

# GLOBALTIES > Iowa

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



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Proud Member of  
**GLOBALTIES > U.S.**  
AT THE CENTER OF INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE

# GLOBALTIES > iowa

is a community-based and member-driven non-profit organization that creates, supports, and sustains citizen diplomacy initiatives in eastern Iowa's Creative Corridor and beyond. We invite our community to greet, guide, host, and give with us!

## WHAT WE DO

Global Ties Iowa coordinates people-to-people exchanges between international leaders and residents of eastern Iowa.

As a member of Global Ties U.S., we collaborate with the U.S. Department of State's sponsored exchange programs, including International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), to host current and emerging international leaders who work in both public and private sectors. By programming meetings and exchange opportunities between visiting leaders and their professional peers, hosting Iowa Table Dinners, and sharing unique aspects of the eastern Iowa community, Global Ties Iowa connects the world and the heartland.

## OUR MISSION

We seek to strengthen our community's commitment to and participation in international exchanges on professional and individual levels. We believe in the inherent value of these interactions and that people-to-people exchanges contribute to the creation of a more prosperous local community

Through citizen diplomacy, we aim to develop international cooperation, foster mutual understanding across national borders, facilitate the creation of global professional networks, and contribute to the global education of area students and community residents, making eastern Iowa a better place to live and work.

## OUR VALUES

In our day-to-day and long-term decision-making, we seek to align our actions with our values. To do so, we ask: Is it globally- and community-focused? Is it reciprocal? We believe that these questions support our mission and move us closer to our vision



## Greetings, Citizen Diplomats!

Fiscal Year 2022 has truly been transformational for Global Ties Iowa. We are thrilled to continue our long-standing annual celebration of outstanding achievements - this year is bursting! We could not have flourished without the efforts of our cherished members and volunteers, experienced staff, dedicated board, and supportive community and are so appreciative of all you have helped us accomplish.

Sustainability and managed growth are top priorities, and our biggest news is that Amy Alice Chastain dropped the 'interim' and has officially assumed the position of Global Ties Iowa Executive Director as a salaried part-time position. The board unanimously and enthusiastically approved Amy's plan to combine a part-time role as Associate Professor of Instruction at the University of Iowa with the position of Executive Director at Global Ties Iowa. Under Amy's leadership, we have greatly expanded our partnership and networking relationships and increased visibility of the organization. Global Ties Iowa is becoming a much more well-known and respected organization not only in Iowa City but also to business leaders and resources in Cedar Rapids, North Liberty, and Coralville among other eastern Iowa communities as we promote global exchange and introduce our impressive international visitors to them. We are already seeing remarkable results from Amy's focus on expanding our capacity, growing the programming of IVLP, and ensuring our mission of citizen diplomacy is financially secure and stable. We could not be more grateful for her leadership and enthusiasm for this organization.

As always, our incredibly talented and committed staff and interns have been critical to our success. Special thanks go to Holly Harris (Manager of Programs and Operations) who led the first-ever effort to standardize and document procedures and provided much needed support and institutional knowledge to the team before departing to Brazil in March for her Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship Award. Abby Fowler (Communications Coordinator), Bailey Shafer (Program Coordinator), Abbey Weldon (Membership and Development Intern), Lexi Passno (Program Fellow), Ondrea Li (Social Media and Storytelling Intern), and Anna Peach (Programming Intern) are truly the engine that drives our organization – they inspire us with their seemingly endless energy, passion, creativity, and determination. We are so proud of how well they represent us both locally and to our partner national organizations.

The Global Ties Iowa Board continues to evolve and grow – we welcomed new members Katie Ron, Melissa Meisterheim, Zach Smith, and Christopher Herring (Honorary Board Member) earlier this year and look forward to many new board members in the process of onboarding now. Our deep gratitude and appreciation goes to Peter Gerlach, Arnold Daniels Jr, and Marlén Mendoza who all served during very challenging times and transitioned off the board during this fiscal year. The February Board Retreat provided a much-needed opportunity to focus on and identify specific initiatives to recruit, build board capacity, and augment resources with additional revenue streams. We remain committed to sharing our expertise, giving time and energy to these initiatives, being intentional about networking, and actively supporting citizen diplomacy in our community.

