2025 – 26 **Annual Impact Report**: At Work. At Home. And in the Community.

A Bridge to Hope and Opportunity

GESHER HUMAN SERVICES

Connecting more than 38,000 people and families with life-changing services.

This year, our impact on the community hit an all-time high, serving 38,476 people, including 3,298 job placements that translated into $135 million in wages earned by people who, not long ago, weren't sure a paycheck was possible. Newly employed folks are now paying $25 million in state and federal taxes and are able to contribute to the community.

Internally, we strive for excellence. One benchmark is continued accreditation from CARF International where we have been found to be compliant with 97 percent of standards for accreditation as a human services agency.

Data is important, and we know that behind every data point is a person's life. In this year's report, you will meet ***Louise***, interviewing with a resume that reveals her worth. ***Alonzo***, trusted with a floor in a federal building. ***James***, packing to the rhythm of a production line. ***Meloneze***, whose neurologist can't explain why her decline has simply stopped.

Our impact is a credit to a team and community of support grounded in integrity, forward thinking, kindness, and a belief that people come first. These values drive the high performance that has earned Gesher a growing reputation.

We don't do this work alone. We are appreciative of our Board of Directors, our community partners, and each of you who support our work. Five years ago, we asked the community to trust us as we brought together two meaningful community resources. In our hearts, we knew the people we served would benefit from the change. Thank you for helping prove out our theory.

We now look ahead with the imagination and momentum to make an even greater impact. Thank you for helping Gesher go from strength to strength as more people cross life's bridges with hope and opportunity.

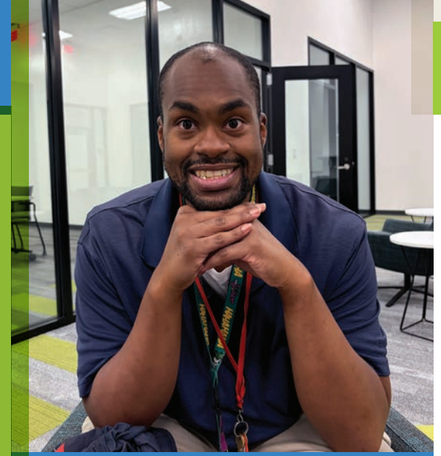
Paul Blatt
Chief Executive Officer

Dani Gillman
Board Chair

2,386 people received training throughout all of our metro Detroit career centers.

109,889 individuals connected with Gesher seeking employment or additional training through our Oakland80 workshops and outreach.

The number of Orthodox clients served doubled, closing a gap in access to culturally competent services.



$3.4 million in wages paid to people with disabilities means more individuals contributing to the economy.

Supported Employment

Gesher offers many pathways to employment for people with disabilities.

For Alonzo, this meant starting with skill-building in volunteer settings in 2013 to get ready for the workforce.

After volunteering in a garden and at a local church, Alonzo, who resides in Harper Woods, felt "relieved" a few years later to land his first paid job making cotton candy at the Detroit Popcorn Company, part-time, with a job coach by his side.

In October 2020, Alonzo joined Gesher's janitorial crew at the Rosa Parks Federal Building in Detroit, working in supported employment on a supervised team. By 2023, staff noticed he was ready to advance, having mastered industrial equipment and navigating tenant requests with aplomb.

"It took me a moment, but I learned to embrace it," he says.

Today, Alonzo works independently on the first floor. Site manager Joe Gildner calls it one of the toughest assignments in the building. "There's a lot of interactions, constant movement," Joe says. "I wouldn't give it to anyone."

As his earnings have grown, Alonzo's Social Security disability benefits have shrunk, replaced by a full-time paycheck and health benefits. Beyond the financial independence and spending power employment affords, Alonzo says Gesher has given him confidence. "***They believed in me,***" he says. He is already looking ahead to perhaps becoming a "lead" who oversees others.

"Not yet," he says. "But one day."

Multiply Alonzo's experience across everyone who moves through the same pipeline, and the story becomes an investment that pays society back.

Residential Services

Gesher offers safe, supportive housing for adults with severe and persistent mental illness in comfortable and welcoming homes and condos.

