

20  
23

YEAR-IN-REVIEW  
**REPORT**



wholespire

Inspiring wellness in all communities

# ABOUT US

Since 2007, Wholespire has provided communities with proven and sustainable strategies that lead to increased access to healthy choices for all people. Our strategies are focused on advocacy, community action, and youth engagement initiatives that increase access to nutritious foods and safe places for physical activity.

## Our Purpose

Many people are chronically ill because they do not have access to healthy opportunities and choices. Communities across South Carolina aspire to change this reality but need infrastructure support and technical assistance.

## Our Vision

We want informed influencers and empowered communities who work together to ensure an equitable South Carolina, where everyone has access to healthy choices.

## Our Mission

Many people are chronically ill because they do not have access to healthy opportunities and choices. Communities across South Carolina aspire to change this reality but need infrastructure support and technical assistance.

## Our Approach





# ABOUT US

## Board of Directors



### **Chairperson**

Deena Hilton MBA  
Hope Health, Inc.



### **Vice Chairperson**

Reverend Sean Dogan  
Long Branch Baptist Church  
Bon Secours St. Francis



### **Secretary**

Dudley Brown  
Renewable Water Resources



### **Treasurer**

Sean Battle, CPA  
Bauknight Pietras & Stormer



### **Member-at-Large**

Mary Jones, PhD, MPH  
University of South Carolina  
Arnold School of Public Health



Phil Cristaldi, JD  
Ross & Cristaldi, LLC



Taquina "TQ" Davis, PhD, MA, CHES  
Health E Strategies



Lakilya "Monique" Hill  
Health Equity and Partnership  
Solutions



Lori Phillips, MPH  
SC Department of Health &  
Environmental Control  
Division of Nutrition, Physical  
Activity and Obesity Prevention



Marian Robinson  
Clemson University  
Department of Parks, Recreation  
and Tourism Management



Phyllis Smart  
The Smart Box

## Our Team



**Executive Director**  
Meg Stanley, MMC



**Policy & Advocacy Consultant**  
Phillip Ford  
The Ford & Ford Agency



**Marketing & Communications Manager**  
Brandie Freeman



**Community Engagement Coordinator**  
Genita Green



**Digital Marketing Coordinator**  
Nyia Langley



**Accounting Manager**  
Stacy Rivera  
TR Bookkeeping Services



**Community Relations Manager**  
Kelsey Sanders, MPH, CHES



**The HYPE Project® Program Manager**  
Jamaius White



**Operations Manager**  
Jaci Foister Williams

# STRATEGIC FOCUS



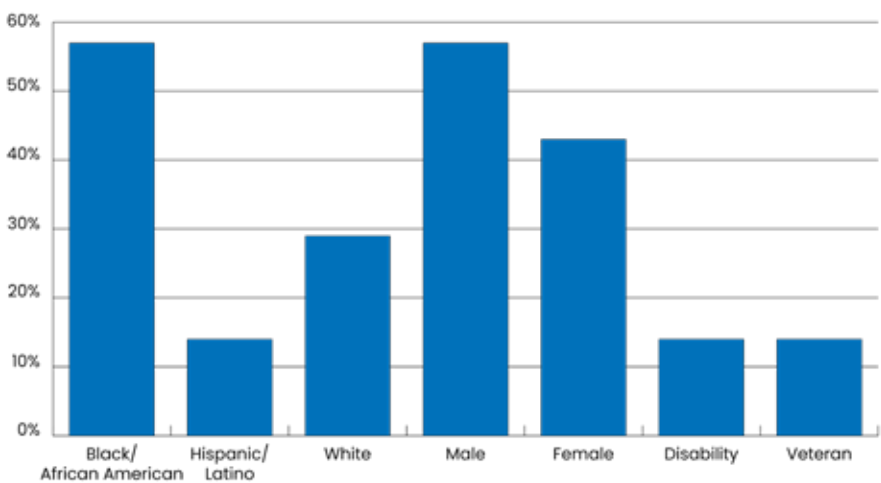
## Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

As Wholespire embarked on another year of progress and growth, leadership continued to ensure DEI and REI remained at the forefront of its organizational culture. The Board of Directors continues its commitment to implement sustainable strategies to reach a more diverse audience of candidates and to be more reflective of the state's population.

### Board of Directors Nominations

Wholespire implements an open nomination process through its newsletter, social media and other communications methods. We started doing this to ensure everyone in our network has the opportunity to nominate qualified candidates for board service who represent diverse backgrounds that strengthen the way we think and work.

