

IMPACT REPORT

July, 2024 - June, 2025



Rylee Spoonemore, MassArt

**SCHOOL
onWHEELS**
MASSACHUSETTS

Educate Kids
Empower Families
End Homelessness

A message from Executive Director Athena Giannaros



I am deeply honored to serve as Executive Director of School on Wheels, a role I began in February 2025. Families across Massachusetts who are experiencing homelessness are navigating a time of great change, yet our commitment to ending the cycle of homelessness remains unwavering.

With the generous partnership of The Highland Street Foundation, we are developing a new Strategic Plan to meet these challenges and strengthen and expand our programs. We are committed to ensuring that every student has access to safe, supportive spaces for learning, whether in family shelters, libraries, or community partner sites.

I welcome you to meet our village; our staff, donors, volunteers and students, by visiting our website at www.sowma.org. Thank you for your confidence and for standing alongside us. Together, with compassion and renewed purpose, we are creating brighter, more stable futures for all students.

With gratitude,

Athena

The Average Age of a
Homeless Person in
Massachusetts is
8-Years-Old



Massachusetts Students
Identified as Homeless
32,000+



Source: Massachusetts Department of Education, 2024

Our **mission** is to support the academic, social and emotional growth of students impacted by homelessness and poverty.



Our **vision** is for all students impacted by homelessness and poverty to have the academic, social and emotional support necessary to achieve a bright and productive future that will help end the cycle of homelessness and poverty.

Three Programs

Bridge Mentoring



Tutoring



Backpacks



Building Connection Through TUTORING



BRIDGE MENTORING



BACKPACKS & SCHOOL SUPPLIES



Throughout FY 25, our volunteer Mentors guided students through high school, college, vocational training and career opportunities.

76

MENTORING STUDENTS

*High school, college & vocational guidance;
GED & HiSet study, Internships, Scholarships
Apprenticeships & Job placement*

55

**Mentor/Mentee
Matches**

10

Graduations

16

**Scholarship
Recipients**



2025



**BS Health Science with a
Minor in Biology**

“

There were so many moments in college when I'd watch others get picked up by their “home team” - and I'd quietly feel that absence. Then last fall as I stood on stage before a crowd at the annual SOWMA gala, one of the students shared her story of how homelessness no longer defines her; how she found freedom from shame because of SOWMA’s support. I cried. Not because our stories are the same, but because her words echoed something I used to feel deeply too.

Stephanie, Bridge Mentoring Student, Gordon College 2025

Tutoring children from pre-k through high school

14 TUTORING COMMUNITIES

Attleboro, Brockton, Boston,
Fall River, Kingston,
Lowell, Marshfield,
Middleboro, Norwell,
New Bedford, Rockland,
Stoughton, Taunton,
Weymouth



➤ Served 395 PreK-12 Students

➤ 5,095 Interactive Sessions

A backpack often serves as a personal locker for children living in crowded quarters, such as family shelters, transitional housing and hotels.

11,566

CUSTOMIZED BACKPACKS

11,566 students received new backpacks with customized, grade-level supplies, books and notes of inspiration from volunteers



Distributed to 44 Massachusetts Communities



Largest Communities Supported:
Boston (5,172), Brockton (1,881),
Fall River (1,783) and New Bedford (644)

Since 2004

Celebrated 71 graduations,
representing 48 colleges,
universities and vocational
schools

Tutored **4,100+** students
(PreK-12)

Distributed **70,000+** grade-
level backpacks to children
and youth

Our Students

“

“One night I desperately searched my laptop hoping that someone, somewhere might care. I met SOWMA, and celia, the big sister I never had.”

~ Douaa

Bridge Mentoring Student



I liked this art project with my tutor because I learned I could draw good and it made me like my science class a lot.

~ Anthony

Tutoring Student



Our backpacks are customized according to grade-level and include the items listed by local school districts.



“I like the red one, with the kittens on the front.”

~ Jasmine,

Tutoring Student

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