

2023

ANNUAL  
REPORT



DREAM project

DREAM TO  
... da vida

# From DREAM's Founder and Chairman

August 2023

It is with great excitement that we welcome the new DREAM leadership team, Cledenin Veras, Executive Director, and Laura Sundquist, Deputy Director. They come to us with fabulous credentials and achievements in education and management, and we look forward to working with them. Catherine DeLaura, our exceptional Executive Director over the last 14 years, is stepping up to President of DREAM. Catherine has been the driving force behind building DREAM from a small local non-profit into a nationally recognized leader in education in the Dominican Republic. We are extremely grateful for what Catherine has accomplished and very much look forward to her continuing to guide DREAM in her new role as President as DREAM enters a new phase of serving children and communities in so many places in the Dominican Republic.

For me, DREAM has been an exhilarating journey over the last 28 years from its inception to what it is today. It is extremely gratifying to know that we have so greatly benefitted scores of thousands of children and their families in so many communities since the founding of DREAM in 1995. We could not have accomplished this without Catherine and the great team she gathered and managed over so many years. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!



**Michel Zaleski**  
*Founder and Chairman  
of The DREAM Project*

## Who We Are

The DREAM Project provides high-quality educational opportunities to children, youth and families in the Dominican Republic. Our transformative education programs respond to gaps in the national education system and empower at-risk children and youth to create a better future for themselves and their families. Through innovative approaches to literacy, early childhood education, youth leadership, music instruction and community support, DREAM promotes critical thinking and independence to enrich lives and strengthen sustainable communities.

Throughout its history, DREAM has developed long-standing relationships with local communities, building awareness of the challenges they face and establishing sustainable strengths-based solutions that meet their needs.

## Our DREAM

We believe in inclusive, innovative and community-based education for all. At DREAM, learning never stops, and opportunity is our great equalizer.



## Our Impact

For over 20 years, the DREAM Project has operated quality educational programming based on the needs and challenges of our communities. DREAM has a demonstrated track record of long-term, sustainable impact in the communities that we serve. DREAM is an organization for the community by the community, which we put into practice with a staff drawn largely from the local community, and community leaders contribute to the creation, implementation and evaluation of our programs.



## Our DREAMers

### Testimonial Kirssy Almonte A Ganar graduate

Thanks to the A Ganar Program, I gained various tools to build confidence and develop skills that have helped me succeed in my endeavors. Nowadays, I apply the knowledge I gained during the program in my daily work. I started as a customer service representative, and, after eight months, I was promoted to Coordinator of Operations at Gregorio Luperón Airport, La Unión, Sosúa. I have received praise for being promoted in such a short time due to my great effort and dedication.

# From DREAM's Board President

August 2023

This is an exciting time for the DREAM Project. After an extensive search process, we have found the perfect leadership to move DREAM forward. This fall, Cledenin Veras, Director of the School of Education at UNIBE, will be joining DREAM as the Executive Director and Laura Sundquist, Education Program Manager at the Peace Corps in Santo Domingo, as Deputy Director. I am confident that I am leaving DREAM's 120-plus staff members, students and partner communities in good hands. The expertise they are bringing, along with new energy, will allow DREAM to keep growing.

Today, DREAM is working in 15 communities and implements 18 programs, ranging from preschools, after-school academic reinforcement classes and parent education to youth empowerment and vocational and teacher training.

Our award-winning Luceros documentation program, acclaimed Bachata Academy and 12 published children's books are just a few accomplishments of which I am incredibly proud. Most importantly, DREAM has achieved quality, cohesiveness, professionalism and commitment amongst the staff, who work diligently every day to serve our communities.

I am honored to have been asked by the Board of Directors to stay on as President, and I am excited to work with Cledenin and Laura as DREAM continues its focus on high-quality programs and how we can support our communities even more effectively. I thank all of you for your unconditional support. Without you, we could never have come this far nor be this strong.