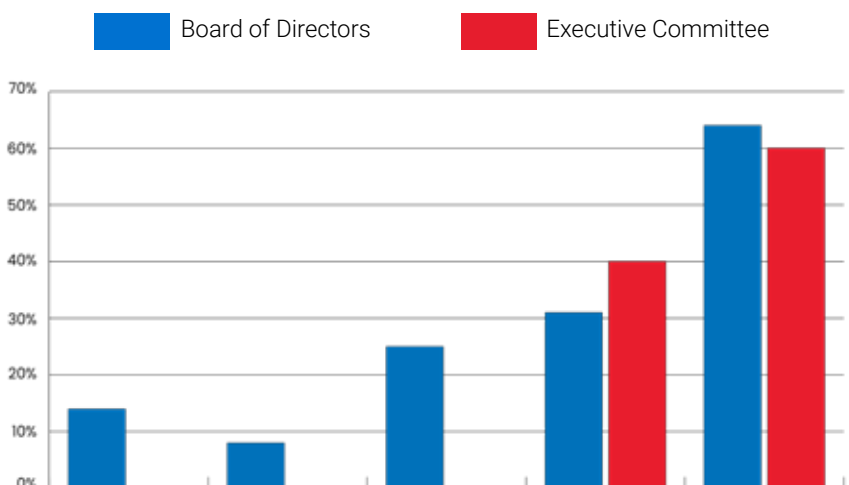
2023 Board Nominees' Demographics



### Board of Directors & Executive Committee Representation

Year over year, Wholespire has strengthened the leadership backbone of the organization by ensuring the board of directors and executive committee represent a diverse group of people. Representation of ethnic groups helps drive our work to reach more South Carolinians in populations our work may not currently touch.

2023 People of Color in Leadership Positions





## Advocacy

Wholespire experienced a successful advocacy season thanks to grassroots advocates, organizational partnerships, and strengthened legislative relationships. Wholespire successfully increased its partnerships with organizations and state agencies to support legislative campaigns that address health equity and increase access to healthy choices for all people.

### An Increase in Public Reach, Awareness

One key component of the Wholespire advocacy strategy is creating public awareness through the media. **Strengthening relationships with the media** led to an increase in awareness of **S.148, Proviso 1.68 and the SNAP and Healthy Bucks programs.**

# 15

News stories aired or published



# 53%

Increase in coverage across SC

### Legislative Wins at the State House

HEALTHY SCHOOL MEALS FOR ALL



S.148 pre-filed by Senator Shealy

# 12

SC Senators signed on a co-sponsors



H.3312 passed & a study committee formed



Proviso 1.68 included in the state budget

- Ensures eligible public schools participate in the USDA Community Eligibility Program.
- More SC students get two nutritious meals every school day.

SNAP AND HEALTHY BUCKS

# \$8.7M

Allocated in budget to update SNAP processing system

# \$5M

Allocated in budget to extend the Healthy Bucks program

### Legislative Champion Award



#### Senator Katrina Shealy

was awarded the inaugural Wholespire Legislative Champion Award. Senator Shealy unites diverse perspectives, builds consensus and navigates the complexities of policymaking with integrity and foresight. Her unwavering support of children and active engagement in the advancement of legislation that positively impacts the welfare of South Carolina's families is greatly appreciated.



# STRATEGIC FOCUS



Wholespire set out to encourage an alignment of healthy eating and active living strategies and tactics being implemented across the state to increase the impact on health equity and the social determinants of health. With this in mind, Wholespire was presented with several incredible opportunities to co-lead state- and federally-funded initiatives.

## Active People, Healthy Nation<sup>SM</sup>

Wholespire was recruited to assist in identifying community participants and co-hosting the **South Carolina Hybrid Walkability Action Institute/Walkability Virtual Academy**. Over 60 national, state, and local cross-sector partners including public health, planning, transportation, elected officials, and other disciplines came together for a dynamic, engaging course focusing on increasing the understanding of the built environment and how to leverage resources to create a more liveable, sustainable and inclusive communities.



**5**  
Rural communities selected, trained & created action plans

- Georgetown County
- Fairfield County
- West Columbia/Cayce
- Anderson County
- Williamsburg County

### What was the benefit?

Communities received continuous technical assistance and financial support for project implementation from all partners.

### Healthy Palmetto Collaboration

Wholespire co-leads Healthy Palmetto alongside the **SC DHEC Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Prevention**. Healthy Palmetto is the state coalition of more than 20 organizations that collectively addresses healthy eating, active living and healthy weight for the Live Healthy SC State Health Improvement Plan. Wholespire assists in leading a coordinated effort to unify and mobilize organizations working on healthy eating and active living efforts in the state.

### Free Online Learning

In 2023, Wholespire began **Wisdom Wednesday**, a **free, monthly webinar series** focusing on a variety of topics, such as PSE change, collaboration and collective impact, research and data, developing a funding strategy for a coalition, advocacy and policy, and equity. Two other series were co-hosted with partners: Connecting Communities and Schools and PEACE Training.

