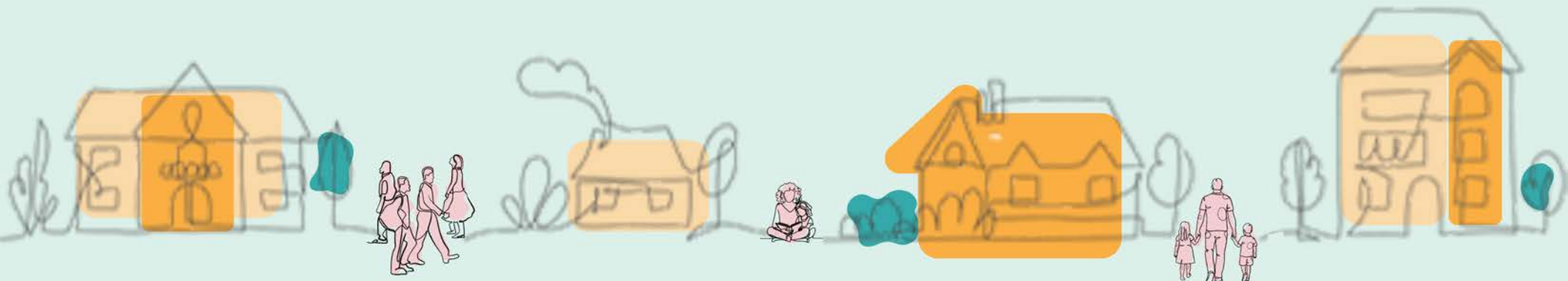


BUILDING POWER **CENTERING JUSTICE**

2024 – 2025 Biennial Report



“This work is about freedom.”

*Shakara Tyler, Co-Executive Director
Detroit Black Community Food Sovereignty Network*



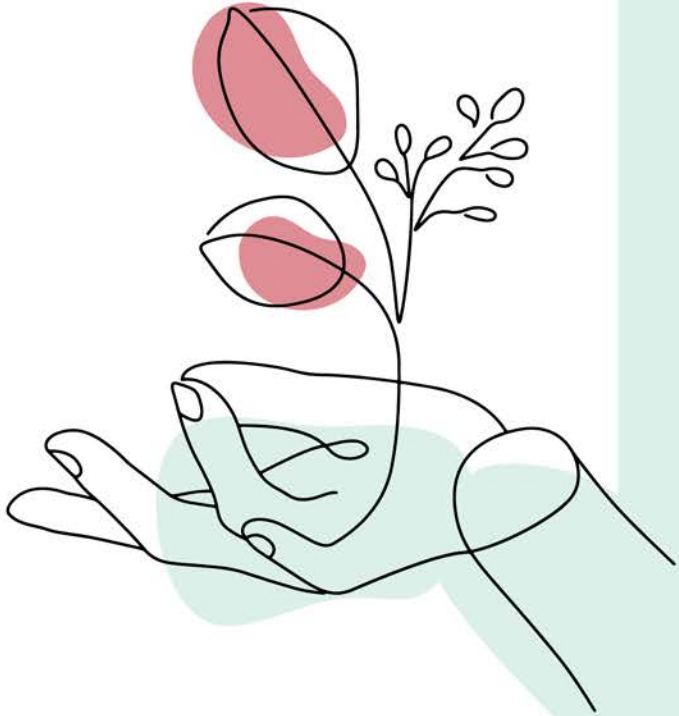


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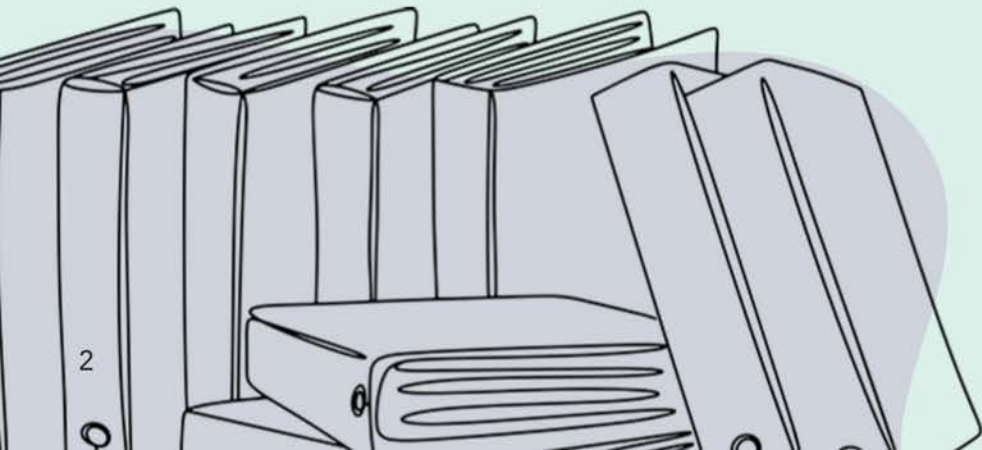
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Partners for Liberation

Over the last two years, we've stood alongside our partners as they've built community power, advanced justice, and confronted growing challenges to their work.

This labor continues to exact an extreme toll on Detroiters and the nonprofit leaders who walk alongside them. Even as we continue to uplift rest as a matter of justice, these leaders face new pressures, including the need to constantly adapt to help others survive. All while facing shrinking public support and holding up systems of care under relentless attack.