**Catherine DeLaura**  
Board President

## Testimonials from Mi Mundo Summer Camp participants

**Darlenys Garcia**

Participating in the Mi Mundo camp has been an experience that has impacted my life in a profound way. I learned teamwork, leadership and problem-solving skills that will be very useful in both my academic and personal life.

**Jose Martinez**

During my participation in the Mi Mundo camp, I learned to always look for the solution to problems, developing important knowledge for my growth as a student and a person. I am very grateful. Thank you, Mi Mundo.



## Our Core Values



## Our Reach

Each program we offer is designed to promote lasting improvements, nurturing knowledge and skills that drive progress.

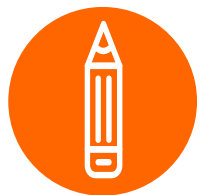
Our commitment goes beyond rhetoric; it's a driving force that propels us forward. Together, we are shaping a brighter and more promising future.

### Key Results 2022-2023:



**93%** of Literacy students raised their reading level in Reading A-Z

**90%** of Montessori students increased their skills in Language and Mathematics by **80%**



**75%** A Ganar students improved across all learning competencies

Over **250** active music students at the Bachata Academy



Parents attending Escuelita de Padres improved their knowledge by an average of **30%**

Over **2,500** registered users on the Única App



My Very Own Library Book Fairs donated **23,000** books in 7 communities



**LITERACY PROGRAM**

Reading & Library Programs, My Very Own Library, Teacher Training, DREAM Publications

DREAM implements a unique approach to literacy that is rooted in research-based best practices and includes direct instruction of phonics, decoding, reading comprehension and critical-thinking skills. Through small-group instruction focusing on early literacy intervention, DREAM educators teach young learners to read and emphasize comprehension and critical-thinking skills for older students. Staff participate in professional development opportunities where they are trained on innovative instructional methodologies and classroom management skills.

**MONTESSORI ACADEMY**

Montessori Preschools, Escuelita de Padres, Integrated Elementary Education



The Montessori Method focuses on alternative educational opportunities based on childhood development theories for children ages three to eight. Children are free to explore their intelligence while socially developing. Our program allows children to grow and develop at their own pace while encouraging play and exploration in a safe learning environment. Teachers act as guides who promote and enable students to be independent, taking ownership of their development. The Montessori curriculum focuses on nine key areas: practical life skills, sensory development, math, language, science and culture, art, gross motor skills, character development and family integration.

**YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

Deportes para la Vida, Única, Luchadores por el Cambio, A Ganar, Scholarships



DREAM believes that holistic youth development is key to ensuring that youth have the opportunity to live safe, healthy and productive lives, which ultimately strengthens the communities in which they live. Youth development programs protect the basic rights of vulnerable youth, encourage personal growth, promote positive behavior change and develop future leaders. Our programs foster healthy decision-making at critical moments so that youth do not just survive – they thrive.

**BACHATA ACADEMY**

The Bachata Academy is the only music program in the world that focuses on teaching bachata, merengue and kompa. A music education focused on local traditions motivates children, empowers communities and preserves diversity. The Academy adjuncts the DREAM Project's flagship campus in Cabarete's Callejón de la Loma and offers free intensive music classes to children of surrounding communities. The Academy's highly qualified professors endeavor to transmit their knowledge of bachata to future generations, while encouraging children to develop their own musical expression.



Each Bachata Academy student receives **150 hours** of instruction each year



**COMMUNITY PROGRAMS**

Luceros, Department of Psychology, Summer Camp, Eco-DREAM

DREAM believes in holistic community development that begins with access to high-quality education, from early childhood to primary school and beyond. We realize that education is just one piece of the puzzle to end extreme poverty in the Dominican Republic. Through our community programs, we provide additional services, including birth registrations and documentation, psychological intervention and training, summer enrichment and crisis response.