Farmington Hills | West Bloomfield | Southfield | Oak Park

Residential homes reduce:

- Psychiatric hospitalization
- Repeated crisis interventions
- ER utilization
- Homelessness

Risa and Salome have bonded over a shared love of gardening. Both 64, they share a home with two other housemates in one of our semi-independent homes in Farmington Hills.

Risa's love of gardening began in childhood. She and Salome tend to seeds and plants donated by Yad Ezra, including basil, yellow squash, and cucumbers, and Risa, who previously volunteered with Everyone's Garden in Berkley, brings that experience to the mix. She even picked up tips on weeding and composting from a housemate's landscaping business.

Together, Risa and Salome also tend vegetables and water the plants at **Gesher's Clubhouse for the Common Good**, and take neighborhood walks.

After our Spring Clean Up in May, when more than 70 volunteers beautified 10 Gesher properties with weeding, mulching and planting, Salome says "it means a lot to see the grounds looking so good." Risa adds that the clean up felt "like being cared for."

Whenever there's greenery nearby, the two gravitate toward it, and their basil and parsley find their way into salads and soups. Risa even prays for rain.

Research shows gardening's mental health benefits are strongest for adults 64 and older, including better wellbeing, lower stress and anxiety. The backyard garden Risa and Salome tend to is a reminder of what Gesher's residential services aim for beyond physical safety, medication management, and transportation: the everyday routines and connections that build real quality of life.

The Brown Center

The Brown Center provides innovative, engaging activities and care for those living with dementia, along with support for their families. It is a joint initiative of Gesher Human Services and Jewish Senior Life.

98 individuals served

by The Brown Center for adults with dementia this year,

20% more participants than last year,

reflecting a growing need for services for an aging population.

Meloneze's neurologist is amazed: Since Meloneze began attending the Brown Center, there's been no further decline in her condition.

Her daughter, Vershaun, isn't sure how to explain it except to say that until a cure for dementia exists, "the Brown Center is the closest thing to a cure."

As an only child without family nearby to help, Vershaun, an engineer, needed somewhere safe for her mother while she works. One tour of the Brown Center, where vibrant artwork covers the walls and music fills the air, and Meloneze fell in love. Now she commutes from Vershaun's Novi home to Southfield four days a week, returning with completed projects and an exhaustion that tells Vershaun she's been busy, so busy that Vershaun bought the Uno card game just to keep the momentum going at home on the weekends. Vershaun says the Brown Center staff, which uses a "positive approach to care" method, acts as an extra set of eyes and ears, and they have become a support system not only for Meloneze, but for Vershaun herself, alongside other caregivers who understand.

"*I recommend the Center to anyone facing this journey,*" Vershaun says. "The Brown Center has given me more time with my mother."

Business and Career Services

We're here to help you make your career goals a reality through personalized career counseling, assessments, technical skills training, networking opportunities, and job placement services.

3,298 total job placements

119 individuals placed through Business and Career Services

350 individuals received free resume help from a team of certified professional resume writers.

On her own mother's suggestion, Louise turned to Gesher, where Women to Work Program Coordinator/Career Counselor Phyllis Scripsick guided her in revising a resume that had grown outdated.

Louise worked most recently at a Ferndale optical shop that couldn't offer her full-time hours. Like many working mothers, she carried a stretch of time on her resume dedicated to raising her children.

Over four meetings, Phyllis explained that today, resumes need the right keywords to get past applicant tracking systems. Moreover, she encouraged Louise to put the best version of herself "on paper," leading with her strengths in creativity, organization, and attention to detail.

These traits aligned with an opening for an Administrative Assistant at National Council of Jewish Women. With her new resume in hand, and pride in the story it told about her value to the organization, Louise interviewed and was offered the position, her first in a nonprofit setting.

Louise, who resides in West Bloomfield with her fiancé, says her experience is a lesson for her three daughters. "Wherever you are in life, if you feel stuck, you're really not. You just have to invest in yourself and give yourself permission to try something new. I walked away from Gesher with renewed confidence in my ability to adapt and grow."

