SWEET EVENING BREEZE REFLECTS ON 2024-2025

MESSAGE FROM THE TEAM

Dear Friends,

Thank you for taking a look at Sweet Evening Breeze's 2024-2025 year end. This is an opportunity to express our gratitude for your continued interest and support of our organization, and to update you on our most recent activities over the past year.

2024-2025 was defined by success and growth not only for Sweet Evening Breeze as an organization, but for our clients as well. With the opening of Trager House we have been able to bare witness to the hard work and success of our first few graduates. We have also obtained an outreach van with help from the Kentucky Colonels which has allowed us to go out into the community more frequently with more supplies.

Of course, there have also been some set backs for our community as well. Federal funding for some of our partners has been cut and have affected programs such as our free weekly HIV testing which we had to pause briefly, but is now in operation again thanks to our partners at NuLease Medical Solutions . We want to assure you that we have *not* lost any direct funding as we are fully funded by our generous donors and community partners like you. This means that we are here to stay and we are proud to offer support to our local LGBTQ+ community.

Despite our resolve, offering queer affirming services to a vulnerable population in a time of political upheaval and instability has been taxing for our team and we could always use more monetary support for operations, transitional housing, and programs.

In the following pages you will find a summary of demographic information about our population, a list of services including our Trager House program, notable events from the past year, and personal stories from our first few graduates of 2024-2025.

We hope you will see the value of our organization as the only organization in Kentucky that works specifically with LGBTQ+ young adults facing homelessness. We are looking forward to staying in touch with you and to having another successful year in 2025-2026.

with gratitude,

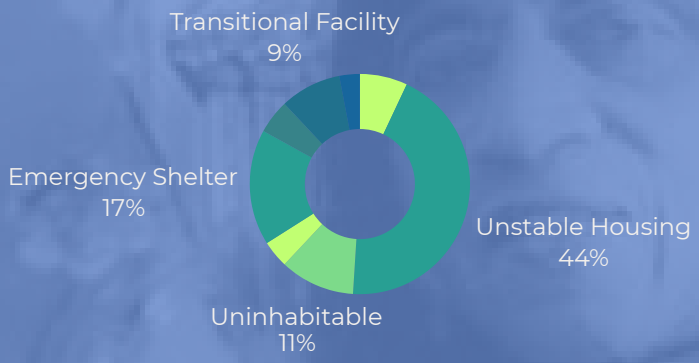
The Sweet Evening Breeze Team

SWEET EVENING BREEZE

Providing an affirming space for 18 -24 year old LGBTQ+ young adults experiencing homelessness.

UNDERSTANDING OUR YOUNG ADULTS

Housing Status at Time of Intake

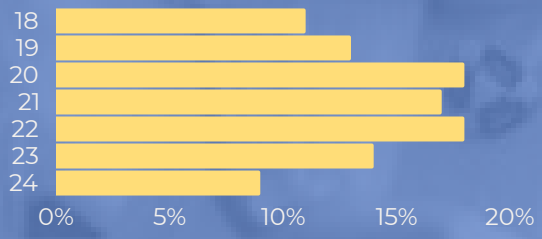


SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Our young adults come to us from all walks of life, but there are some common themes with regard to housing status at the time of Intake. Most of our clients come from unstable housing situations which can mean that they have: been given an eviction notice, are living somewhere without their name on the lease, or couch surfing with friends and family.

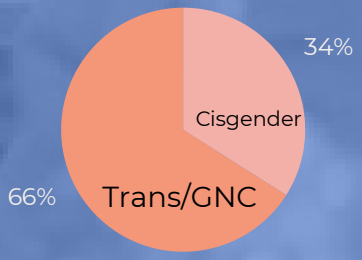
Other trending housing situations include staying in emergency shelters like Wayside or Salvation Army, living in unhabitable spaces like the streets or in a car, or exiting other transitional programs like psychiatric facilities or substance use treatment programs.

Young Adult Clients by Age



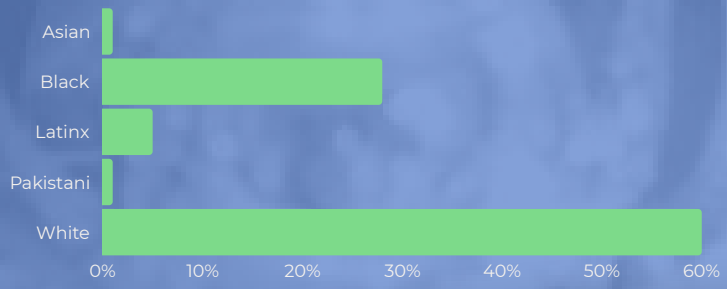
Our drop-in clothing and supplies pantry and other outreach programs are open to all ages, but we only provide housing, case management, and therapy to young adults 18-24 years old. Most of our clients utilizing these programs fall between the ages of 20 years and 22 years old which may indicate a higher need for this age group.