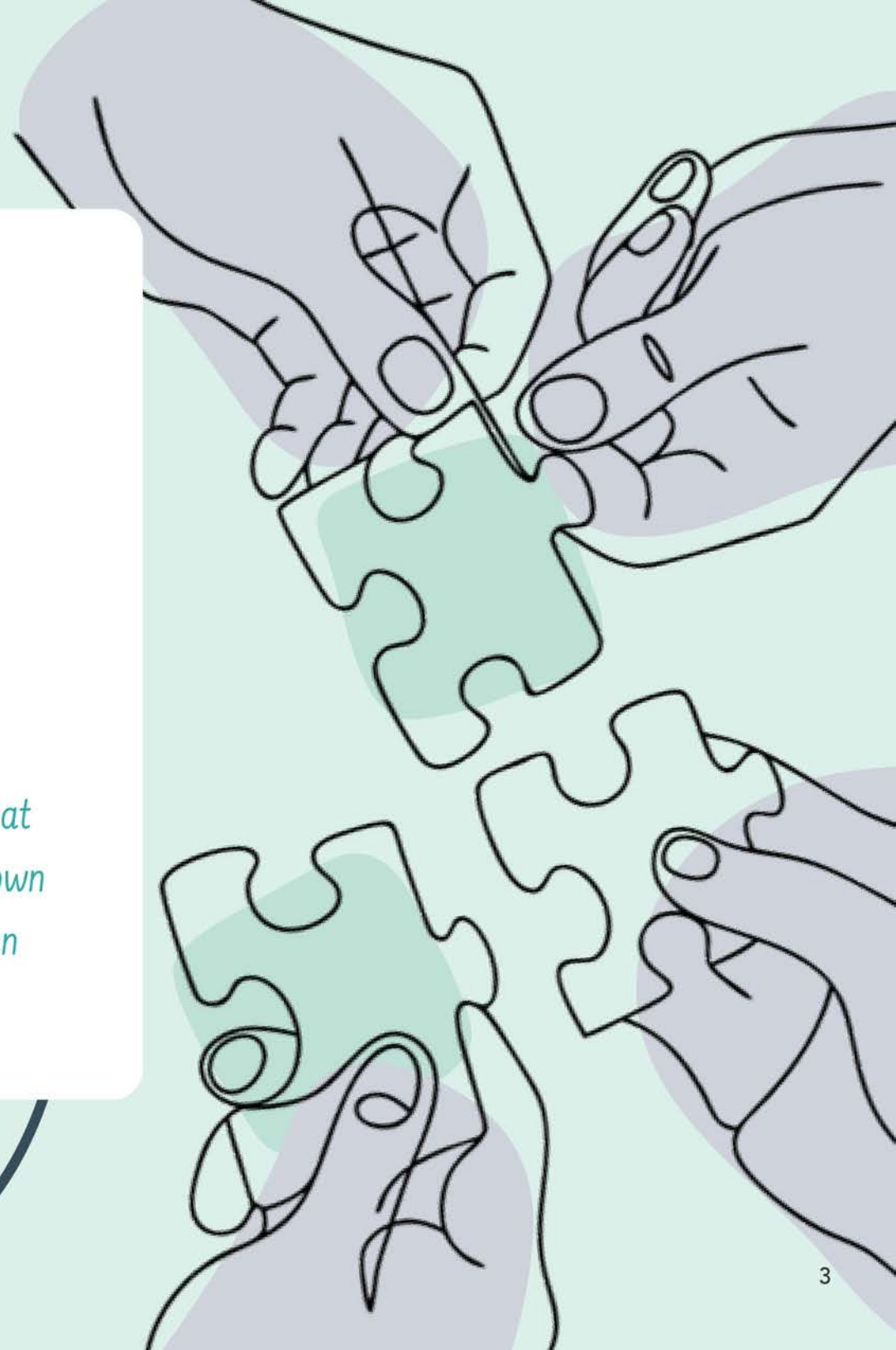
Our partners are the connective tissue of community well-being. They advance a long-term vision of thriving, while responding to acute needs and contending with unjust systems. They carry the weight of structural inequities while pushing forward towards justice, dignity and liberation. They, as much as anyone, deserve to experience joy and abundance.



We are grateful for the opportunity to learn from and support our grant partners as they work to advance housing justice, economic justice and food sovereignty.

They illustrate every day what is possible when communities define their own solutions and funders take the time to listen and respond to that call. As we continue to evolve our grantmaking, we will remain steadfast alongside our partners, protecting their well-being and joining hands to build power in Detroit and beyond.

Our grant partners illustrate every day what is possible when communities define their own solutions and funders take the time to listen and respond to that call.





Letter from the President

Dear friends, dear community,

Our founders, Tracy and Katherine McGregor, devoted their lives to fellow Detroiters who were dealt misfortune through stacked circumstances. With clear-eyed proximity, the McGregors witnessed the social and economic injustices of their time and grew to understand the limits of charity. They saw the necessity of just legal and care systems for individual and community well-being. Over time, Tracy led efforts to reform some of those systems, to smooth down some of those injustices' rougher edges.

One hundred years later, their example still calls us to tackle injustice and unjust systems by supporting advocates and visionaries working to change them. In 2020, we issued an anti-racism statement. It has guided us ever since, bringing a sharper focus on racial justice to our learning, analysis, grantmaking, advocacy, operations and culture. Our partners also taught us how personally exhausting the work of justice is for its leaders, and to see and support their often-overlooked need for deep rest.

More recently, we've focused on how our partners serve, advocate, build and dream to bring about more just, alternative systems. We've sought to better understand what housing justice and food sovereignty can look like at the community level. This orientation became our driving line of inquiry and learning, which in turn evolved our approach to supporting partners and fields of work. In this report, we've tried to share some of what we've learned and supported through our partners.

As I write this, we're living through a corrupt federal administration turning our government against us, weaponizing policy and funding, even deploying paramilitary forces to inflict harm and terror on our most vulnerable communities — actions intended to undermine our democratic rights, freedoms, norms and spirit. They are an assault on justice itself.