The above efforts, coupled with those of our treasured members, volunteers, professional resources, and supporters, have allowed us to host an unprecedented number of visitors and visits this year. Our amazing team of citizen diplomats greet, guide, share knowledge, and build networks that impact countless lives. It's the HOW you do it that is truly moving – visitors to Iowa are always impressed by the incredibly warm and genuine welcome they receive here and the breadth of offerings in our communities. Thank you for making citizen diplomacy come alive by deeply touching so many lives. Global Ties Iowa has at its

heart, the mission to connect people and it's so true as we say each year, that this work matters now more than ever. Person to person, reaching out, and the world is better for it. As are each of us.

What seemed impossibly challenging a year ago has become our new reality – and we could not have gotten here without you. We've no intention of stopping here, confident knowing that you'll be with us to deepen the connection between the world and the heartland in the coming year!



*Liz Bergeron*  
Liz Bergeron, Board President

# 2023 BY THE NUMBERS

**30** IVLP  
programs

↑ 11 from 2022

**1135** hotel  
nights

↑ 538 from 2022

**130** professional meetings  
with **267** professional peers

**199.5** professional meeting hours

**930** volunteer hours

**33** Iowa Table Dinners

**2876** intern hours

**\$589,141.55+**

of total economic impact

↑ \$220,935.35 from 2022



**↑ 45 from 2022**

**↑ 169 from 2022**

## 25 Mandela Washington Fellows

[illegible]



Above: Sip & Socialize at the Greenhouse with leaders from across Latin America.

# PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS

## International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP)

Thanks to the hard work of our programming staff and interns, this year was one of our most successful yet for IVLP programming! While these delegations visit many cities during their stay in the U.S., we are often their only hosts in the Midwest and we hear time and time again from our international leaders how much eastern Iowa surpasses their expectations, in no small part due to the kindness and dedication of our volunteers. We are proud to bring international connections to the heartland!



Leaders from the Kyrgyz Republic take a tour of the Catherine McAuley Center in Cedar Rapids.



Leaders from Bangladesh enjoy a Literary Walk in downtown Iowa City.



Leaders from Palestinian Territories visit Mount Trashmore in Cedar Rapids, accompanied by Executive Director Amy Alice Chastain, volunteer Alisa Meggitt, and Program Intern Lexi Passno.



Leaders from around the world are greeted at the Eastern Iowa Airport by volunteer Eddy Djagou.



Leaders from Kosovo meet with Legal Aid, accompanied by volunteer Jane McMullen.





Leaders from Pakistan enjoy Pizza on the Farm in Wellman.



Journalists from around the world enjoy an Iowa Table Dinner, hosted by DeeAnn and John Hebrink.



Leaders from Tajikistan meet at the Englert Theatre with board members of Combined Efforts Theatre and Deputy Director Ali Baskey.



Leaders from Armenia enjoy a Thanksgiving Iowa Table Dinner, hosted by Executive Director Amy Alice Chastain with daughter Maria Ünnap.



Leaders from the Western Hemisphere enjoy activities at Tanager Place with Expressive Arts specialist Kelli Michel.



Leaders from the Near East and North Africa play basketball at the Cedar Rapids Islamic Center.



Leaders from around the world meet with the University of Iowa Undergraduate Student Government.

“

I wanted to express my heartfelt gratitude for the warm welcome I received during my time in Iowa City. I am truly grateful for the opportunity to learn about elections and about the similarities and connections between Iowa City and Jordan.

**Samar Mohd Ibrahim Tarawneh, Head of Woman Empowerment Unit  
Amman, Jordan**

”



“

In Iowa, everyone is very hospitable and friendly, you can feel it everywhere. Iowa showed us a different side to the USA; it is not a metropolis. I felt the American life here. Let me repeat once again, the people here are very friendly.

**Bakhtiyor Yunuszoda, Head of Department of Religious Associations**  
Dushanbe, Tajikistan

”



A leader from Moldova tries on firefighter gear at the Coralville Fire Department.



Leaders from the Near East and North Africa attend an Iowa Table Dinner hosted by Jayne Finch and Rami Abu-Hijleh



Leaders from across Latin America take a mural tour of Iowa City, courtesy of Pedal Power.



Leaders from Ukraine tour collections at the University of Iowa Pentacrest Museums.



Leaders from Japan spell out "IOWA" while meeting with University of Iowa admissions staff.



Leaders from multiple regions visit a class at West Liberty Elementary School.