Summer Camp participants achieved a **99%** attendance rate, up **15%** from last year



**83%** Of STEAM Elementary students improved to good/ excellent academic performance, up from 62% at the start of the year

**80%** of A Ganar students exceeded professional development expectations

**UNESCO CONFUCIUS PRIZE FOR LITERACY**

The UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy is awarded to three outstanding winners, selected by an international jury. It celebrates remarkable achievements in the field of literacy and education. This prize stands as a testament to the hard work and dedication of the DREAM Project team, inspiring us to persist in our valuable work for the benefit of our community and beyond. With your continued support, we are creating a lasting and meaningful impact in the world of education and reading.



**119** birth certificates obtained for families and **246** institutions reached through Luceros.



# THANKS

In the spirit of Helen Keller, 'Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.' Thank you to our staff and community partners for your vital role in our success.

## \$100,000 and above

Ace Bailey & Jennifer Tuvell  
Benjamin de Menil  
Michel Zaleski  
Phoenix Tower International  
Zaleski Family Foundation

## \$50,000 to \$99,999

Beachwold Partners  
Cigar Country  
Global Giving  
Thomas Rosato Foundation  
University of Chicago  
William Friedman

## \$25,000 to \$49,999

Camp Scatico  
Georgetown University  
Hispanic Federation  
Kimball Family Foundation  
LA Dodgers  
Tribeca Pediatrics

## \$15,000 to \$24,999

Beth and Ravenel Curry Foundation  
Boykin Curry  
Farmington Public School  
JetBlue  
Mirtha Cabral  
Positive Legacy  
Playa Grande Beach Club  
Ralf Roskamp, M.D.  
Sealand  
Wanh Porter

## \$10,000 to \$14,999

CharityBuzz  
Fondation de France  
Universal Music Group

## \$5,000 to \$9,999

CEPM  
Gage Spolansky  
Library of Congress Awards  
Miguel Díaz  
Norman Lerchen  
Phillies Charities  
REO Asset Management  
Sherman Charitable Trust

## \$1,000 to \$4,999

4T Youth Leadership Program  
Andari Spa  
Apple  
Amira Chambers Ottley  
Beyond the Beach  
Boaz Rahav  
Brown School of Social Work  
Cable del Norte  
Carol Levy  
Cigar Country Night  
Charles Le Pierrès  
Chandler Joel Reedy  
Chester Amick  
David Vicente  
Dawn Techow  
Erik Cima  
Fundación Cultura Viva  
Friends of the DR Peace Corps Fund  
George de Menil  
Jack Cumming  
Jason Litman  
Joseph Pagano  
Jonathan Wunderlich  
Juan Perdomo  
Kristy Petrillo  
Letty Gutierrez  
Lori Bein  
Lois and George de Menil Charitable  
Louisa Hutton  
Lusk-Damen Charitable Gift Fund  
Luis & Elizabeth Martinez  
Molly Hamm  
Omari Walker  
Organización Estados Iberoamericana  
Pass it On Store  
Realtor DR.  
Steve Wallace  
The Warburg Pincus Foundation  
The Lisa Sasevich Family Giving Fund  
The Breteau Foundation  
The Agency Dominican Republic  
The Boston Foundation  
US Embassy, Santo Domingo  
Ulrike Bugler  
Victoria De Gonzalez  
Wehe Leonardo

US Embassy  
USAID

## Shared Responsibility Partners

321 Takeoff  
4D Cinema  
4TW  
ADSSosua  
Agualina Hotel  
Andari Spa  
Black Jack Tar  
Bliss Restaurant  
Blossom Retreat  
Blue Moon Retreat  
Cabarete Beach Houses  
Cabarete Chiropractic  
Cabarete Fitness  
Cabarete Sostenible  
Carib Wind Center  
Casa 21  
Casa Colonial  
Casa de Campo  
Casa Dorado Bed & Breakfast  
Casa XVI  
Casita de Papi  
Ceiba Café Pizzeria  
Chez Arsenio Restaurant  
Claro Café  
Colonial Gate  
Coral Bay Real Estate  
CPS  
Drifter Restaurant  
Ecoserve  
El Magnifico  
Empire Hotel Group  
Fred's Joyeria  
Gordito's  
Guido Perdomo Law Offices  
Helado Bon Cabarete  
Hostal Nicolas de Ovando Hotel  
Hotel Mercure  
House of Shiatzu  
Iguana Mama  
Inspire DR  
International Tennis School  
Johan Design  
Juan Perdomo Century 21  
L'Agence Real Estate  
La Cabana  
LEK - Laurel Eastman Kiteboarding  
Love POP  
Lulu Tasting Bar  
Menzies Aviation  
Millennium Resort & Spa  
Mojito Bar  
Natura Cabana