It's hard to overstate the toll of this environment on our partners and their communities. Our team and board take very seriously our responsibility to act in solidarity with them. We've doubled our grants budget to support partners under resulting financial strain, to resource new emergency needs in community, to support resistance to the federal administration's overreach, and to continue investing in a very different future. Our partners are not backing down in the face of these attacks, and their vision and work to create systems that are far more just than those being dismantled give us both hope and direction. Partners, I hope you see yourselves reflected in our work and feel our deep, deep gratitude.

In these hard, chaotic times, we hold on tight to the guiding values and example of our founders. We are also buoyed by the unequivocal support of all our trustees, who share real passion for our partners' work and clarity around what drives deep change. As we moved rounds of emergency grants in early 2025, they've been on call and fully trusting of our team, allowing us to move quickly and in lockstep.

Special thanks to our chairperson, Joyce E. Jenereaux, always ready and generous whenever we lean on her for wisdom and support.

And I cannot say enough about my colleagues, all extraordinary in so many ways, with special appreciation for Heidi Alcock and Vanessa Samuelson who've reached their ten-year anniversaries at the Fund. In 2025, our team grew from five to eight, with new colleagues who jumped right in, contributing in huge ways from day one. We all, and I especially, understand our privilege to be a part of such a tight, caring organization. Thank you all.

In solidarity,



Kate Levin Markel
President
McGregor Fund



Letter from the Board Chair

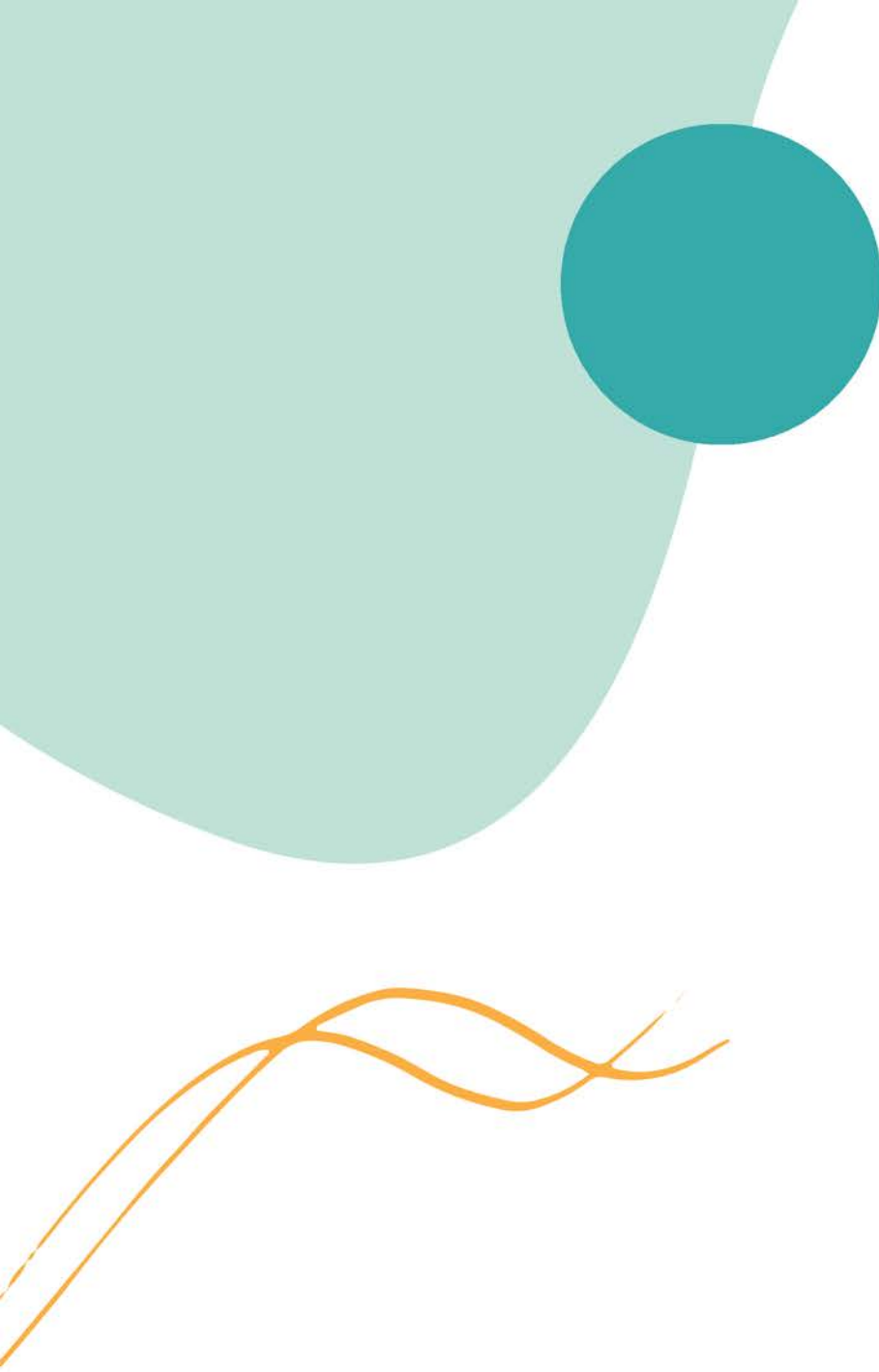
For as long as I have been part of the McGregor Fund — beginning in 2016, with the most recent four years as Board Chair — I have been drawn to its eagerness to do the work differently.

Over the past two years, the Fund has crossed a new threshold of community care by responding to what our grant partners have asked for.