Clients by Gender



We serve young adults in the LGBTQ+ and intersex communities. This is a very broad umbrella of identities, nevertheless, a trend we continue to see is the overrepresentation of gender non-conforming young adults coming to us for services. These individuals identify as transgender, non-binary, intersex or other gender non-conforming identities. In fact, over half of our young adults identify as gender non- conforming (66%), while our cisgender clients make up 34% of young adults receiving services.

Young Adult Clients by Race



SEB works with any and all young adults (ages 18 - 24) in the LGBTQ+ and intersex community of Louisville. Our goal is to represent all ethnic populations and individuals who identify as transgender, non-binary, intersex and/or other gender non-conforming identities. As we grow and expand our reach, we hope to engage communities that have not been able to access our services. We feel it is important to remain connected to the founding members mission of reaching out those who are less fortunate and unable to make the connection to agencies like ours for support. As we plan for the future our goal is to expand our services and form connections with organizations and agencies in city areas not addressed before.

This data was calculated using demographic information that Sweet Evening Breeze collects during the client intake process. This data is specific to clients served by Sweet Evening Breeze and it is not meant to mirror local or national data on LGBTQ+ homelessness. To reduce barriers to service, drop-in clients who are not seeking ongoing or financial assistance may choose to not complete a full intake. In these cases, their data is not reflected in these numbers.

SWEET EVENING BREEZE



PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- EMERGENCY HOTEL STAYS
- TRANSITIONAL HOUSING (TRAGER HOUSE)
- FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
- DROP-IN AND TRIAGE CENTER
- FREE HIV TESTING (NULEASE MEDICAL SOLUTIONS)
- COMMUNITY OUTREACH
- THERAPY (BEST LIFE MENTAL HEALTH)
- CASE MANAGEMENT (BEST LIFE MENTAL HEALTH)
- PEER AND FAMILY SUPPORT GROUPS
- INCLUSIVITY AND HOMELESSNESS TRAININGS

TRAGER HOUSE

April 14th, 2025 marked Sweet Evening Breeze's one year anniversary of the Trager House Grand Opening. Within the first year, our small transitional housing program has seen 4 graduates succeed in their goals and move on to more permanent housing.

Trager House provides daily support for our residents including case management, therapy, and peer support programs. While living in the space, residents are provided with fully furnished apartments free of rent and utility payments.

We are so pleased with the success that each resident has worked hard to achieve and we are excited to offer this opportunity to more applicants.

To qualify for Trager House, clients must be LGBTQ+ 18-24 years old and enrolled in case management and therapy at Sweet Evening Breeze.

If you are interested in referring a client to us for services, you can call 502-690-4003 or email us at Info@sweeteveningbreeze.org.

Trager House has become very dear to us. The ability to help and also witness the success of clients growing and overcoming their individual circumstances in order to reach a place of housing stability is amazing. We wish to thank our founding members of Sweet Evening Breeze (Ariel Brooks, Dr. Cynthia Conley, Jaison Gardner, Dr. Maurice Gattis, Dr. Emme Sterrett-Hong, Samantha Reams, Nikki Thornton, and Brian Wilson) for their hard work, dedication, and vision in creating this direction for Sweet Evening Breeze!

SWEET EVENING BREEZE

OUR YEAR AT A GLANCE: 2024 - 2025 NOTABLE EVENTS

- Our SEB Annual Fundraiser at 21C
- Healthy for Life with the American Heart Association
- A BBQ Outreach day with Vocal Kentucky
- Louisville Pride
- JCTC's Multicultural showcase
- SEB's Brave Spaces Panel
- The Halloween Party at Pride Center
- Louisville Roller Derby Fundraiser
- The Rose Hulman LGBTQ history Presentation
- The Rainbow Revival
- A Boys and Girls Haven presentation
- An SEB Staff , board, and volunteer appreciation party at Big Bar
- Christmas at Trager House
- "She Kills Monsters" panel discussion with SEB and Pandora Productions
- HIV Stops with Me with VOA
- The CIVITAS Awards Ceremony
- JCTC's Multicultural fair
- Blackout with BQPH and Mdnght Hr
- JCTC Pride Festival
- SEB Staff Training at St. Vincent De Paul
- Wandering Tree House Fundraiser and Clothing swap
- Queer, Here, & Everywhere: The Roots of Kentucky's LGBTQ History
- Kentuckiana Pride Festival

















Trager House Successes

RP moved into Trager House in April of 2024. They were our first resident to be accepted into our Trager House Transitional Program and our first successful alumni. When they applied for the program they were at serious risk of eviction, in debt with no means to repay it, fleeing a job that had punished them for coming out as transgender and living in an apartment with a roommate who was not accepting. RP had a history of mental health issues related to their financial insecurity and feelings of Gender dysphoria which included anxiety and depression. This caused an imbalance between life and work and put them into a cycle they could not seem to escape on their own. RP's goal when they moved in was this: They wanted to heal and physically transition, find stable income, pay back their debts, and move into their own apartment. Sweet Evening Breeze is proud to say that in less than a year RP managed not only to meet their goals but exceeded them. RP does not just have a stable income, they now have a job with a pathway to a career. They did not just secure an apartment, they found an affordable apartment in a central location and close to work. RP is almost a full year on hormones and is living authentically and happily. In their own words, all they needed was a moment to "take a breath," and there was no better way to do that than offering them a Sweet Evening Breeze.



