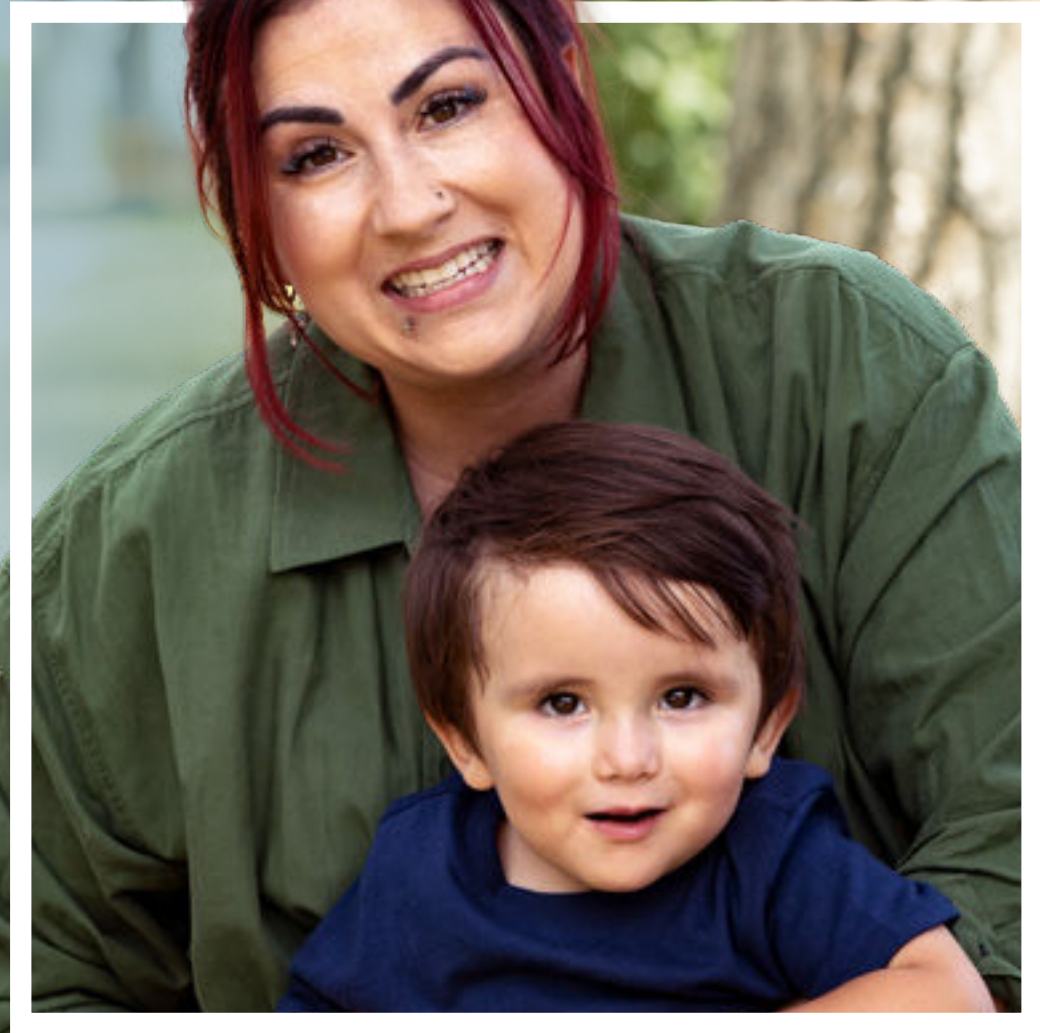


My family's Story



Climb
W Y O M I N G

CLIMB WYOMING PROGRESS REPORT 2023

Dear Friends,

Each of us has a story unfolding in our lives right now. Our stories are all unique and always evolving.

The stories in this year's Progress Report are **powerful and real** as families share their heartaches, obstacles, brave first steps, and empowering accomplishments.

It takes vulnerability and courage to open up the pages of your life and transform your family's future with the hope of inspiring others.

In the many years that I've been working with single moms at Climb, I've witnessed how families deep in the crisis of poverty often have a story of turmoil and chaos, from moving around frequently in unstable housing situations, to experiencing trauma, to struggling to afford groceries and other basic needs.

Once moms take the brave step of coming to Climb, they begin to shift their narratives. During the program, they receive comprehensive support from our caring and compassionate staff in all areas of life, including mental health services, and gain new job skills and career placements with local employers.