Through close listening, quick adaptation, and intentional action, we've expanded our capacity with new roles, doubled our grantmaking, and widened our lens, all while staying true to our core mission: to promote the well-being of humankind.

As I reflect, there are two things I'm especially proud of. First is the Fund's enduring commitment to trust — trust in our partners, trust in our staff and board, and trust in the idea that real progress happens when we're willing to question convention. The past two years have affirmed that our greatest strength lies not simply in what we fund, but in how we show up.

The second thing I am especially proud of is the Fund's leadership as a thoughtful, credible risk-taker among our peers. We've strengthened our ability to move resources quickly, cutting through complexity to nimbly navigate crises and adapt to shifting political realities. We've doubled down on our understanding that "Rest is Justice" and pushed this advocacy for well-being into new corners of the sector at every opportunity. We've discussed culture-shifting questions among the board and staff to begin reframing ideas of stewardship and accountability. These are smart risks, taken with intention.



As I look ahead toward my final months as Board Chair, and as the Foundation celebrates its centennial, I find myself less focused on answers and more inspired by questions: How do we continue to honor the promises and intentions of our founders while boldly reenvisioning what well-being means in a rapidly changing world? And how can we stay far enough ahead of the curve to meet the future not just with readiness, but with imagination?

I am confident that we will answer these questions with responsible rigor and creativity, all of which is a testament to our partners, our team, and my fellow Trustees who are committed to continually adapting our work to answer the realities of this time while fearlessly preparing for the future.

Thank you to our partners, to our President, Kate Levin Markel, the McGregor Fund staff, and my fellow board members for your trust, your collaboration, your indefatigable energy and your shared commitment to shaping a more just future. It is an honor to serve alongside you.

With gratitude and anticipation,



Joyce E. Jenereaux
Chairperson, Board of Trustees
McGregor Fund

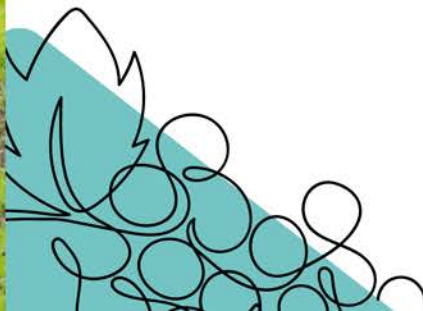


Building a Food Sovereign Detroit

What does a food sovereign Detroit look like? Community ownership. Culturally resonant cooking classes and recipes. Land held and stewarded by the people who live here. Black farmers purchasing and controlling land across a majority Black city. “This work is about freedom,” says Shakara Tyler, Co-Executive Director of Detroit Black Community Food Sovereignty Network (DBCFSN).

When DBCFSN and Keep Growing Detroit (KGD) were founded in 2006 and 2013 respectively, their vocabulary and pathways to long-term sovereignty were still taking shape. In those early years, DBCFSN co-founder Malik Yakini was studying farms across the country and internationally, exploring different economic models, and quietly seeding the vision of a food sovereign Detroit at home. KGD was also deepening its commitment to food sovereignty by promoting local ownership, leadership and self-determination.

As the McGregor Fund walked alongside these architects of the movement, we learned what they already knew: direct ownership and trust in our mutual capacity is the next chapter in our work together.

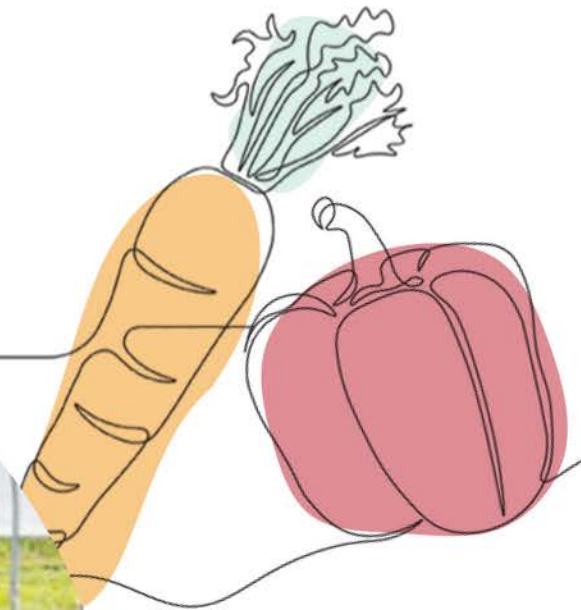


FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

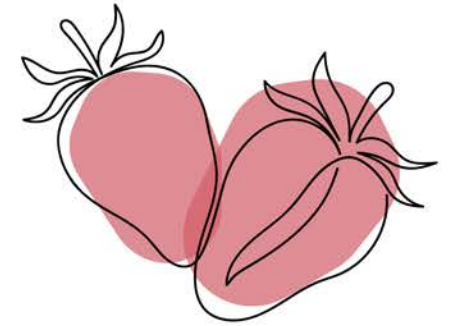
Building the Vision

KGD grew out of existing community initiatives, including the Garden Resource Program. Rather than continuing to place trust in systems where Detroiters had little agency, they knew it was time to build something themselves. As KGD Co-Executive Director Ashley Atkinson explains: "We wanted to build a food system for Detroiters, by Detroiters, where people are not just consumers but the architects and owners of the farms and food businesses that nourish our city." Today, KGD is central to Detroit's urban agriculture movement, supporting growers at every stage and helping thousands of residents build a just, resilient and locally controlled food system.

Shakara Tyler defines DBCFSN's mission as "building more self-reliance in Detroit's Black community and greater Detroit through urban agriculture, youth development, policy advocacy, and facilitating the reconnection of Black people's relationship to land and food and the broader natural environment." DBCFSN is now a network of farmers, food entrepreneurs, organizers, educators, activists and herbalists — a community ecosystem growing not just food, but power.