MH was one of the first clients that we served at our drop in center before we obtained Trager House. They came to us as a fish out of water. They were only 22 years old and due to unfortunate circumstances early on, financial insecurity and an unaccepting home, MH had never lived independently and didn't know where to begin when they were kicked out. Sweet Evening Breeze watched MH grow before they were even accepted into our Trager House Program, so we knew they would be a good fit when they eventually applied to move in. Within a year, MH went from being a shy and depressed young adult with no clue how to move forward, to a resilient young adult that has learned to advocate for themselves, work hard, and maintain compassion for their peers by giving back. It was bittersweet to see MH leave the program, but MH found a passion for working with non-profits during their stay, so they are never too far away and we are happy to learn about the good work they continue to do.



CP moved into Trager House last August, 2024. There is a night and day difference between the CP that moved into our apartments and the CP that moved out almost a year later. When they first walked into our office to get help with resources they were 20 years old, struggling with an undiagnosed disability, and had driven all the way up to Louisville from rural Kentucky to ask for help. They lived in a house that was infested and neglected by their family and they recalled feeling extremely isolated and unsafe. CP maintained a part time job, but it didn't bring in enough dollars for groceries let alone their own apartment. CP enrolled in therapy and case management at Sweet Evening Breeze and began working hard to change their situation. When they were accepted into our transitional housing, CP got a better part time job and received a certificate in welding through goodwill's SPOT program. They learned to manage their disability through therapy and self care, and most notably they have found ways to overcome their social anxiety and have even begun taking responsibility in our peer support group when needed. CP is now 22 and is on their way to fulfilling their potential of being an anchor for their community, especially for those who have lived similar experiences.



For safety and confidentiality all of the Trager house residents in these stories have been given a pseudonym and a stock photo. All have agreed to share their stories and we thank them for their vulnerability and we congratulate them on their success!

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

Hey Sweet Evening Breeze family,

I'm Ali Gautier, and I'm beyond proud to serve as the Board Chair of this incredibly special organization. I've known what it feels like to not have a place to land, to feel unsure of where you belong. So being part of this organization,and this community, means everything to me.
Sweet Evening Breeze isn't just an organization. It's a lifeline. A place of safety, care, and celebration for LGBTQ+ young adults, and our community as a whole in this time that we need it most. Many of us have been where our clients are now, and I know how powerful it is to not only be told that you belong, but to be supported in the ways you need to not just survive, but truly thrive.
This year, we've seen some incredible wins together, so let's CELEBRATE THEM!!

In 2025, we raised over $15,000 to support Trager House, our transitional housing program. That's huge. Trager House provides LGBTQ+ young adults ages 18–24 with furnished apartments, food, mental health support, skill building, and more, all wrapped in a community of care. It's the first program of its kind in Kentucky, and it's already changing lives.

Since opening its doors in April 2024, all four units at Trager House have been filled, and we've already seen our first residents successfully graduate from the program into more permanent housing. That's what it's all about, giving young folks the tools and support to step into their future with confidence and care.

Outside of Trager House, Sweet Evening Breeze continues to show up for our community in so many ways. Our office has stayed busy offering resources, hygiene kits, mental health support, peer groups, and a safe place to just be. We've provided emergency shelter and supplies when needed, and built even stronger partnerships across the city to make sure no young queer person falls through the cracks.
As we look ahead to 2026, we're dreaming even bigger. More support for Trager House (possibly more housing space)! More services. More opportunities for our youth to thrive, not just survive. Because everyone deserves a soft place to land, especially LGBTQ+ youth right now, who've been forced into fear in the margins for far too long.

Thank you for being with us on this journey. Whether you're a donor, a volunteer, a community partner, or just someone who cares, you're a valued part of us. And we're so glad you're here.

With gratitude and hope,

Ali Gautier
Board Chair, Sweet Evening Breeze

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AND A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!



We are proudly named after James Herndon, also known as **Sweet Evening Breeze** or "Sweets." Sweets was born in 1892, and was recognized for their/her gender non-conforming style, often wearing makeup, scarves, jewelry and at times, dressing in full drag. Sweets is a celebrated queer figure in Kentucky History and was instrumental in helping to overturn the city's cross-dressing ordinance. Despite being a gender non-conforming Black femme in the Jim Crow Era, "Sweets" was well-respected in the community and was known for random acts of hospitality and kindness which included baking cakes for others, and gifting shoes to poor. It was Sweet's southern hospitality and compassion for others that helped inspire the vision of the Organization.

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Thank you to our Donors

Without YOUR support we would not have gotten here! SEB sends a proud "Thank You" to ALL!

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