

## Who We Are

Serving Madison and Dane County since 1992, Wheels for Winners is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that supports bicycling through an earn-a-bike program and related activities. Working with community organizations and schools, we provide refurbished bicycles to kids and others who perform community service to earn their bikes. We have enhanced our programming by offering bike repairs and supporting community cycling events. Our efforts as an all-volunteer organization encourage volunteerism, recycle unused bicycles, and promote cycling as part of a healthy lifestyle. This year we amplified our commitment to promoting access to cycling, following through on our belief that equitable access is an important component of a strong, vibrant, healthy community.



## From the Chair: A memorable year of meeting challenges



*A repair at one of 39 offsite events*

Looking back on this year, Wheels again rose to the occasion and accomplished much that we can be proud of. We can be thankful for many things including a generous outpouring of bike donations and financial support, the redoubled efforts of our dedicated volunteers, and new-found opportunities and partnerships. We distributed 345 bikes within our community thanks to our volunteers who refurbished bikes at a record pace-- additionally repairing another 400+ bikes at 26 community events. Responding to increased needs within our community and partners who faced challenges getting bike earners to the shop, we pursued creative ways to distribute bikes and be of service. Our new partnerships with BikEquity and Waunakee Neighborhood Connection enabled us to better meet our goals of expanding access to biking for

communities of Color. Through bike donations and repairs, we did more to support bike rodeos and other local efforts aimed at reengaging the community after a year of relative isolation. We strengthened our relationship with cycling organizations such as Dream Bikes, whose energetic staff helped us secure the right bikes for kids. In a year filled with many memorable events, the work of our volunteers shines through. To that end, we are delighted that this report shares some of their perspectives.

## Bikes In and Out

- ❖ 760 bikes received as donations
- ❖ 350 donated bikes refurbished
- ❖ 170 refurbished bikes provided to earners for community service
- ❖ 175 refurbished bikes provided to community groups and events
- ❖ 267 bikes sent to Africa via Working Bikes
- ❖ 239 helmets and 175 locks distributed

## Bike Earners

We remained nimble, making adjustments to better implement our earn-a-bike program, ensuring that 80% of earners were from communities of Color. Our success depended on expanded efforts to bring bikes to Bayview Foundation and other groups who could not come to the shop to select bikes.

Bayview, along with Madison Community Center, were leading sponsors of kids, accounting for 35 earners. We also had over 20 other organizations that sponsored community service opportunities including Waunakee Neighborhood Connection (WNC) whose bike drive did not generate enough bikes for everyone on its waiting list. WNC approached us with a request to have their volunteers use their own service hours to earn bikes for 29 community members (largely Latinx). They submitted documentation for 2000 service hours, for an average of 70 hours per volunteer!

Forty of our bikes were earned through our partnership with BikEquity, a new non-profit that



*Kids getting loaner bikes from BikEquity's Kitty Knox Mobile Bike Library*

engaged communities of Color through 36 neighborhood and bike club rides. BikEquity ensured access to bikes through a lending library, which we helped stock with 60 refurbished bikes and 10 new bikes from REI Co-op. The library needed to be replenished as kids earned bikes through enhanced participation in riding events. In association with BikEquity, we repaired 81 bikes at 11 events held at local parks including Penn and Leopold.

## Expanded Community Involvement and Impact

Seeking to better support local efforts to bring life back to the community, we expanded our contributions to help biking events succeed. Our volunteer mechanics attended 26 community and other events held from April to October, where we repaired 402 bikes, five times our 2020 repairs. Highlights included three trips to Bayview Foundation to repair 49 bikes, 20 repairs at the June Ride the Drive at Marlborough Park, maintenance of One City School's bike fleet by completing 49 repairs, 19 repairs during a Bike Rodeo held by the Monona Police Department at Nuestro Mundo Community School, and tuning up 38 bikes used by Lussier Family Heritage Center for biking programs involving county parks such as [Youth Environmental Leadership experience](#), [Junior Naturalists](#), [Summer Adventure Program](#), and [Get Outside](#).



*City of Madison staff loading our donation of 23 bikes for Bike Rodeo held at Allied Park.*

## Filling the need



*Wheels provided locks and loaner bikes for a mountain bike club operated by the Boys and Girls Club*

Beside ramping up our repairs, we supplied much needed bikes to enable community organizers to meet the challenges of running successful events. Fifty-three bikes were provided to Centro Hispano for 2020 Three Kings Day and other giveaways, while its community partner Roots4Change received 10 bikes. When another kid's bike organization did not have enough bikes for their community wide initiative, we filled the need by providing 45 bikes to kids and their families at Eagle Heights with the request for them to "pay it forward" by doing good things for the community. On top of performing 31 bike repairs at a Madison-sponsored Bike Rodeo, we supplied 23 bikes for the Allied Park event that distributed 72 bikes among 350 participants. We also donated 14 bikes to start up Bike Federation's Madison-based bike fleet.

## Volunteer viewpoints

We are grateful for our dedicated and hardworking volunteers. We asked them to share some of their favorite memories from the past year.

"At a Leopold Park event, fixing a bike for a young man who was so friendly and appreciative! And he watched and learned something about bike repair and maintenance. All good." -**Jamie**

"The joy of seeing friends and fellow volunteers after a long Covid break. I was missing my Wheels shop crew: working alone in my garage on bikes just wasn't the same." -**Alicia**

"W4W provided the highest quality refurbished bikes of all the BikEquity partners this year. I was impressed that the 60 bikes we received were in excellent riding condition (some were so clean that they looked brand-new!)" -**Francisco**

"Joining Wheels as a new volunteer to help spread the joy and freedom of cycling to another generation." -**Tom**

"Attending BikEquity's inaugural bike event and witnessing a new level of engagement for us. That April 3<sup>rd</sup> I saw families borrowing bikes we refurbished and our tent with volunteers ready to repair bikes." -**Richard**

"Continuing to make the shop a better place to work through a team effort to install LED lighting in the whole shop. Let there be light and thanks to all who helped make this happen." -**Neil**

"After a year of being withdrawn, returning to the newly lit bright shop filled me with so much joy. The quality of the repairs and the availability of bikes were heads and tails above what we produced pre-pandemic. Everything was hopeful and wonderful." -**Stephen**

"Favorite memories for the Covid year are the people who volunteers there and their dedication to the work as well as the dedicated folks who came to the shop to pick up their bikes." -**Dave**

"I received a call from a woman wanting to donate a bike that was very special to her because it belonged to her college age son who loved to ride. She went on to say he committed suicide and she wanted his spirit and love of cycling to live on. After learning about Wheels, she thought we would be the perfect organization to do that. I accepted the bike with a plan of tracking it to its final destination. This conversation touched me on so many levels, confirming once again what a great work we do at Wheels and how much people appreciate what we do." -**Alan**

# Supporters



Healthy Kids Collaborative



Wheels for Winners  
229 S. Fair Oaks Ave  
Madison, WI 53704