After the program, they radiate newfound confidence and pride in how far they've come and how much they've altered the course of their children's futures.

Watching this transformation is like seeing a photograph go from black and white to color: as moms find success and step out of the shadows of poverty, our schools, workplaces, and communities become brighter and more vibrant.

The stories of so many families across Wyoming aren't done yet, because your support gives them the opportunity to write new chapters in their lives. Thank you—your generosity inspires us every day.

With gratitude,

KATIE HOGARTY
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
katie@climbwyoming.org



WATCH KATIE'S
WELCOME
MESSAGE

A Mom's Story impacts all of us

Across the state, we serve families most in need—single moms with children. The majority of Wyoming children living in poverty are being raised by a single mom.¹ When these women find the courage to come to Climb, they write a new chapter in their lives, impacting their family as well as neighborhoods, schools, communities, and Wyoming's economy.

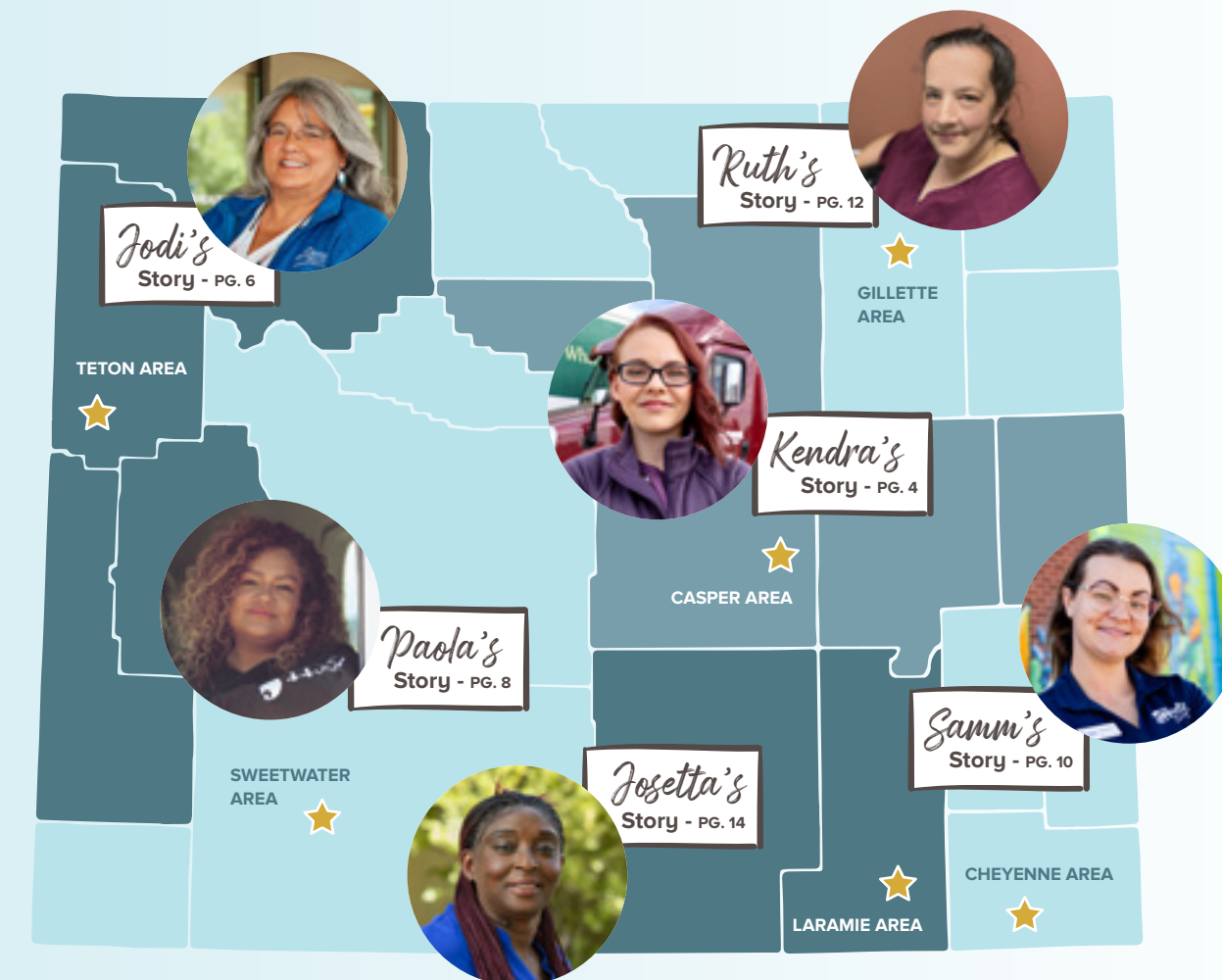


97% average graduation rate
over the past five years.