FOOD SOVEREIGNTY



Today, growing operations across Detroit are increasing in number and sophistication. More people are gardening, cooking, learning and gathering in community. Beyond the data on land ownership trends and the transformation of vacant lots lies the deeper story: the ongoing, mutual construction of a new way of living. The way the work is done is the destination.

KGD operates with co-directors and co-board chairs and DBCFSN through collective leadership with intentionally distributed power. Both organizations create ongoing, mutually respectful, community-led conversations about what is working, what isn't, and what people know they need. And as for those they serve, DBCFSN and KGD meet people exactly where they are.

“There's just so much visionary leadership in Detroit. So many people who know deeply what they need, what their families need, what their communities need to thrive and be successful. They have ideas and an incredible vision of what will help them achieve that.”

Ashley Atkinson
Co-Executive Director
Keep Growing Detroit



FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Challenges and Realities of the Work

A food sovereign Detroit means young people connecting with their ancestors and understanding that agriculture can be a source of heritage, possibility and power.

It means centering the cultural meaning of food across communities — okra, biscuits and honey, how to use the whole watermelon. People are invited in and know they belong.

It means removing barriers: helping farmers prepare paperwork for land purchases; ensuring access to seeds, tools and tool-lending libraries; organizing farm shares; reducing costs for soil testing and site visits; offering marketing support, farm tax education and technical assistance; and investing in visionary leaders.

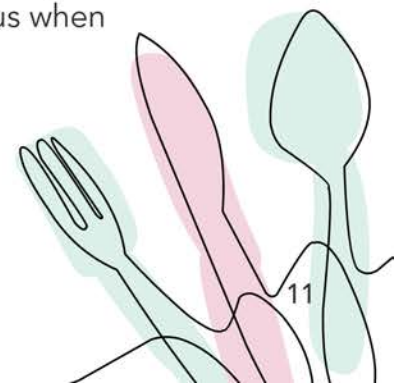
It means people will own their land and develop the systems to work that land, creating sustenance for themselves and their families.

A food sovereign Detroit is emerging, season by season, relationship by relationship. The work of the Detroit Black Community Food Sovereignty Network and Keep Growing Detroit makes that vision real: one seedling, one farmer, one plot of land at a time.

It means listening to growers' ideas and championing them in pursuing the work they care about, while supporting the infrastructure needed to keep farming rooted in community power.

As funders, meaningful partnership in the food sovereignty movement requires right relationship, equality and transparency. It means rejecting traditional power dynamics that undermine the liberation this work advances. It's trusting our partners to lead and know what they need.

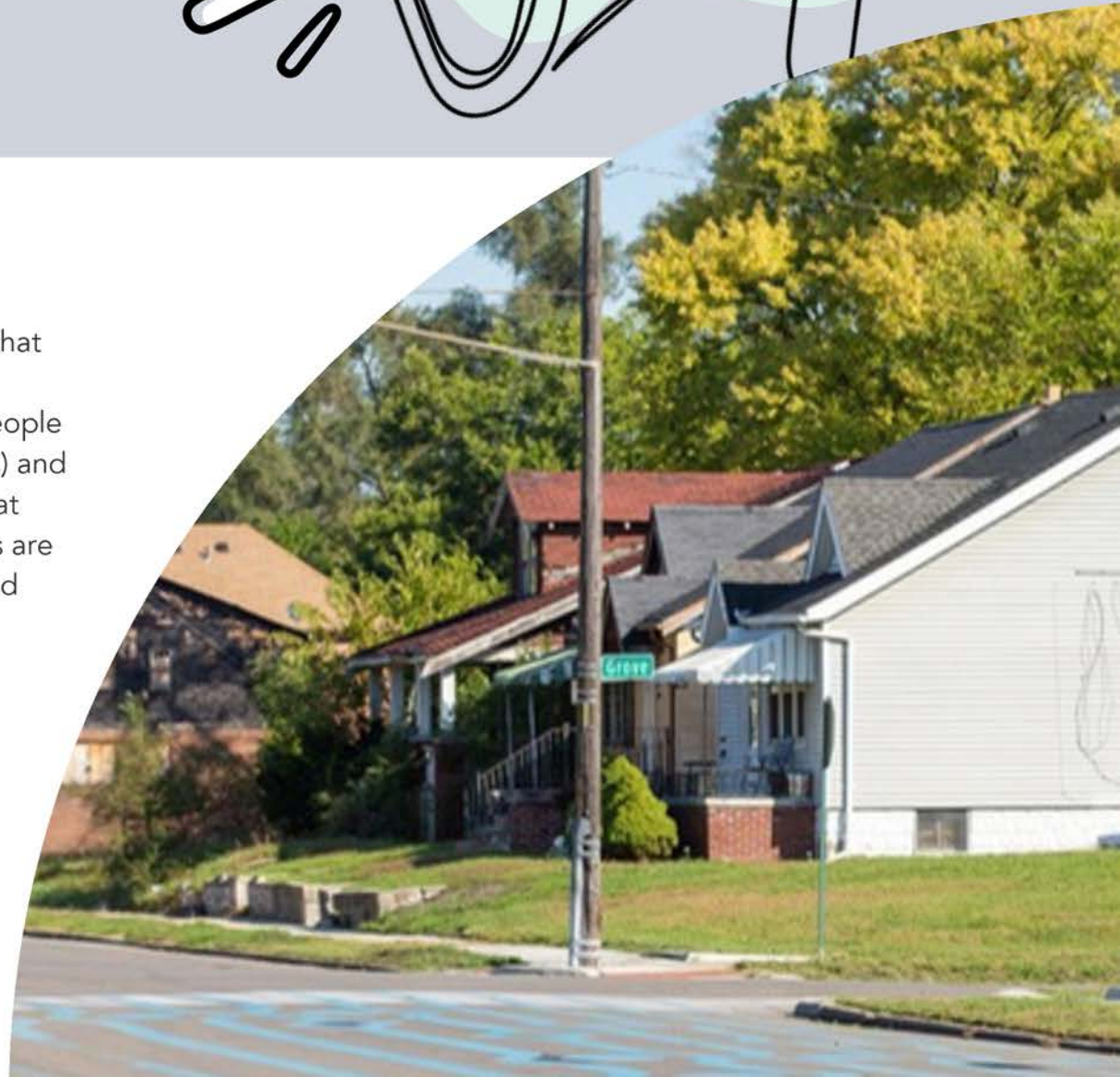
Tyler invites us to ask: "How are we raising our children? How do we care for one another in times of crisis? Are our relationships transactional, or are they rooted in trust and reciprocity? What values guide us when no one is watching?"



