services Committee  
 Antoninus Hines Foundation  
 The Capitol Hill Community Foundation  
 Crowell & Moring Foundation  
 Enterprise Community Partners

10,968

NUTRITIOUS MEALS PROVIDED TO STUDENTS IN 2024

240

BACKPACKS AND SCHOOL SUPPLIES GIVEN IN 2024



Greater Washington Community Foundation  
 Heinz and Liselotte Nehring Stiftung  
 Herb Block Foundation  
 Holloway Family Foundation  
 JKBae Foundation  
 John Edward Memorial Foundation  
 Jurie Foundation  
 Molinini Family Foundation  
 The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation  
 New Life Foundation

New York Life Foundation  
 Richard E. and Nancy P. Marriott Foundation, Inc.  
 4G Foundation

## GOVERNMENT

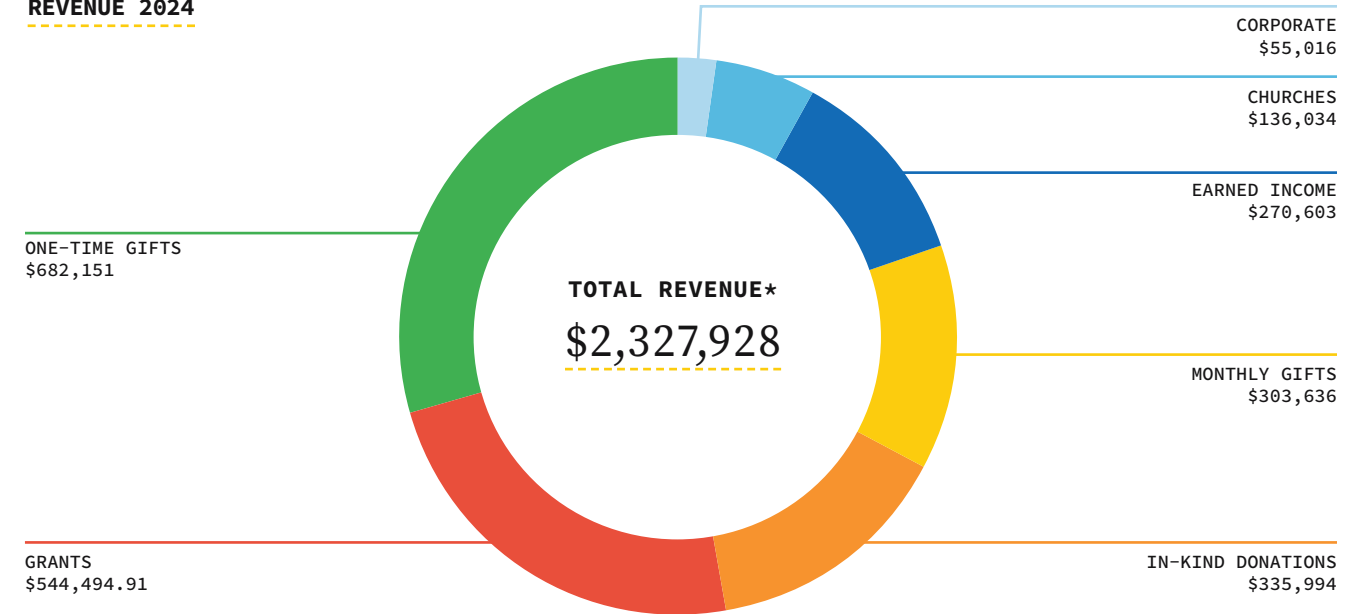
DC Housing Authority  
 DC Public Schools  
 Department of Employment Services  
 Learn24 OST





