



ANNUAL REPORT

2025



www.TheSpotNY.org

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Letter from the Director



Dear friends and supporters,

This year marks a pivotal chapter in The Spot's journey of service to our community. As we have witnessed a steady increase in need over recent years, our dedicated leadership volunteers rose to meet that challenge with extraordinary commitment, many contributing nearly 20 hours per week to ensure our mission continued without interruption.

After careful consideration and two years of strategic planning, our board of directors made the transformative decision to hire part-time staff. This past fall, we proudly welcomed our first employees, marking a historic transition from our eight-year legacy as an entirely volunteer-led organization to one strengthened by professional staff support.

This milestone has enabled us to provide more consistent, reliable service to our programs and, most importantly, to the children and families who depend on us. What began as a humble grassroots effort operating from storage bins in a garage has flourished into an organization that now serves thousands of students across Canandaigua and Victor annually.

Today, we are honored to employ four dedicated staff members whose expertise and commitment are already making a meaningful difference in our capacity to serve. This growth represents not just organizational development, but a deepened promise to the families who turn to us in their moments of greatest need.

Even as we celebrate this professional expansion, we remain profoundly grateful for the volunteers who continue to form the heart of our organization. We have been encouraged by increased volunteer interest, and we continue to depend on the generous individuals who deliver food, sort clothing, assist with back-to-school events, and support our mission in countless ways.

As I reflect on this remarkable year and look ahead to 2026, I am filled with deep pride - pride in our exceptional team, our unwavering volunteers, and our school community partners who work alongside us to provide critical support to those in crisis situations. Together, we are not just meeting immediate needs; we are building stronger, more resilient communities where every child and family can thrive.

Thank you for being part of this extraordinary journey.

Sarah Chilson

Founder & Executive Director

Program Overview

The Spot is a registered 501c3 dedicated to improving the lives of Ontario County children by providing easy access to food, clothing, school supplies and personal care items in Canandaigua and Victor Schools.

The Spot started as a simple sock and underwear drive in 2017 and has grown into an annual back to school event, year-round free resource rooms, school based food pantries, a dynamic board of directors, a dedicated leadership team, and over 100 passionate volunteers.



Our Passion

We dream of a community in which every child has what they need to succeed in school. When children are hungry, they cannot focus. When they do not have the tools they need to learn, they become discouraged, and can fall behind. When basic needs are not met, learning cannot happen.

We know that by providing these basic needs, we help children reach their full potential in, and out of, the classroom.

Our work benefits students, their families, teachers, and our entire community.

How We Help

- Resource rooms are located in each school building and include free school supplies, clothing, sneakers, winter gear, personal care items and snacks.
- Teachers, social workers and administration can access items for unhoused families or those in crisis at any time and can even submit special requests - without red tape.
- Spot Mart, our in-school food pantry, provides immediate emergency support to children as well as scheduled monthly distributions.
- Our annual back to school event provides 800+ students with new backpacks and supplies.
- The Concert Boutique gives students an opportunity to select dress clothes for performances.

Community Partners

Local businesses and organizations provide program support in many ways; volunteer hours with their teams, collection drives in storefronts, donations of talent and time, financial support, and strategic partnerships. Approximately 40% of funding for critical programs comes directly from our committed community partners. As a result of this support, we can say “Yes!” every single time a social worker or teacher has a need for a child. Every emergency request can be met and we have the ability to provide consistent, year round support in our resource rooms and food pantries. Please join us in celebrating just a few of our dedicated partners!