Ocean World  
OJO/Lax  
Pat'e Palo  
Pauhana Surf Camp  
Pizza & Spaghetti House  
Rancho Baiguarte  
Rancho Luisa & Tommy  
Sea Horse Ranch  
Speedy Rodriguez Taxi  
Super Pola  
The Butterfly Effect  
The Honey Company  
The Peninsula House  
Tuva  
Vela  
Velero Beach Resort  
Vibez Fitness  
Villa Taina Resort & Spa  
Voyvoy  
Yamazato Sushi

## Student Group Partners

Alcuin School  
Camp Mountain Chai  
Education First  
Green Tech High Charter School  
Middle College High School  
Millwoods Christian School  
New Heights Charter School  
Ravenscroft School  
Scatico  
Therapy Abroad  
Wilmington Friends School

# OUR TEAM



## Honorary Chairs

Junot Díaz Pulitzer Prize-Winning Author  
Leslie Grace Singer & Actress

## Founder and Chairman

Michel Zaleski

## Board President

Catherine DeLaura

## Executive Board

William S. Friedman, Secretary & Treasurer

Mirtha Cabral McQuilling, Vice Chair

Lucy N. Friedman, Vice Chair

Marie Josee Barshi

Benjamin de Menil

Adriano Espaillat

Karla Farach de Athanasopoulos

Katharine Zaleski

Spencer W. Kimball

Kevin P. Manning

Ana Galán

Letty Gutierrez

Ana Karen Peralta-Morales

Charles Le Pierrès

## Greater Board

Cynthia Carrion

Darlene Cordero

Molly Hamm-Rodríguez

Carlos Lamarche

Laura Messina Pilson

Oliver Montas

Edward Paulino

Donald Rabinovitch

Waldo Tejada

Celines Toribio

Joana Vargas

## Executive Director

Cledenin Veras

## Deputy Director

Laura Sundquist

## Director of Programs

Anis Altagracia Carrasco López

## Director of Montessori

Pura M. Barruos Medina

## Coordinators

Ana Berrido

Vittoria D Achille

Cristian Demorizi

Karla De Marchena Ulerio

Mayte Dictamen Molina

Angela Yudelky Martinez Gomez

Fray David Peralta

Yaritza Marine Sanchez

Jildania M. Sanchez

Jhan Carlos Toribio Martinez

## Admin & Support Staff

Abigail Amarante

Maurin L. Alcantara Santos

Juanita Bonilla

Yancarlos Blanco

Patricio Antonio Capellan

Diomara Diaz Martinez

Jose Antonio Diaz

Hailen Garcia Silvestre

Maria Lerenny Gomez (Isabel)