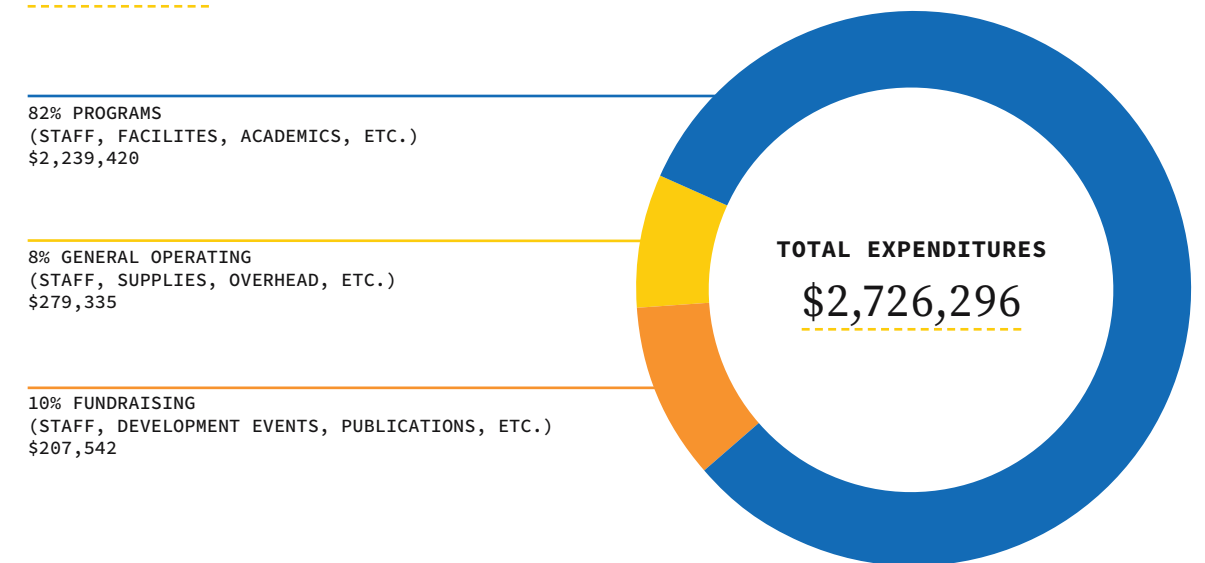
# FINANCIALS

## REVENUE 2024



\*An additional \$1,200,972 was raised for our Capital Campaign

## EXPENSES 2024



# STAFF & BOARD

## CLEAN GREEN TEAM

Lawrence Dozier  
Kelvin Gordon  
Gary Sams Jr  
Bernard Tyree

## PART-TIME STAFF

Ricky Altizer  
Jahlil Abdul-Sabur  
Joann Acosta\*  
Uliah Ahn  
Julia Arbor  
Chloe Baldauf\*  
Ajayla Beach  
Tyrone Boyd  
Sade Cole  
Nyziah Crawford\*  
Camryn Davis  
Markeith Davis  
Josiah Densby  
Caulah Francis  
Dorothy Francis\*  
Aaronica Glover  
Bonita Guerrero  
Daisy Hand\*  
Charmaine Hart\*  
Josh Heron  
Kevin Hollins  
Jah'mere Jackson  
Kirsten Jackson\*  
Sullivan Jackson\*

Jeffrey Keith  
Peace Kinsella  
Monique Lavoie\*  
Kierra Little\*  
Shelly Malcolm\*  
Deverrick McAllister Jr.\*  
Olivia McGlaughlin  
Ta'Shawn McKinney\*  
Amy McMahan  
Darrien Miller-Dyer  
Clanasha Munford\*  
Kiry Murray\*  
Diamond Odom\*  
Jane Pak  
Dae Pendergast\*  
Shantelle Powell\*  
Kassidy Powers\*  
Alona Robinson  
Izabella Robinson  
Anna Rozzo  
Tamar Ruth  
Dominique Scruggs\*  
Jamiyah Scruggs  
Minyarn Smalls\*  
Victoria Smallwood  
Andrea Smith\*  
Camille Smith  
Jasmine Stanfield  
Jennifer Tomlinson\*  
Danyel Turner  
Deniesha Tyree



Jada Veney  
Joseph Washington  
Denzel Watkins\*  
Levi Webb\*  
Amaria Williams\*  
Devonta Williams  
Shondra Williams  
Antwan Wright

## FULL-TIME STAFF

Mary Daniel Cheek  
Crystal Jenkins  
Tia Kim  
Katie Larkins  
David Lee  
Sophia Nalty  
Courtenay Oliver\*  
Mary Park  
Steven Park  
Cierra Peterson  
Karmen Taylor  
Andrew Topps\*  
Maggie VanZalen  
Alizah Wilson

“Little Lights has been a blessing in many ways. They not only nurture the educational well-being of each scholar but also their personal and spiritual journey. Each of the team members work on behalf of the scholars with love and genuine care.”  
*Parent of Little Lights Student*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Derek Sykes, Board Chairman

Vice President of Finance and Operations, Community of Hope

### Steve Park, Board President

Executive Director, Little Lights Urban Ministries

### Andrew Ho, Vice Chair

Director of Development, The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine

### Muteba Mukendi, Treasurer

Senior Manager, Deloitte Consulting LLP

### LaToya Archibald, Secretary

Director of Operations, Leadership and Governance, International Association for the Study of Pain

### Cherie Bellamy

President, LaVie Medical

### Audrey Donnell

Founder, Audrey Donnell Coaching & Consulting

### Candace Essel

Pharmacy Manager of Regional Outpatient Centers, Maryland, Children's National Hospital

### Kay Kim

Chief Practice Innovation Officer, Paul Hastings

### Ted Kim, Former Board Chair\*

Deputy Associate Director, Refugee, Asylum, and International Operations, USCIS

### Alex Knight

Vice President of Business Development, Cooley LLP

### Phillip Lee

Associate, DLA Piper LLP

### Matt Luecke

Deputy Associate Director, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System

### Anthony Minter

Pastor, First Rock Baptist Church

### Olutosin Oguntunde

Managing Director, Accenture Security LLP

### Michael Oh

Director, FINRA, Office of Financial Innovation

### TL Rogers

Pastor Emeritus, Triumphant Church & Founder, Triumphant Relations Ministry

### Amy Sareeram

CEO & Leadership Coach, Ignite Coaching & Consulting

### Tina Yoon

Director of Philanthropy Consulting, The Nature Conservancy

\*Indicates that they are no longer on the staff or board



## BOARD SPOTLIGHT: DEREK SYKES

In 2024, Derek Sykes became Chairman of the Little Lights Board of Directors. Since he joined the board in 2018, Derek has served faithfully and wisely and has helped Little Lights steward its resources well in his role as Treasurer. Prior to joining the Board, Derek volunteered as a tutor and a mentor. Derek has a big heart for the communities Little Lights serves and we look forward to his leadership as Little Lights undertakes the largest expansion in our history.

# PARTNER IN THE JOURNEY

SCAN TO GIVE