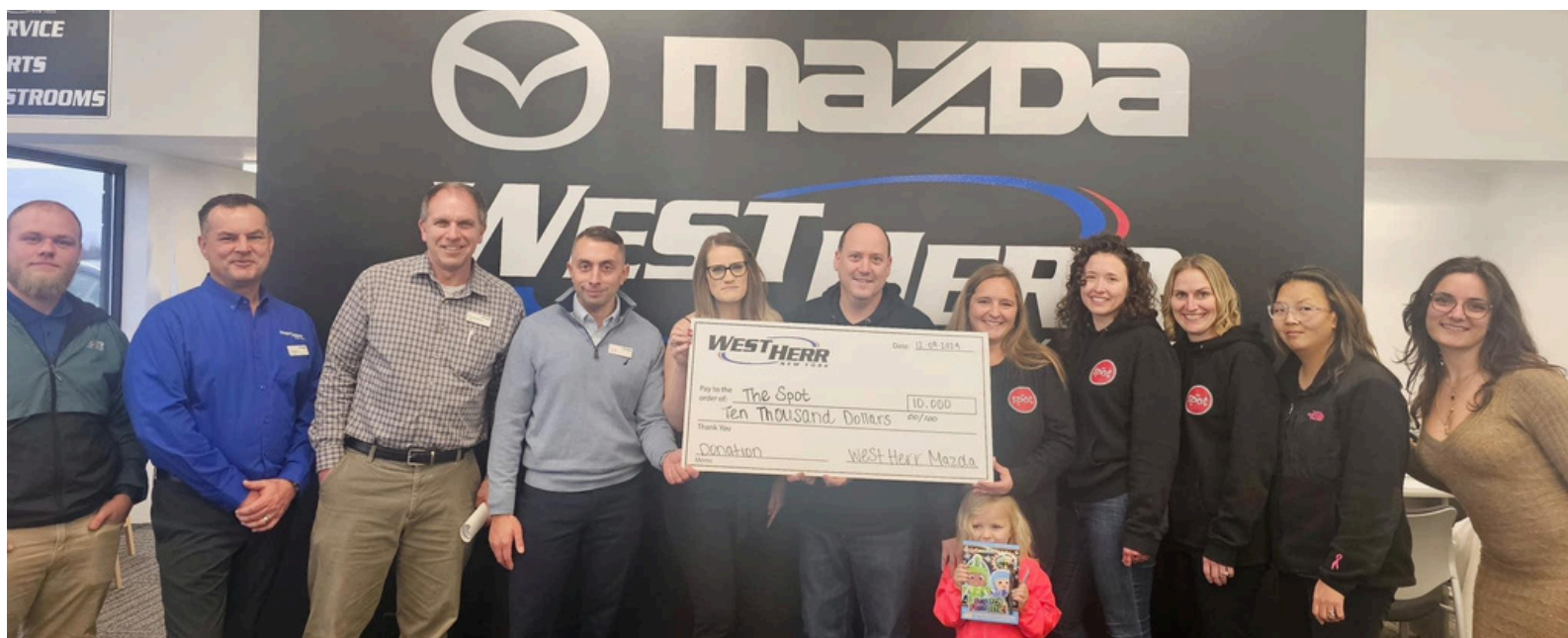
WACHOB
Financial



Canandaigua



Kiwanis
FARMINGTON-VICTOR



SpotMart



The Spot operates a school-based pantry, SpotMart, for families in the Canandaigua and Victor school districts who are facing food insecurity. SpotMart has been in operation since 2023 and is located at the Primary-Elementary School (PES) in Canandaigua and the Learning Center building in Victor. In addition to utilizing donated goods from student and community drives, SpotMart purchases items in bulk through Wegmans and Foodlink to help meet the needs of local students and their families. For the 2025-2026 school year we will need to raise \$35,000 to run both pantries and meet the full need of our community.

Feeding students, supporting families

- By offering a wide selection of healthy food items including pastas, sauces, rice, beans, canned protein, canned soup, cereal, peanut butter, and more, The SpotMart Pantry will support entire households.
- Families may choose to pick up or have food delivered once per month, before long weekends or holiday breaks, or on a as needed basis. Families can enroll by contacting their child(ren)'s social worker.

SpotMart also serves as an emergency pantry for students in crisis situations. District employees can access it at any time for their students.



39,200+

Pounds of Food Distributed



350+

SpotMart Volunteer Hours

Our Impact

The Numbers

Our operations team utilizes bulk purchasing and skilled sale shopping to purchase items for the best possible rates. In combination with donations, we distributed many of these items this past year and have a portion in inventory for the upcoming year.

A snapshot of what was purchased in 2024-2025:

120 Pairs of sneakers

110 Pairs of winter boots

100 Winter coats

88 Pairs of snow pants

1000 Backpacks

Measuring Success

The numbers only tell us part of the story. Success, to us, means being able to help every single time we are asked.

“My student hadn’t eaten since school lunch on Friday. On Monday morning I was able to get food from the pantry.”

"A student came into the resource room because their sneakers were too small - we found the perfect fit and they had a huge smile on their face "

 **39,200+**

Pounds of SpotMart Food Distributed

 **2000+**

Students Served

 **800+**

New Backpacks with School Supplies

 **500+**

Special requests



Leadership Spotlight



Leah Thomas

Executive Director Designate, 2026

As ED Designate, Leah is spending this year immersed in every aspect of The Spot's operations and executive leadership, preparing to step into the ED role in September 2026. Leah brings a deep passion for helping local children and a strong background in leadership and fundraising. Her energy, vision, and commitment to our mission are already making an impact and will continue to guide The Spot's growth and sustainability in the years ahead.



