# desirainbow

*Support, education and advocacy for South Asian LGBTQIA+ people and their families, built by our community, for our community.*




# Five Years of Desi Rainbow 2021 - 2026

**2,000+**
community members served by our support groups and Saathi since 2021

**99%**
support group members would recommend it to a friend

**635,000+**
people reached with affirming, educational content

**500+**
members in 30+ WhatsApp community groups today




desirainbow

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## Our Mission

Desi Rainbow provides support, education and advocacy for an intergenerational community of South Asian LGBTQIA+ people and their families.

## Our Vision

An intergenerational Desi Diaspora community that values, affirms and celebrates diversity of gender and sexuality.






## Creating our Vision Through:

### *Support*

Monthly support groups and Saathi one-to-one peer support, building family acceptance for our community

### *Community Building & Education*

Parent Education Series, Proud Possibilities, Story Time, Ally workshops and Pride

### *Advocacy*

Advocacy training for parents and allies, amicus briefs, trans student protections and trans healthcare rights

Support

# Someone who understands, whenever a family needs it

Monthly support groups, one-to-one Saathi peer support, and a WhatsApp community growing each day.



**2000+** community members supported

**300+** one-to-one Saathi requests answered

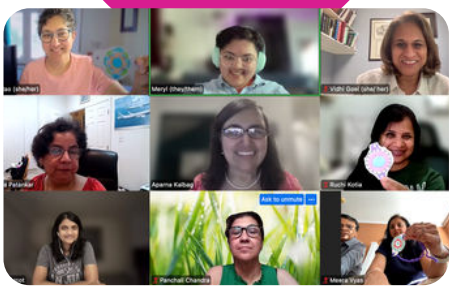
**100%** of Saathi recipients said it helped them feel hopeful

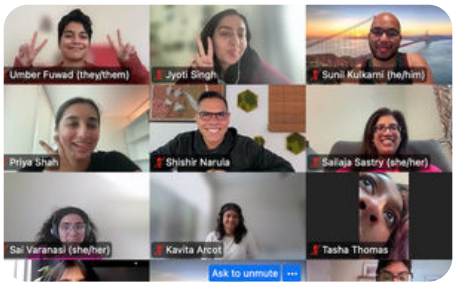
**2021**

Saathi one-to-one peer support launches

**2023**

50+ support group facilitators and peer volunteers trained






**2024**

Our WhatsApp community grows to 450+ members in 30+ groups

**2026**

17 new facilitators trained; hosted a Marathi group and a Grandparents group

## *In their own words...*

*"I leave every group on the verge of tears because I'm so happy I've found people like me."*

LGBTQIA+ Support Group Member
2021

*"I am finally part of a group that understands what I have gone through and is helping others who are starting their journey as I had done."*

Parent, Family Support Group
2022

*"It's been very helpful to know that so many families from my community are in the same position as mine. Before finding this group... I was feeling very alone and hopeless."*

Parent, Family Support Group
2023




## Community Building & Education

# Building the community we wished we had

*Spaces where Desi LGBTQIA+ people and families learn together, see their stories reflected, and celebrate openly.*

**635K +**
people reached through our social media engagements

**35 +**
metro areas with in-person Desi Rainbow community engagement

**1200 +**
joined our education programs live

## *Moments we're proud of*

**2021**
Proud Possibilities: talks with Desi trailblazers like Rep. Pramila Jayapal

**2024**
Breaking the Silence allyship workshops for Jahajee (NY) and Sanjeevani (Chicago)

**2025**
The Queer Diwali Ball celebrations raised community engagement and expanded our outreach

**2025–26**
Marching at Pride from Atlanta to San Francisco



"That was so unbelievably marvelous... a genuinely brilliant catalyst for positive change in the org."

Andrew Harpin, Delphix, after our Ally Workshop






"Celebrating Pride in my hometown means so much. For years, I never thought I could. Now, I'm proud to live as authentically as I always knew I was inside."