Vocational Rehabilitation

Gesher assists people of all ages with developmental, emotional, physical, visual, hearing, and learning disabilities to help them achieve their career potential.

250 individuals with disabilities secured employment

100% of Vocational Rehabilitation employers report satisfaction with Gesher services.

Amid the noise of machinery and shelves of seasonings, James is thriving as a neurodivergent employee, growing faster and more skilled at packing products.

Every morning James walks into Red Goose Spice Company, where the air is thick with the aroma of spices, and slips on a hair net and one to cover his beard. He builds, labels, and lines boxes, pressing out air pockets so liners won't pop if a box gets tossed. He fills boxes with seasonings, using a machine, and scoops flour by hand. He keeps detailed logs of the high volume he packs.

Supervisors say James has helped the company communicate better with all employees, recognizing that people learn differently, especially with multi-step tasks.

One of James' favorite parts of the day is the morning meeting to review the production schedule supplying customers like Better Made, Chicken Shack and Nino Salvaggio. "We're a team, and we work well together," James says.

James works 40 hours a week with benefits, and lives with his parents in Rochester Hills. When he's not working James stays active at Planet Fitness, which he drives to in his new truck, a proud milestone moment for him.

James credits his Gesher placement specialist, Marianne Harpster, with connecting him to employment that draws on his strengths and interests. "*She gave me a blessing with this opportunity.*"

Financial Education

822 clients received Financial Education services this year

Ashley knows what it's like to feel in over her head. As a mom, Ashley wants to give her kids everything, but she's learned the importance of living within her means.

A divorced mom of two, she fell into credit card debt in 2025 and came dangerously close to bankruptcy, carrying, too, the weight of a childhood awareness of others who lived off credit. "I'm not great with money," she admits. "I have debts and loans to pay."

At Gesher, Financial Coach Stella Shor gave her honest, direct guidance. Tracking her budget, cutting expenses, cooking instead of buying food, and giving up credit cards entirely because, as Ashley herself says, she "can't be trusted" with them, she's rebuilt her habits from the ground up.

Leaning on her Michigan State University education and background in fashion merchandising, she also landed a new job in her field, as a Dealer Success Manager at Indeal, and she's building toward a future that includes a home of her own.

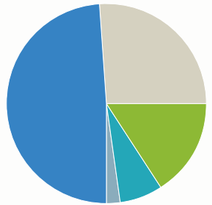
Ashley wants her kids to learn early what took her years to face. "Financial literacy shouldn't be reserved for people who work in finance," Ashley says. "It's for everyone, no matter your background or circumstance."

Gesher offers financial education programs to help people manage debt, build credit, and achieve home ownership.

Core Programs: HarMoney | Certified Homebuyer Education
One-on-One Counseling and Seminars | Foreclosure Prevention

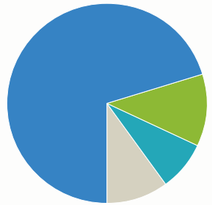
2026 Financial Statement

Gesher Human Services is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to helping people across metro Detroit lead more stable and fulfilling lives through career development, behavioral health, and residential services that strengthen our community by strengthening the individual.



SOURCES OF SUPPORT: $37,013,378

Program Revenue	49%
Service Fees	26%
Philanthropic Support	16%
Investment Income	7%
Miscellaneous	2%
TOTAL SUPPORT	**100%**



PROGRAM ALLOCATIONS: $33,445,479

At Work	71%
At Home	12%
In the Community	8%
Miscellaneous Initiatives	9%
TOTAL SUPPORT	**100%**

91 cents of every dollar donated to Gesher Human Services goes directly to programs that help people in our community.

Philanthropic and Institutional Partners

We partner with public and private organizations that share in our vision and advance our common cause.