Since 1986, the State of Wyoming
has saved
\$120 million
from decreased dependence
on public assistance programs
among Climb graduates.²



Climb has served
12,000 moms
& **25,000** children



Kendra's family story:

My daughter gets to dance.



WATCH KENDRA'S STORY

Kendra was working at a gas station and struggling to get by but is now thriving and can afford dance lessons for her daughter.



“She is the light of my world, my little spitfire. She is my everything,” Kendra says of her seven-year-old daughter Jaylee.

Before graduating from Climb’s Commercial Driving License (CDL) training in Casper three years ago, Kendra was surviving paycheck to paycheck, working at a gas station for \$10 an hour.

“It was pretty bleak. I wasn’t able to spend much time with my daughter because of my work schedule. I was never home. I would drop her off at school, and she would cry and cry and not want me to leave her. And then I would get home with only enough time to tuck her into bed.”

During this time in her life, Kendra says she relied on food stamps and other community assistance programs.

After completing training, Kendra began her job placement at the Food Bank of Wyoming, where she still works today. She earns a high enough salary that she no longer needs government assistance.

Kendra loves driving her big semi, delivering critical food resources to families in need. She’s really proud to use her training and career to pay it forward. She says sometimes people are surprised when she hops out of her truck, standing barely 5 feet tall. “Me just being the mighty woman that I am, I show that I can do it. I guess my smile just changes people’s minds.”

“Thanks to Climb, I feel more secure. I am giving my daughter opportunities that she didn’t have before.”

Two Years After Climb

As graduates’ wages increase,

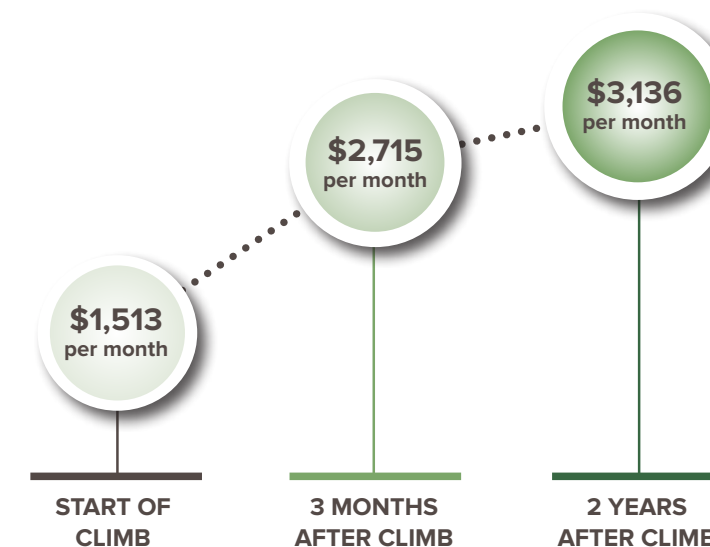
79%

reduce their food stamp use.



Access to private health insurance **more than triples** for Climb graduates.

Graduate Wage Progression





Jodi's family story:

Improving my mental health helped me push past my fears.



After suffering for years with social anxiety that kept her out of the workforce, Jodi found the mental health support she needed to thrive in a job at St. John's Hospital, where she really enjoys connecting with her coworkers.

At Climb, Jodi didn't just push past her comfort zone, she leaped out of it feet first.

After suffering from severe social anxiety that kept her out of work and on disability for more than 20 years, Jodi bravely walked through Climb's doors two years ago feeling determined...and very nervous.

The first person Jodi met at Climb was our mental health provider. "She was so easy to talk to," Jodi recalls. "She leaned in and really wanted to hear my story."

that are often damaged from the toxic impacts poverty can have on brain functioning.

The job interview phase presented another opportunity for Jodi to learn and practice new skills. In the safety of Climb's intentional, therapeutic structure, staff guided her through preparation for different interview types—one-on-one, panel, and phone—so she could grow her confidence.

Jodi accepted a position as the Administrative Assistant for Physician's Services at St. John's Health in Jackson, where she supports more than 40 health providers by coordinating meetings, staff recruitment, hospital visits, and more.