Stephen (he/him), Philadelphia, PA













Advocacy

# Standing up for our families

**We train parents and allies to speak up in schools, courts and on the national stage, especially for trans youth.**

**30**

Joined 30 South Asian groups in 2026 SCOTUS Amicus Brief on birthright citizenship

**135**

Trans Ally Pledge signers

**7**

Joined 7 orgs serving queer Muslims in 2025 SCOTUS Amicus Brief

## *Moments we're proud of...*

**2023**

Co-hosted Pyaar is Pyaar, celebrating the 2022 Respect for Marriage Act

**2024**

Helped win a 6–3 school board vote protecting trans students in Edison, NJ

**2024**

Rallied at the Supreme Court for trans kids' healthcare

**2026**

Conducted a national needs assessment of our community

*"I hope that every Desi person knows that – we need you here, we want you here, and our community would not be the same without your presence."*

**– Mason (they/he), Trans Day of Visibility 2024**



*Our community in pictures*

# Built by our community, for our community

## Our story

In 2015, a Desi mother in New Jersey couldn't find support after her child came out, so she started her own. Today we are a national community of LGBTQIA+ Desis, parents and allies.

"When I saw kids yesterday with their parents, I literally had tears... I haven't seen anything that gets the family together like Desi Rainbow."

Community member, 2021




Alok in Edison, NJ

**1200+** LGBTQIA+ Desis served



Pyar is Pyar in NYC



Onam Celebration in Chicago



Picnic in New Jersey

**800+** Parents and Family Members Served



Breaking the Silence in Washington DC



Maryland Book Discussion



Los Angeles Gathering



# Financial Summary

## FY 2025

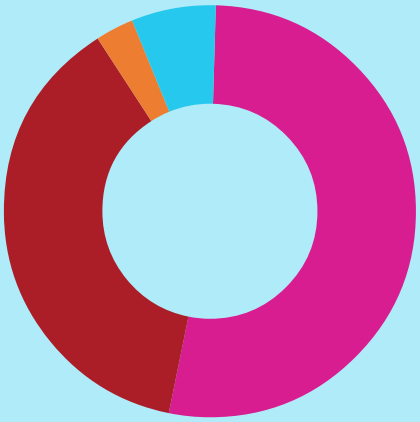
*Here is where our money came from, and where it went.*

Community gifts, grants and partners keep our programs free for every family who needs them.

### Revenue:

**$223,473**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Individual donations | $118,680 | 53% |
| Grants | $0 | 0% |
| Events and sponsorships | $83,266 | 37% |
| Employer matching gifts | $6,742 | 3% |
| Other income | $14,785 | 7% |