Justice Begins with Home



Ending youth homelessness begins with the belief that young people are the experts in their own lives. In systems that too often make decisions for young people rather than with them, Detroit Phoenix Center (DPC) and Community & Home Supports (CHS) understand that young people who have experienced homelessness are the experts in what it takes to end homelessness and they trust them to identify what is needed. This approach is transformative for individuals and for Detroit's collective response to ending youth homelessness.





“Young people should be agents of change, which is why we root our work in dignity, choice, equity, access and youth power.”

Courtney Smith
Chief Executive Officer
Detroit Phoenix Center

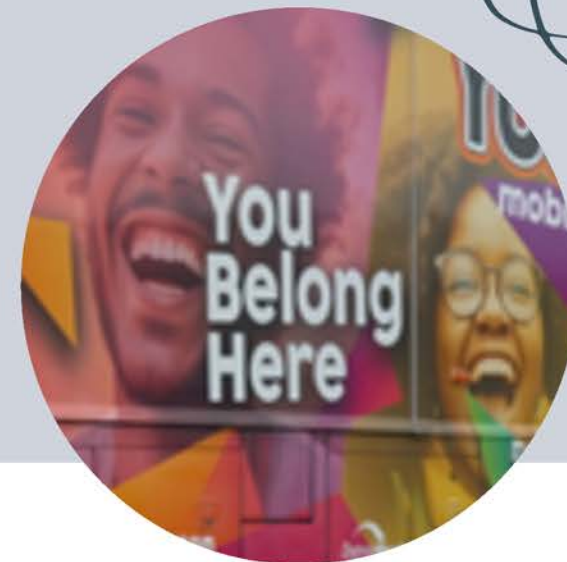
One of the many ways young people are putting their voice and their power to the work to end homelessness is through Detroit’s Youth Action Council (YAC). Evolved from DPC’s Youth Action Board (YAB), the YAC was adopted by and is now accessible to an entire Detroit ecosystem with region-wide influence.

The YAC is “a space that’s free of judgment, where youth can feel safe to be unapologetically themselves,” which is most important to Caylene Redd, DPC Youth Action Board member. Morgan Stewart, affiliated with CHS, values a setting where youth are not turned away “for what they believe in, or their race or their gender, or what they like...and that is responsive and open for the generations of kids that are growing up now.”

DPC and CHS live this by creating spaces of radical belonging and championing youth to become decision-makers in their own housing journeys. Youth advisory councils, peer leadership roles, and participatory design processes ensure programming evolves alongside real needs. Youth leadership and feedback shapes how our partners show up, including intake processes, program hours and policy advocacy priorities.

Our partners also recognize that stability unfolds differently for each young person. Case managers build consistent, trusting relationships allowing youth to set their own pace and priorities.

HOUSING JUSTICE



Our partners' services are trauma-informed, culturally responsive and build security that helps other steps forward seem possible. They're also designed to meet youth where they're at, in ways that directly address their expressed needs. This includes DPC's YouthUp mobile unit, where young people can access immediate supports — meals, showers, clothing, harm-reduction services, healthcare connections, opportunities to socialize and strategize with peers — without prerequisites or judgment. Young people know they belong and are safe to be their authentic selves.

This is crucial for young people working to regain stability, develop their talents, and determine their own futures.

"[Youth want] to be spoken to in an empowering way," says CHS By-Name List Coordinator Lydia Goddard, and "to be trusted in their ability to know what they need."

The future envisioned by DPC, CHS and aligned partners is one where safe, stable housing is standard. Where youth-led design is normalized and community-driven solutions replace one-size-fits-all responses. Where young people are housed with dignity, trusted in their expertise, and invited to shape the systems that affect them. And where unrestricted and trust-based funding is standard practice.

HOUSING JUSTICE



At the Fund, we have been learning from our partners how housing justice for youth requires stepping back from prescriptive approaches and stepping into shared power.

We understand the capacity, insight and vision that young people hold to create trusted spaces for youth leadership, and, as DPC Chief Executive Officer Courtney Smith shared, a city where “youth homelessness is rare, brief and non-reoccurring.”

“Housing justice means doing everything we can to right certain situations, including taking the extra step. It's combining technical expertise and in-person compassion and motivation.”

Matt Tommelein
Coordinated Entry Program Manager
Community & Home Supports



HOUSING JUSTICE



Economic Justice: Rooted in Respect

Organizations in Detroit committed to economic justice are proving that sustainable and meaningful advancement takes shape when workers are trusted to follow their own paths.