- Applebaum Family Philanthropy
- Artichoke Garlic Foundation
- Ben N. Teitel Charitable Trust
- Bureau of Services for Blind Persons
- Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan
- DeRoy Testamentary Foundation
- Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation
- Donald R. and Esther Simon Foundation
- DTE Foundation
- Easterseals | MROC
- HS Foundation
- Huntington Bank
- Jewish Federation of Detroit
- Jewish Senior Life
- Manat Foundation
- Marcia Applebaum Jewish Older Adults Enrichment Fund
- Marvin and Betty Danto Family Foundation
- Michigan Health Endowment Fund
- Michigan State University, IMPART Alliance
- MSHDA: Michigan State Housing Development Authority
- Myron P. Leven Foundation
- Network of Jewish Human Services Agencies
- Oakland Community Health Network
- Oakland County
- ORT American, Michigan Region
- PNC Foundation
- Seligman Family Foundation
- State of Michigan
- Stone Foundation of Michigan
- The Chris and Russ Murphy Foundation
- The Clarence & Jack Himmel Foundation
- The Elaine Stern Foundation
- The Elwood & Carol Simon Family Foundation
- The Ethel Hyman and Rose Kaplan Foundation
- The Jewish Fund
- The Jewish Fund Teen Board
- The Marjorie & Maxwell Jospey Foundation
- The Woll-Yellin Family Foundation
- U.S. AbilityOne Commission
- U.S. Department of Labor
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- United Jewish Foundation of Detroit

We are thankful to all our donors, funders, and partners. Scan the QR code for a complete list.

The Manat Foundation: *A Legacy of Giving*

Thanks to the Manat Foundation and its trustees, in 2026, Gesher was humbled and excited to receive a transformational donation from the Manat Foundation
(*a portmanteau of Manny and Natalie's first names*).

Gesher is using this gift to support several meaningful initiatives, including:

- purchasing six vehicles this year rather than three originally budgeted;
- renovating part of Gesher's Frank building in Detroit to house a new Clubhouse serving individuals with mental health challenges, similar to the one Gesher/Kadima operated for over 20 years;
- completing renovations to the Diem Building in Southfield, including new furniture and lighting;
- paying off an old loan to free up cash and save interest payments;
- creating the Gesher Innovation Grant, a micro-grant program offering Gesher employees $500-$10,000 for an idea that will advance Gesher's mission.

We are grateful to the Manat Foundation and to Manny and Natalie for supporting those we serve, during their lifetimes and beyond.

To learn more about how you can be the bridge to hope and opportunity by supporting Gesher through major and planned gifts, please contact

Eric Adelman | Chief Advancement Officer | eadelman@geshermi.org | 248.233.4210

FOUNDATION SPOTLIGHT: *The Jewish Fund*

THE JEWISH FUND
A LEGACY OF SINAI HOSPITAL

Meet Zakneka Holt, Gesher's Behavioral Health Access Specialist

Zakneka Holt, Gesher's Behavioral Health Access Specialist, helps people access state benefits, connect with a local community mental health provider, and find community resources for clothing and shelter.

Since March 2025, she has served 114 people. She has also represented individuals at hearings to appeal benefit terminations, winning all 13.

Her role has since grown. As Gesher expanded its supports coordination services to include children, Zakneka became a certified Parent Support Partner, guiding families of children with disabilities through the school, medical, and mental health systems, so no parent faces these challenges alone.

All of this is possible because of the support of The Jewish Fund.

With its focus on increasing the capacity of health centers, the fund invested in Gesher to provide the opportunity to hire an expert like Zakneka and help build a healthier, more resilient Detroit, one family at a time.

A Bridge to Hope and Opportunity

MISSION

Gesher Human Services is a bridge to hope and opportunity for people at work, at home, and in the community.

Gesher's workforce development, behavioral health, and inclusion programming serves all Metro Detroiters while meeting the needs of the Jewish community.

VISION

A world where each person will have the tools to cross life's bridges and realize their potential.

VALUES

People First
Integrity
Kindness
Forward Thinking

GESHER
HUMAN SERVICES

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Let's Connect! geshermi.org

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Detroit, MI 48201
p 313.833.8100

Lois and Milton Y. Zussman Center
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Southfield, MI 48033
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Jewish Federation of Detroit

Platinum Transparency 2026 Candid.

ASPIRE to Excellence carf ACCREDITED

Gesher Human Services is funded in part by the Jewish Federation of Detroit and is proud to be a partner agency of the Federation.

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Chief Operating Officer

Eric Adelman
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