**3** Virtual webinar series  
**17** Webinars offered  
**1,002** People in attendance  
**359** YouTube views

Wisdom Wednesdays  
Hosted by Wholespire

Connecting Communities and Schools  
Co-hosted with the SC Governor's Council on Physical Fitness

Promoting Equity Among Communities Effectively  
Co-hosted with SC Office of Rural Health (3rd year consecutively)





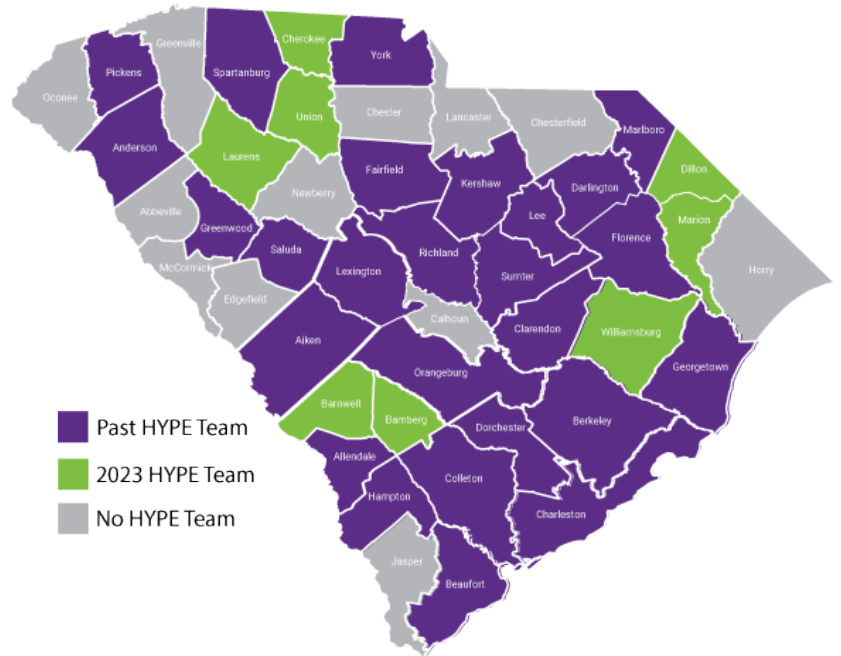
## The HYPE Project®

Building on the strategic aspirations to ensure The Healthy Young People Empowerment (HYPE) Project is evidence-based, sustainable and franchised, Wholespire continued its work to strengthen the foundation of The HYPE Project® by addressing administrative processes, developing resources and tools to fully engage youth and their advisors, and redesigning the curriculum.

### Piloting a New Curriculum

The **6th Edition of The HYPE Project** was launched in the Spring 2023 with eight HYPE teams in rural communities across the state. Following the initial advisor training, advisors returned to their communities, recruited youth participants, and assisted youth with implementing a civic action project. Projects focused on healthy eating or active living policy, systems and environmental change strategies.

### 8 Rural counties adopted a HYPE team



# 17

Advisors trained to implement the curriculum

# 85

Youth joined a HYPE team

# 8

Civic action projects were completed

#### Project Strategies

- Healthy Food Access
- Community Gardens
- Park & Playground Improvements
- Creating Inclusive Environments
- Walking Trail Improvements
- Advocacy/Youth Engagement
- Partnership Development

### Preparing for an increase in awareness and participation



A **new website was created** to assist in marketing The HYPE Project to groups and organization across the United States. A password-protected **digital resources page was created** to give advisors easier access to companion items needed for starting a HYPE team and implementing the curriculum.

# STRATEGIC FOCUS



## Branding & Marketing

Wholespire continued to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of its brand by increasing awareness through social media, improving website engagement, and email marketing. In addition to the Wholespire brand, our strategies include aligning our efforts with partner campaigns that share the same goal, increasing opportunities for collaboration at the state and local level, and maintaining a strong online presence for effective communication among our partners and the partnerships we help foster.

## Email Marketing

**37,915**

Total number of emails sent

**15.14%**

Open rate

- ➔ Whole Community e-Newsletter
- ➔ Professional Development
- ➔ Advocacy Calls to Action Campaign
- ➔ HEAL Mini-Grant Application Campaign
- ➔ Midlands Gives Fundraising Campaign



## Social Media Performance

**6,513**

Total social media followers  
(10% increase)

**137,409**

Total impressions  
(1.6% increase)

**7,325**

Total engagements  
(30% increase)

## Follow us on social media!



@Wholespire



@Wholespire



@WholespireInc  
@TheHYPEProjectSC



@Wholespire



@Wholespire



## Website Performance

**19,006**

Total website visitors  
(72.64% increase)

**11,989**

Total user engagement with the website  
(78.51% increase)

**112.6%**

Increase in website traffic via e-newsletter

**1,536%**

Increase in website conversions



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