Too many systems prioritize employer benefits over human needs. Worker-centered practices provide an alternative, unlocking actual pathways to economic mobility.

Goodwill of Greater Detroit and Mothering Justice are partners working to build power for economic liberation. While their target audiences differ, they align in values. They are both rooted in human dignity, guided by lived experience, and striving for conditions in which everyone can thrive.

Meeting People Where They Are

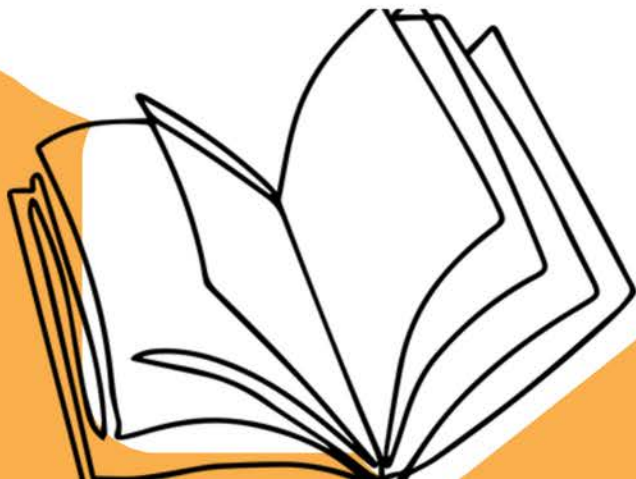
Goodwill of Greater Detroit's workforce development program serves returning citizens and others experiencing systemic barriers to employment. Their phased approach (personal support, skill- and confidence- building, and career pathway development) prioritizes jobs with living wages, benefits and advancement opportunities. In short, if training leads only to stagnation, they don't pursue it.

"We're not just going to train you for a job," says Goodwill of Greater Detroit President and CEO Dan Varner. "We want you to get into a career. We're only going to go for things that we're confident will ultimately liberate people."

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

“We’re not just going to train you for a job. We want you to get into a career. We’re only going to go for things that we’re confident will ultimately liberate people.”

Dan Varner, President & CEO
Goodwill of Greater Detroit



Goodwill's Flip the Script program demonstrates this philosophy. Serving justice-involved individuals, the program achieves a far lower recidivism rate than the state average. Beyond employment outcomes, it offers an alumni network to cultivate long-term community leadership and civic engagement. It is economic justice through power-building and belonging.

According to Varner, Goodwill and its alumni network advocate for an economic system "where the needs of individual job seekers and workers are at least as valued as those of employers and corporations," and where policymakers speak about worker needs as primary.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE



Mamas Know Best What Mothers Need

Mothering Justice's frame for economic justice centers caregiving, policy and humanity. Through organizing and advocacy, Mothering Justice advances policies recognizing childcare as a common good, ensuring paid sick leave, and valuing caregiving labor. This work reflects the lived realities of women, especially Black mothers, whose economic stability is inseparable from systems supporting families, health and care.

For Founder and Executive Director Danielle Atkinson, economic justice is fundamentally about equity in compensation for all labor, including caregiving. "If people are taking time away from themselves to produce labor, that deserves an income that can sustain them," says Atkinson.

Mothering Justice's policy platform — the "Mamas' Agenda" — is shaped by mothers and directly addresses impacts on their financial stability, including affordable and sustainable childcare, paid sick and family medical leave, maternal health equity, reproductive justice and fair wages. Another program, the Mamavist Fellowship, engages participants in relational organizing and mobilizing networks to build political power.

These participatory models reinforce a philosophy that asks policymakers to adjust their priorities to better align with caregivers' needs. Members also help set campaigns, define benchmarks, and determine what victory looks like.

"This work interrupts disappointment and isolation," Atkinson describes. When people have trusted spaces to gather and act together, participation and possibility expand.

For Atkinson, thriving for mothers requires systems intentionally built to support caregivers, where their contributions are reflected in schools, infrastructure, wages and public investments.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE



“If people are taking time away from themselves to produce labor, that deserves an income that can sustain them.”

Danielle Atkinson
Founder & Executive Director
Mothering Justice

What We've Learned

Across these partnerships, a shared lesson emerges: Economic justice is relational, people know what they need, and systems must be designed to allow everyone, including caregivers, space to breathe.