Melanie Goldring

Nathaly Jaimes Maita

Alla Korotyayeva

Cruz M. Lantigua

Raulin Matias

Clara Martinez Martinez

Vicente Martinez

Wildania Medina Bonilla

Luis Mario Murray Peralta

Sol A Ortega Nuñez

Jean Rene Oscar

Wilton Pérez Vasquez

Rita Rebeca Peña Martinez

Wagner Javier Pérez Ozoria

Anngy Reyes

Adarlenis Rojas

Marleni Rojas Mendez

Yaniris Torres Silverio

Emily Wolynski MacDowell

Elizabeth Rodriguez

Carmen Vargas

## Program Staff

Rosmary Agüero Clase

Dilenia Alvarez Blanco

Maribel Arias Santos

Arelis Batista Garcia

Reynalhy Batista Javier

Miguel Angel Berihuete

María Elena Boitel

Soranyi Castillo Guzman

Andrifer Capellan

Tama Centino Feniles

Daniel Stiven Cuervo Jimenez

Jennifer M Cueva Marte

Fernandinho Clermond

Yubelkis De la Cruz

Kelvin De Leon Zorrilla

Kircy Del Rosario

Luisa Ana Diaz

Juan Carlos Dorezin

Wilfrania Espaillat Peña

Elisee Felix

Selena Fermin

Rancel Flete Rojas

Fiorely Germania Duran

Yoelki Guzman Muñoz

Roxanna Hernandez F.

Viviana Jimenez

Elvis Joel

Kedly Lamande

Quedelyn Lamade

Junel Leclercd

Damaris Lopez

Emiliana Martinez Bravo (Morena)

Juan Abel Martinez Mendez

Juan Luis Martínez

Laisa Nayely Mayí Almonte

Wilson Jose Mejia Salomon

Irianna Ironedy Mercado C.

Paula Antonia Mercedes

Elsa Maria Mercedes Quiñonez

Rances Milanes Pelegrin

Alfredo Montero

Meleni Montero De La Rosa

Nicole Nuñez Rodriguez

Ana Silvia Parra Guzman

Ciara Yulendi Peralta

Wilnes Pierre

Wilve Pierre

Dilenia Peña Rojas

Rosaili Pierre Alexis

Juan Claus Previl

Angela Paola Rivas Lopez

Miguel Angel Rivas

Jhon Marcos Robles

Carlianna Rodriguez Morales

Joanna Rodriguez

Paola Rosario

Raysa Rosario

Isaias Sánchez

Magdalena Sanchez

Topacio Santos

Market Silvestre

Jennifer A. Sosa

Elizabeth Suriel

Deyanira Torres

Noni Vasquez

Albelisa Vazquez

Nicole Vásquez

Julianny Ventura

Lupillo Zarzuela

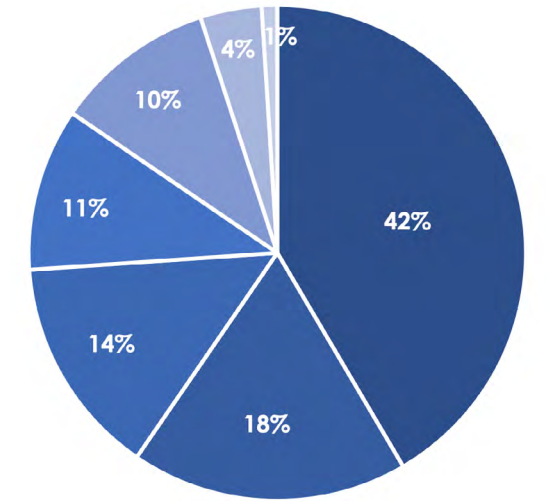


# Audited Fiscal Year 2021-2022

Through contributions from our Executive Board and select private donors, DREAM is able to cover 100% of overhead costs, allowing all other direct contributions to go straight to programs. We are committed to transparency and invite all supporters to learn how our finances are allocated for greatest impact.