Visiting the Mother Mosque in Cedar Rapids

## Mandela Washington Fellows

In collaboration with the University of Iowa Tippie College of Business, it was a pleasure to host the Mandela Washington Fellows for another summer! This group of 25 accomplished leaders came from across Sub-Saharan Africa to study business, do community service, and participate in various activities. Thank you to all of the wonderful volunteers who spent their time meeting, hosting, guiding, and driving them around eastern Iowa!



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Liz Bergeron**  
President



**Newman Abuissa**  
Vice President



**Andrew Farley**  
Treasurer



**Melissa Meisterheim**  
Secretary



**Katie Ron**



**John Achrazoglou**



**Christopher Herring**  
Honorary Member

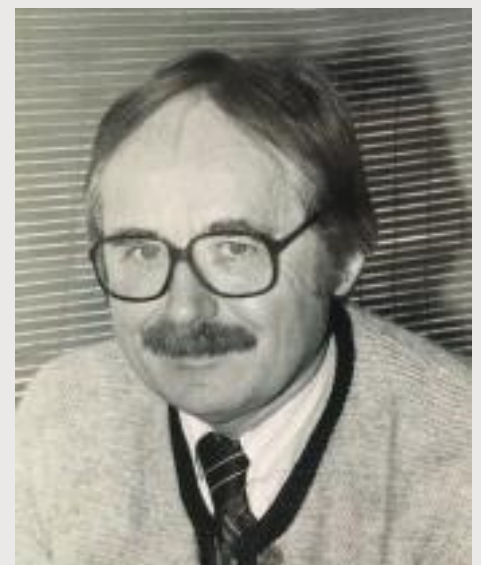
Special thanks to departing Board members Andrew Farley, Peter Gerlach, Marlén Mendoza, and Arnold Daniels Jr.

See our new Board members on our website: [www.globaltiesiowa.org/people](http://www.globaltiesiowa.org/people)

## In memoriam: Thomas Baldridge

Mr. Thomas Baldridge, who served as the Executive Director of Global Ties Iowa (formerly CIVIC) from 1987 to 2007, sadly passed away in early January. As a dedicated citizen diplomat, activist, veteran, and Hawkeye fan, his spirit was inspirational and is dearly missed. We extend our deepest sympathy and condolences to Tom's family.

“Citizen diplomacy is important in shaping how countries interact with another. By developing cultural understanding between people from our country and others, we can empathize and treat people better.” - Tom



# TREASURER'S REPORT

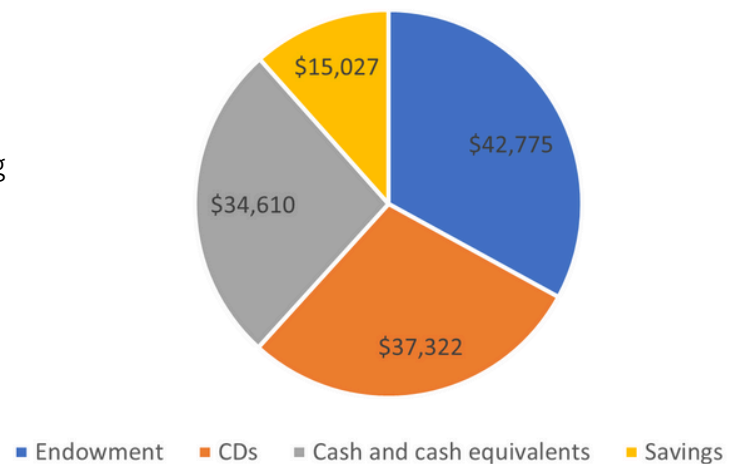
Looking back on FY22, Global Ties Iowa remained in a stable financial situation. The organization's core funding continues to be the Community Partnership Grant (CPG) funded through the U.S. State Department. CPG funding levels increase or decrease based on the number of programs and visitors Global Ties Iowa hosts during a given year. During the pandemic years, the State Department froze funding levels, but are now transitioning back to the historical funding structure based on visitors and programs. Knowing such, the board and staff prioritized increasing the organization's program and visitor capacity, as seen above, resulting in a noticeable increase of CPG funds. It must be said to all volunteers and staff: thank you for all your efforts! Your effort truly materialized and grew Global Ties Iowa this year.