Russ Lyons

Director of Development

As both a dedicated board member and our Director of Development, Russ plays a vital role in connecting local businesses to our mission of supporting children in need. With a genuine passion for helping kids and strengthening our community, Russ champions causes close to his heart and inspires others to join him in making a lasting difference. His commitment, creativity, and compassion continue to open doors and expand our impact year after year.

Number of Volunteers



100+

Volunteer Hours



3,000+

New Monthly Donors



20

New Hires



2

Meet ALICE

ALICE households earn above the Federal Poverty Level yet struggle to afford the basics of housing, childcare, food, transportation, technology, and health care.

ALICE households:

- Span all races, ages, ethnicities, and abilities, though households of color are disproportionately ALICE.
- Include workers whose wages cannot keep up with the rising cost of goods and services.
- Often include those who are working two or more jobs and still cannot pay their bills.
- Include family members who need care and assistance, which makes it harder for their caregivers to find adequate work.
- Live paycheck to paycheck and are forced to make impossible choices: pay the rent or buy food, receive medical care or pay for child care, pay utility bills or put gas in the car.

Asset Limited, Income
Constrained, Employed



Percentage of local ALICE households

49%

of Canandaigua City
households

28%

of Town of Canandaigua
households

23%

of Farmington households

31%

of Victor households



Learn more about

ALICE at

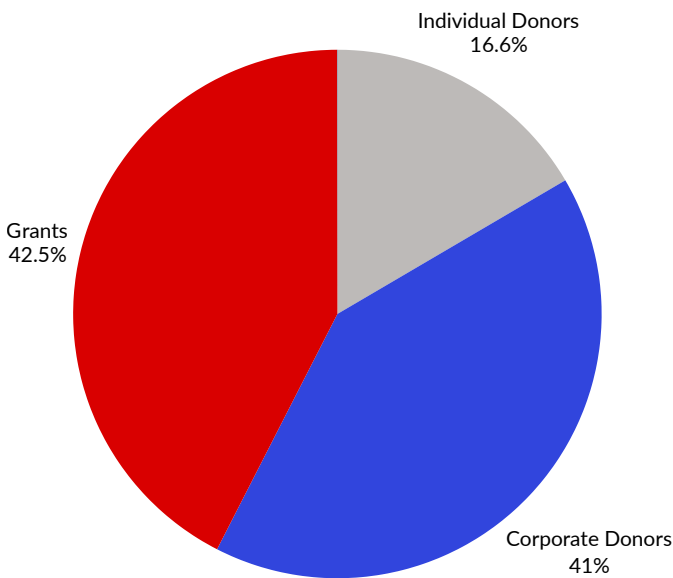
UnitedForAlice.org

Founded by United Way of Northern New Jersey, United For ALICE is a driver of innovation, research, and action to improve life across the country for ALICE and for all.

Financial Information

The Spot is a registered 501c3 operating in New York State. Our program is funded by individual donors, local businesses, and private grants.