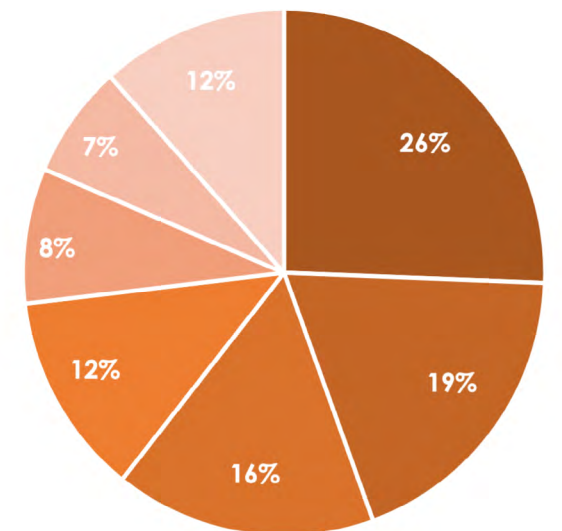
	Montessori Academy	Literacy Programs	Youth Programs	Community Programs	Total Programs	Management & General	Fundraising	2022 Total Expenses	2021 Total Expenses
Bank fees			180	281	461	12,834		13,295	12,372
Brochures and marketing	-	102	1,813	-	1,915	2,289	2,834	7,038	8,855
Community support	1,070	480	48,444	51,795	101,789	214	-	102,003	86,179
Events and trips	267	745	6,333	4,053	14,902	1,377	3,645	19,924	4,381
In-kind goods	282	2,522	14,952	42	18,033	168	10,505	28,706	8,103
Insurance	325	-	-	-	2,302	-	-	2,302	2,412
Meals	11,746	3,363	12,154	649	51,773	257	195	52,225	19,267
Medical	350	104	909	303	2,242	551	250	3,043	6,440
Miscellaneous	-	93	-	-	93	-	-	93	6,237
Occupancy	1,298	219	18,076	-	19,593	5,653	-	25,246	14,582
Office supplies	231	62	285	23	834	2,489	457	3,780	1,027
Payroll and related costs	219,278	82,705	142,988	27,483	528,041	92,810	120,277	741,128	579,405
Phone and internet	1,186	1,628	3,104	154	8,429	2,045	2,391	12,865	16,651
Postage and shipping	337	4,544	661	65	5,618	795	105	6,518	3,288
Printing and copying	176	10,471	575	42	11,322	1,014	1,384	13,720	4,932
Professional fees	193	1,537	-	-	1,730	18,237	-	19,967	21,071
Pro bono	2,228	-	46,430	6,920	55,578	-	-	55,578	25,800
Repairs and maintenance	11,002	6,277	4,199	97	41,389	2,480	-	43,869	18,290
School supplies	9,122	59,441	22,432	10,602	105,127	464	773	106,364	74,915
Staff development	1,999	932	335	24	5,258	1,804	1,205	8,267	4,682
Travel and transportation	7,345	9,217	30,785	7,203	62,230	559	4,753	67,542	27,834
Uniforms	1,513	356	10,835	1,316	17,565	436	2,089	20,090	4,063
Utilities	423	-	890	-	7,548	2,318	-	9,866	3,606
Volunteers	4,028	2,198	16,680	3,265	27,170	-	-	27,170	9,947
Overhead allocation	45,496	31,737	66,319	11,936	23,318	106,152	22,747	152,217	140,014
Depreciation	4,305		7,174	17,218	28,697	957	2,232	31,886	28,147
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$324,200</b>	<b>\$ 218,733</b>	<b>\$ 456,553</b>	<b>\$ 143,471</b>	<b>\$ 1,142,957</b>	<b>\$ 255,903</b>	<b>\$ 175,842</b>	<b>\$ 1,574,702</b>	<b>\$ 1,132,500</b>

**Total Income 2021-2022**  
1,583,692



- Grants & Restricted Donations
- Foundations
- Corporations
- Fundraisers
- Individuals
- Student Trips
- Other

**Total Expenses 2021-2022**  
1,485,916



- Montessori Academy
- Literacy
- Youth Leadership
- Bachata Academy
- Fund Development
- Community Programs
- Admin



For more information



Scan Here



DREAM project

 [www.dominicandream.org](http://www.dominicandream.org)

 [info@dominicandream.org](mailto:info@dominicandream.org)

  [@thedreamprojectdr](https://www.instagram.com/thedreamprojectdr)

**US Contact:**  
 13 Winter Lane, Milton, VT  
 05468  
 (607) 216-4697

**DR Contact:**  
 Calle 1, Residencia 3 Colonia Nueva  
 Callejón de la Loma, Cabarete, Puerto  
 Plata, RD  
 (809) 571-0497