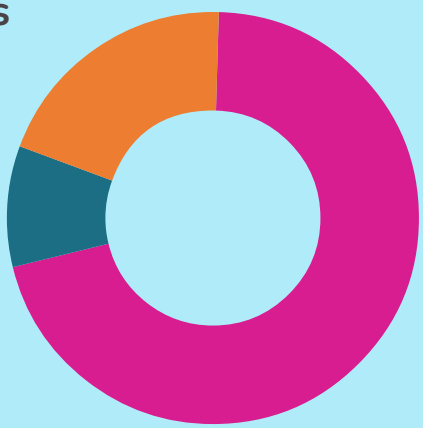


### Expenses:

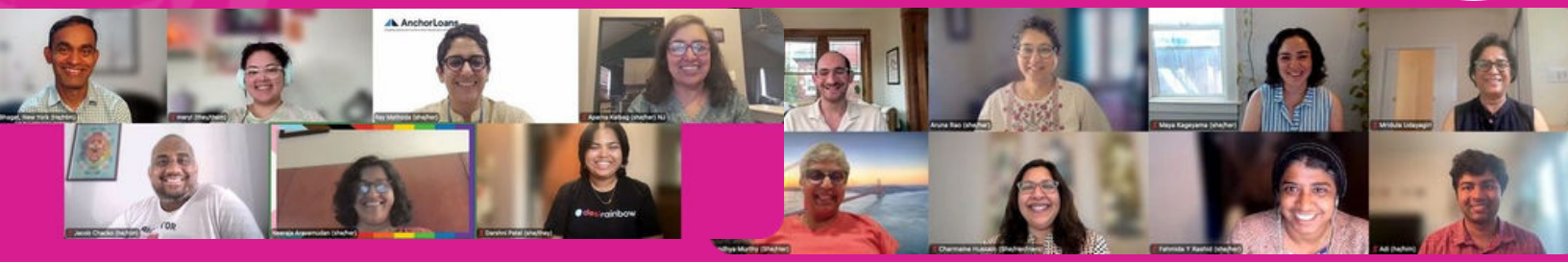
**$124,123**

**71 cents of every dollar goes straight to programs**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Programs: Support groups, Saathi, Education & Advocacy | $87,871 | 71% |
| Administration | $11,823 | 10% |
| Fundraising | $24,429 | 20% |



# Our 2026 Strategic Planning Team



## Our Board, Staff and Volunteers

# The people guiding Desi Rainbow

Behind every support group, Saathi call and Pride march are parents, LGBTQIA+ people and allies. Our board sets the course, and our staff and volunteers carry it forward.

### Our Board

**Rayman Kaur Mathoda**
Chair
she/her

**Neeraja Aravamudan**
Board Member
she/her

**Anupam Dev Goel**
Founding Board Member
he/him

**Jacob Chacko**
Board Member
he/him

**Sandhya Murthy**
Board Member
she/her

**Mridula Udayagiri**
Board Member
she/her

### Our Team

**Aruna Rao**
Executive Director
she/her

**Meryl Haque**
Support Program Manager
they/them

**Hima Sathian**
Saathi Peer Support Manager
they/them

**Shaila Patankar**
Records and Finance Manager
she/her

**Darshni Garcia Patel**
Communications Manager
they/them

**Alina Joseph**
Director of Technology
they/them

**Rina Vaishnav Rhyne**
CRM Support
she/her

**Reema Singhal**
Event Management
she/her

**Linaila Dsouza**
Event Management
she/her

**Adi**
Event Coordinator Manager
he/him

## Thank You to Our Volunteers

Our volunteers are the fuel that powers Desi Rainbow. Dozens of you facilitate our support groups, answer Saathi requests, help keep our online spaces safe, organize community gatherings, march at Pride and show up for families when they need it most. Many of you also gave your time and wisdom to shape our new strategic plan, so the next five years reflect what our community truly needs. You are the reason no Desi family has to walk this path alone. Thank you.

**Aruna Rao (she/her), Executive Director**



# Every family deserves someone who understands.

## *Why this work matters...*

**6x**

higher risk of depression when an LGBTQIA+ child faces family rejection

- Family Acceptance Project

**8x**

higher risk of suicide attempts when an LGBTQIA+ child faces family rejection

- Family Acceptance Project

**60%**

of Desi LGBTQIA+ respondents said they have unsupportive families

- Desi Rainbow Needs Assessment

***Family & community acceptance changes this.***
***That is why we build community for Desi families.***

# Help us build the next five years!

**Our New Strategic Plan prioritizes Expanding Our Reach, Enhancing Programs, Advocating for our Community & Building Organizational Strength and Sustainability**



This Diwali, light the way for Desi Rainbow to launch new strategic efforts to meet our community's needs. Our Five Years campaign aims to raise $50,000 by December 31.

givebutter.com/Five_Years_Desi_Rainbow

Gold Transparency 2026
Candid.

Desi Rainbow Parents & Allies is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, EIN 85-3352073, with Candid's Gold Seal of Transparency. Many employers match gifts.
Questions: info@desirainbow.org

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