"Before Climb, it was hard to even go to the grocery store, so going out and getting a job felt totally impossible," says Jodi. "Now it's really different. I like talking to my coworkers."

Poverty's Impact on the Brain



The toxic stress of poverty disrupts the brain's pre-frontal cortex, a command center that controls critical executive functioning skills required for successful employment:

- planning & decision-making
- organization
- emotional regulation

Once Jodi's Office Careers training in the Teton Area started, her group's first exercise was to make and share posters about their kids, an exercise designed to build connections with the group and work on professional presentation skills. "I was so terrified to talk in front of people, but everyone gave me a lot of positive encouragement," Jodi says.

These structured group experiences, along with individual therapy sessions, help moms like Jodi strengthen and repair executive functioning skills

"I have tools for when I get overwhelmed, but I don't notice my anxiety at work. I speak up in meetings! I've done a complete 180-degree turn."

3 out of 4

Climb participants report improved executive functioning after the program as a result of Climb's mental-health based model that promotes long-term success at work.



Paola's family story:

I'm part of my employer's success.



Gene Legerski (left) has partnered with Climb to fill several critical positions repairing and maintaining county roads and infrastructure.

“I drive and operate several different vehicles, including semis with 13-speed manual transmissions,” says Paola, a driver for Sweetwater County Road and Bridge. “I haul materials for the maintenance and construction of our county roads. Every day is different.”

Paola and another Climb graduate are the only women currently driving for their department. “It’s a big responsibility being behind such an enormous vehicle since they have so much power to them,” says Paola. “You have to have the courage and training to get behind the wheel. I take it very seriously.”

Gene Legerski, Sweetwater County’s Public Works Director, collaborated with Climb for Paola’s job placement. “I’ve worked with many women in the industry during the past 30 years and all of them have been great employees. I try to encourage them because, with the national shortage of CDL drivers, there is always a place for people eager to show up and learn.”

91% of Climb graduates are employed full time post-program.

Gene says that Climb has been a vital source of new employees for Sweetwater County over the years. “I’m a big fan of teaching job skills,” he says. “Starting in this industry is a new beginning for Climb moms, and it makes our community better all around when they fill critical gaps in our workforce.”

Having a higher income has been life-changing for Paola and her children, especially as her oldest son started at the Lincoln College of Technology in Denver this fall. “This job has given us so much more stability,” she says. “I’m very persistent. When I want something that will benefit me or my family, I become very brave and ambitious.”

Thank You to our recent employer partners for helping families start a new chapter in their lives!

CASPER

- 307 Physical Therapy
- Banner Wyoming Medical Center
- Casper Animal Medical Center
- Casper Cardiology
- Casper-Natrona County Health Department
- Community Action Partnership of Natrona County
- Gastroenterology Associates
- Glenrock Health Center
- Memorial Hospital of Converse County
- North Platte Physical Therapy
- Outpatient Radiology
- Summit Medical Center
- True Oil, LLC
- Western Medical Associates
- Wyoming Behavioral Institute
- Wyoming Food Bank of the Rockies
- Wyoming Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
- Wyoming Signs, LLC

- Dental Care Center
- Healing Hearts Home Health
- Homax Oil
- Kindred Souls
- Life Care Center of Cheyenne
- Line Finders, LLC
- Mountain West Commercial Driving School
- Primrose Retirement Community - Gillette
- TCRI Energy Services

LARAMIE

- Albany Community Health Clinic
- Albany County Circuit Court
- All County Cowboy Property Management
- Cheyenne Women’s Clinic
- Greener Paths, Inc.
- Ivins Memorial Hospital
- Laramie Reproductive Health
- Premier Bone and Joint Centers - Laramie
- Volunteers of America - Northern Rockies

CHEYENNE

- 383 Construction
- Banner Health - Wheatland
- Boys and Girls Club of Cheyenne
- CASA of Laramie County
- Cheyenne OB/GYN
- Cheyenne Regional Medical Center
- Cheyenne VA Medical Center
- City of Cheyenne
- Croell Inc. - Cheyenne
- Granite Rehabilitation and Wellness
- Habitat for Humanity - Cheyenne
- Ivins Medical Group Surgical Clinic - Cheyenne
- Laramie County Assessor
- Laramie County Community College
- Laramie County Public Works
- Laramie County School District #1
- Transportation Department
- Laramie Peak Rural Health Clinic - Wheatland
- NextCare Urgent Care
- Polaris Rehabilitation and Care Center
- Simon
- U-Haul