↓ Donation Snapshot July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025



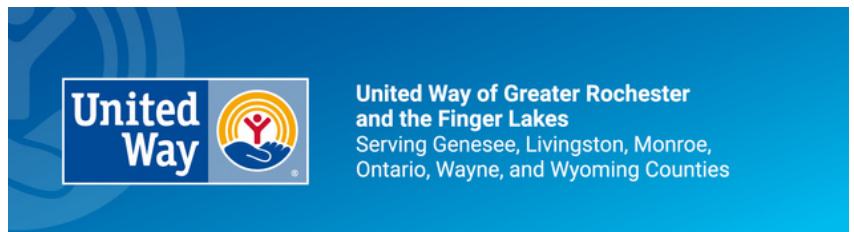
Individual Donors \$15,600

Corporate Donors \$38,600

Grants \$52,950

Revenue \$107,150

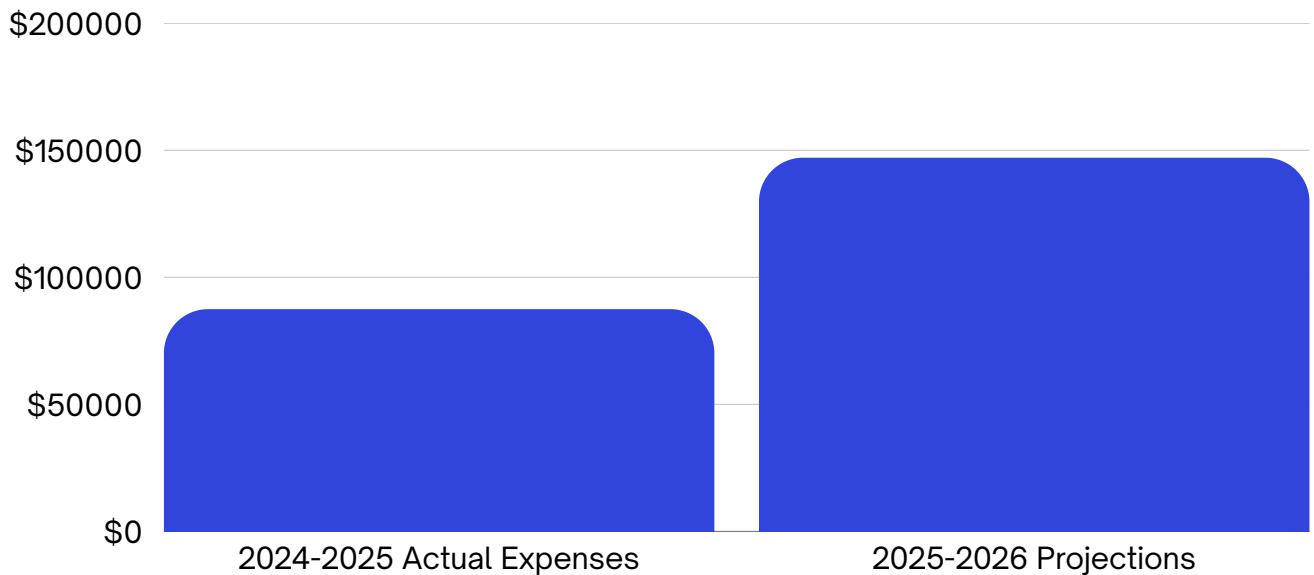
As we continue to diversify our revenue streams, our team has been focused on identifying new grant opportunities and growing our base of monthly donors. We are proud to partner with United Way and Greater Rochester Health Foundation as recipients of their grants and deeply grateful to the many individual and corporate donors whose support makes our work possible.



greater rochester
Health foundation

Financial Information

2024-2025 School Year Actual Costs versus 2025-2026 Projected Costs



- 2024-2025 actual included two part time employees starting in December and the addition of two part time employees in the summer of 2025.
- Projections for 2025-2026 include anticipated increases in our food costs for SpotMart and for school supplies based on pricing patterns in recent months.

As competition for grants intensifies and the cost of goods continues to rise, we are actively seeking to build strong, meaningful partnerships with local businesses that share our mission, vision, and values. At The Spot, we believe that when a community invests in its children, it invests in its future. That's why we're reaching out to local business leaders who have a heart for helping kids and families in crisis - leaders who understand the power of stepping in where the need is greatest.

We are looking to collaborate with organizations that are not only committed to doing good but also passionate about creating lasting change right here at home. By partnering with us, you can directly support students in the Canandaigua and Victor school districts, helping ensure they have access to the basic essentials they need to learn, grow, and thrive.

If your business is looking for a way to give back, we invite you to join us. Together, we can make a lasting difference in the lives of local children and strengthen the community we all call home.

Looking Ahead

\$15
per month

Current Campaign

Last year, we launched our monthly donor campaign in order to provide consistent financial support year round for our critical programs. Currently, we are 80 monthly donors from hitting our first financial goal. Can you help local children by sharing our mission with a friend or colleague or by signing up to be a donor? <https://thespotny.org/donate>



Growing Our Team

Our program is growing! As we continue to meet the increasing need in our service area we have a need for additional volunteers. Currently, we have several building volunteer positions open in both districts. Monthly SpotMart volunteers are needed in Canandaigua and Victor and there are always openings for fundraising professionals on the Development team. If you are interested in learning more about becoming a Spottie contact us today to get started!

Contact Us



www.thespotny.org

executivedirector@thespotny.org

PO Box 563
Canandaigua, NY 14424



“As a Kindergarten teacher, I really appreciated the presence of The Spot in our building. We often had children who needed things at the last minute: mittens, snow pants, hats, sneakers, socks, and extra outfits. It was so great to be able to head down the hall and have these items available. I am so thankful for all of the Spotties and all of the work they do to provide all of these items to the children in Canandaigua. A very well organized group of amazing people have made the lives of teachers and children so much better. Thank you so much!”

-Lisa Carro, Retired School Teacher and Current Spot Volunteer