One significant financial change this year was shifting the Executive Director to a salaried part-time position, which was made possible by greater CPG funding. The board recognized that Global Ties Iowa's sustainability and growth depended greatly on staff, and thus continued investment in personnel will be necessary for long-term sustainability and growth plans. Another noticeable financial change was a decrease in year-over-year expenses, due primarily to a lack of technology spending that was used in the previous fiscal year to support virtual programming. Lastly, a fiscal highlight that should not be ignored: membership and donations increased by almost 50% compared to FY21. An increase, no doubt, connected to Global Ties Iowa's growing momentum within eastern Iowa built on the passion each staff, member, and contributor gave to fostering international cooperation and understanding this year— Global Ties Iowa's mission.

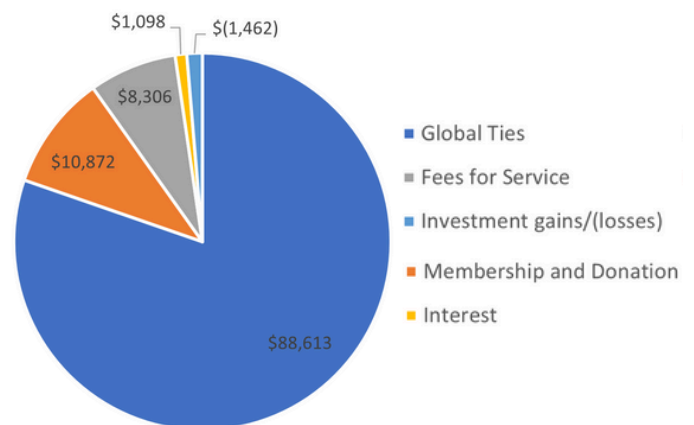
Thank you for making FY22 a success.

Andrew Farley  
Board Treasurer

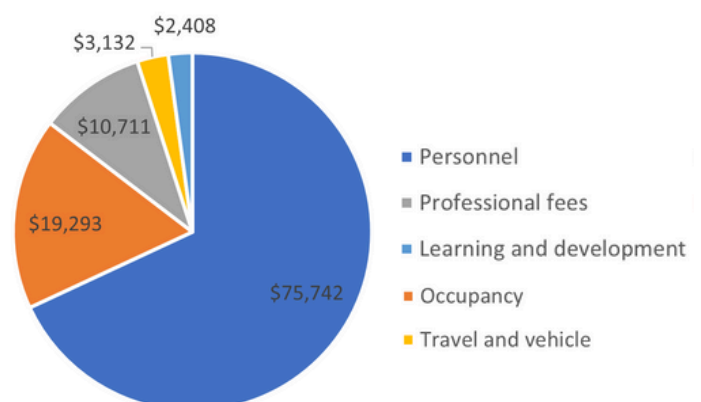
## Financial Position as of Sept 30, 2023 \$129,570



## Total Income: \$107,427 Oct '22 - Sept '23



## Total Expense: \$111,287 Oct '22 - Sept '23







# IMPACT REPORT

Thanks to our community's participation in the Global Ties U.S. Community Impact Study, we received valuable information about the impact our work has on our volunteers and professional resources. Here are some statistics that demonstrate the impact our work has on our volunteers and their local communities.

**92%**

of volunteers are more likely to consider different perspectives when problem-solving

**89%**

of volunteers are more comfortable with encountering differences

**79%**

of volunteers gained skills that allow them to better contribute to their community.

**86%**

of volunteers learned a great deal about the countries of visitors

**82%**

of volunteers learned more about international affairs and issues

**71%**

of volunteers better understand their local community's needs

**68%**

of volunteers become more engaged with local issues

**46%**

of volunteers keep in touch with international leaders at least a few times a year

# STAFF & INTERNS



**Amy Alice Chastain**  
Executive Director



**Abby Fowler**  
Communications  
Coordinator



**Bailey Shafer**  
Program  
Coordinator



**Abbey Welden**  
Membership and  
Development Intern,  
Mandela Washington  
Fellows Program  
Coordinator



**Lexi Passno**  
Program Intern



**Anna Peach**  
Program Intern



**Ondrea Li**  
Social Media and  
Storytelling Intern

Thank you to our amazing staff for their hard work and dedication this year! Special thanks to Holly Harris, Élie Nio, and Jaclin Thompson, who departed during the year.



**Greet.  
Guide.  
Host.  
Give.**

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