SWEETWATER AREA

- Bodell Construction
- Cowboy Cares
- DJs Glass Plus, Inc.
- Infinity Power and Controls
- Lewis & Lewis, Inc.
- Mission at Castle Rock
- Rocky Mountain Power Sports
- Sage View Care Center
- Searle Brothers Construction
- Suburban Propane
- Sunroc Corporation
- Sunset Energy
- Sweetwater County Road & Bridge
- Sweetwater Technology
- Wyo4News

TETON AREA

- Avail Valley Construction
- Bank of Jackson Hole
- Community Resource Center of Teton Valley
- Evan’s Construction
- First Bank of Wyoming
- Friends of the Teton River
- Jackson Hole Mobile Massage
- Melvin Brewing
- St. John’s Medical Center
- Stam and Associates
- Teton County Parks and Recreation
- Thompson Palmer & Associates
- Trefonas Law, P.C.
- University of Wyoming Extension - Afton
- Vertical Harvest

GILLETTE

- Big Horn Pediatrics and Family Medicine
- Blakeman Propane
- Campbell County Health - Behavioral
- Campbell County Health - ER
- Campbell County Health - ICU
- Campbell County Health - The Legacy
- Campbell County School District (CCSD)



WATCH CLIMB'S EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIPS AT WORK

Samm's family story:

We're making our community better.

Samm and her family enjoy volunteering and giving back to their community.



Growing up in foster care, Samm didn't feel like she belonged. "Before Climb, I felt shut out of society. I felt rejected."

In her teens and early 20s, Samm realized she was at risk of repeating for her family the same negative patterns she'd experienced growing up. "Dead-end jobs, drugs, alcohol...I became hell-bent on getting out of that situation."

Today, you'll find Samm working for Habitat for Humanity, her job placement after completing Climb's Administrative Support Specialist training in Cheyenne last year. After leaving a life of isolation and pain, Samm now throws herself into each workday with zeal, learning as much as she can and taking on new responsibilities like writing grants, fundraising, planning, and project management for new homes and a home rehabilitation project that's under construction. She has met Cheyenne's mayor and sat in on county commissioner's meetings with congressional staffers.



On the weekends, Samm loves taking her kids along to help with community improvement projects, picking up trash, or planting trees. She has also signed up to be an advocate for troubled youth in the court system.

"The best way I can explain it is that at Climb, I felt nurtured," Samm says. "I felt accepted, and that has helped me come out of my shell and see my past as a strength instead of a weakness."

"Climb gave me the tools to go forth into the community. I've been able to replicate the energy I felt at Climb in other places in my life."



Community Impact

When single moms move out of poverty and into stable, well-paying employment, communities become healthier and more vibrant.

BENEFITS:

- ✓ increased economic mobility and reduction in government assistance
- ✓ healthier children who are set up for success in school
- ✓ robust and resilient local workforce



Ruth's family story:

I treat my residents with care and compassion.



Ruth feels like her job as a CNA is a natural fit and takes pride in caring for Mary (right) and other residents at Primrose Retirement Community.

“I really enjoy getting to know the residents and their life stories,” says Ruth, a recent graduate of Climb’s Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training in Gillette.

“For me, working in healthcare means not treating a patient like a job to get done but **making them feel like a real person.**”

In response to the community’s need to fill in-demand CNA positions, Ruth’s training included classroom modules with hands-on lab hours that prepared her for testing and certification. Each participant also had a chance to do clinical rounds and experience different medical settings.

After training, Ruth began her job placement at Primrose Retirement Community. With six kids ages 11 to 20, Ruth says her new career has a consistent weekly schedule that has allowed her to do new activities with her family.

Her work also holds a lot of personal significance. “My mom was in a care facility before she passed away,” says Ruth. “So it was a real drive for me to pay it forward and take care of people like her.”

“Ruth is such a great CNA,” says Mary, one of the residents at Primrose. “There’s a difference between just doing your job and being a very caring person.”

When Ruth walks into work each day, she’s grateful to feel a newfound confidence. “I was in a relationship for a long time where my self-confidence felt extinguished,” she says of years living with domestic violence. “Climb is the first place where I’ve felt truly seen, heard, and accepted with no judgment. It’s a safe place, a real second chance. Climb helped me see what I *can* be, not what I was.”



Two-thirds of Wyoming nursing homes are understaffed, the **second-highest rate** in the nation.³

Since 1986, Climb graduates have contributed more than

45 million hours of work

to Wyoming’s economy.

Destin, Destiny, & Josetta's family story:

*My mom's
career gave us
life-changing
opportunities.*

Josetta works at the University of Wyoming. Her son and daughter both attend college.



WATCH
JOSETTA'S
STORY



“I study criminal justice and think I want to be a lawyer, but there are so many avenues to consider,” says Destin, a 22-year-old University of Wyoming student. “I’m excited. It’s kind of overwhelming because I also really like business. So, we’ll see.”

While Destin thinks hard about his next step, his sister, Destiny, started college this fall. She wants to study for a career in television and film.

When children move out of poverty, they are **three times** more likely to thrive in employment as adults.⁴

Their mom, Josetta, graduated from Climb’s Office Careers training in Laramie almost a decade ago. Today, Josetta works as the dean’s assistant for the University of Wyoming’s School of Pharmacy.

“I remember a time in our lives before my mom did the Climb program,” says Destin. “That was the hardest of the hard times.”

Born in West Africa, Josetta first came to Wyoming for her husband’s job. Then she found herself on her own, in a foreign country, raising two kids with the help of her mother.

“When our granny passed away,” remembers Destin, “I saw my mom experience pain for the first time. That moment really sticks out to me. At that time in her life, she was really alone in raising us.”

Destiny says the biggest thing she noticed when her mom did Climb was how she met other moms and then started a career that gave her even more connections and resources. It opened up a new chapter in their lives that soon filled with academics, soccer, theater, dance, attending UW football games, and hanging out with friends.

“We’ve always had our **dreams and goals and aspirations**, but I think our ability to achieve them and the confidence to get there was higher because my mom had a professional career and all that came with it.”

Destin and Destiny are excited for what their futures will bring. “I want my mom to know that I appreciate everything she has done for us through all the ups and downs,” says Destin. “No matter what happens, I’m going to put my best foot forward. And hopefully one day I’ll make her proud.”

Climb has impacted
the lives of
25,000
children.



When you invest in a Climb participant, **your support changes her life.** Developed over the past 37 years, Climb's comprehensive model achieves some of the strongest outcomes in the nation.



Climb Connections

We help moms get set up for success and connected to support with food assistance, housing, childcare, legal services, and more.



Career Training

Professional trainers and Climb's caring staff provide industry-specific and life-improving skills and mental health services as moms prepare for new careers.



A New Career

We match graduates with an employer that's the right fit, providing ongoing support and check-ins as moms settle into new jobs.



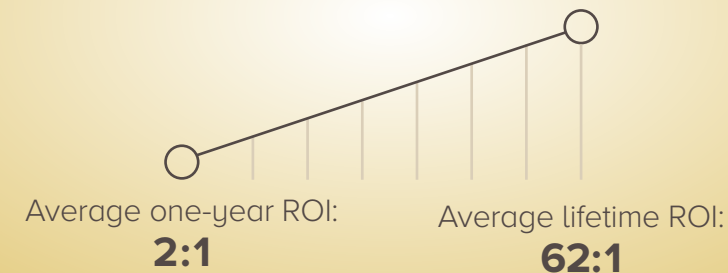
Graduate Services

Climb continues to be a place of belonging and guidance as graduates grow personally and professionally.

YOUR RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI)

Your impact compounds as soon as a mom gains employment and becomes self-sufficient, earns higher wages, continues to grow in the workforce, and breaks the cycle of poverty for her children.

Average investment per Climb participant: \$17,000



2023 FINANCIALS

Expenses	
Program	83%
Management	8%
Fundraising	9%
Revenue	
Public Funding	65%
Private Funding	35%

Thank You, Investors

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“Like my mom, every Climb graduate possesses unmatched strength, selflessness, drive, and determination to provide a safe, secure, and self-sustaining life, not only for herself, but also for her children.”

Daughters and sons of Climb moms will always remember that their mom took a chance and made a change—that she ‘climbed.’ It is truly an honor to be a part of this amazing organization!”

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SOURCES

- U.S. Census Bureau, 2020
- Wyoming Department of Family Services; Wyoming Department of Health-Medicaid; Wyoming LIHEAP FY2017 State Profile; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- AARP Nursing Home COVID-19 Dashboard Fact Sheets; Public Policy Institute, updated Sept. 14, 2023
- Urban Institute, Child Poverty and Adult Success

All remaining data are collected through self-reported participant assessments.

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a family's *Story* isn't done yet.



MISSION

For low-income single mothers to discover self-sufficiency through career training and placement.

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