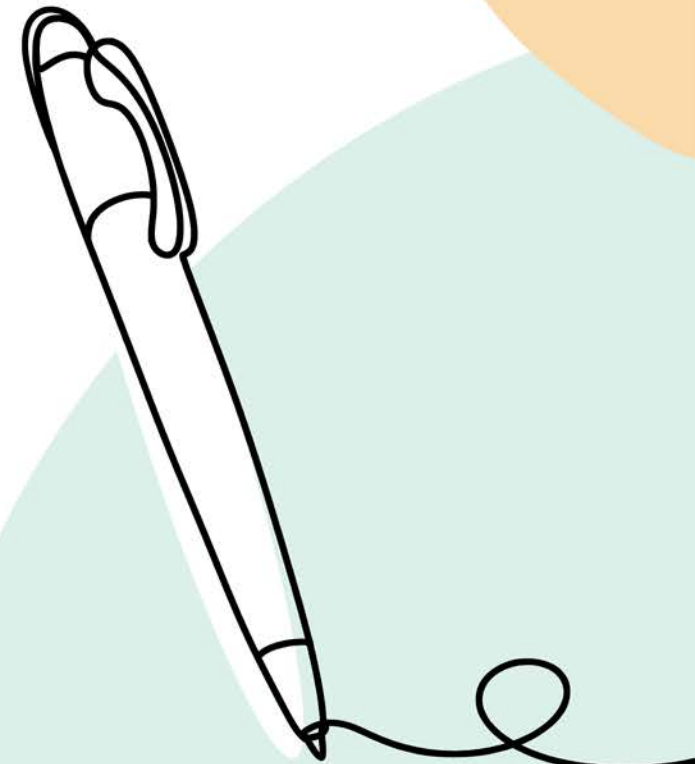
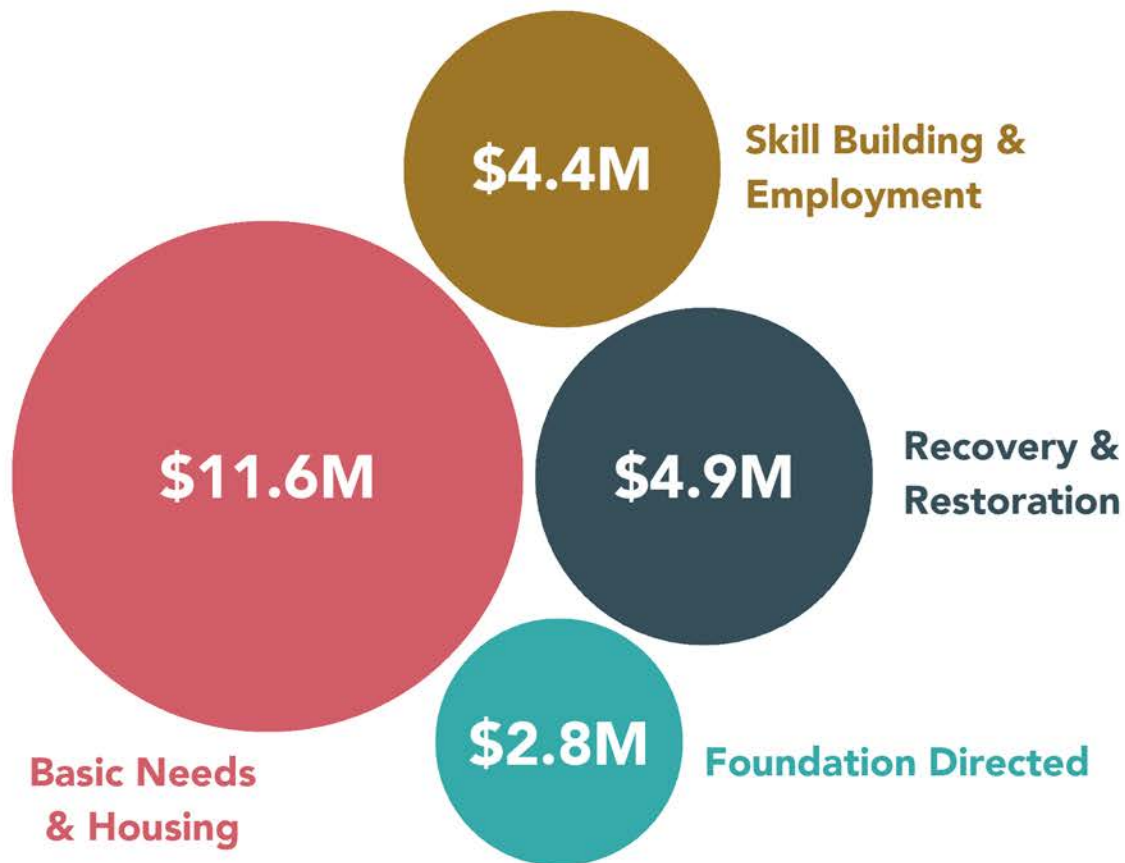
When individuals are met with respect, their strengths and leadership emerge.

These insights continue to shape how the Fund thinks about economic mobility and workforce investments. Careers, rather than short-term placements, create stability and agency. Employer investments in training and childcare are commitments to shared prosperity, and we must always create space for caregivers. We must support an economy that values workers as much as their employers, as every person's well-being and need for rest and joy is equally important.

This learning continues to shape the Fund's approach, including prioritizing flexible support, centering well-being, and remaining accountable to partners whose work makes justice visible in everyday life.

GRANTS BY PRIORITY AREA

Anchored in the work



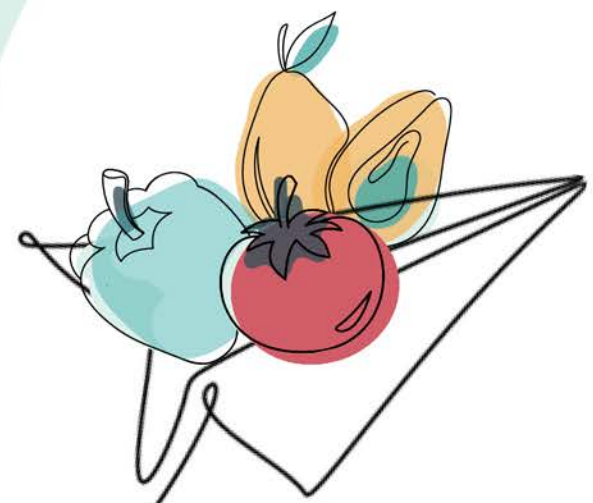
12

NEW GRANT PARTNERS

Expanding our network of justice-oriented organizations

Does not include matching, trustee designated grants, or memberships.

GRANTMAKING DATA



40

GRANTS IN FY2024

60

GRANTS IN FY2025

\$23M

TOTAL GRANTS AWARDED

\$262K

AVERAGE GRANT SIZE

\$235M

ASSETS UNDER MANAGEMENT

Growing our impact

The McGregor Fund Board of Trustees voted to double the Fund's payout in the third quarter of the 2025 fiscal year. The full impact of this historic decision will be reflected in the Fund's future reporting.

Flexible funding for community-led solutions

\$23M

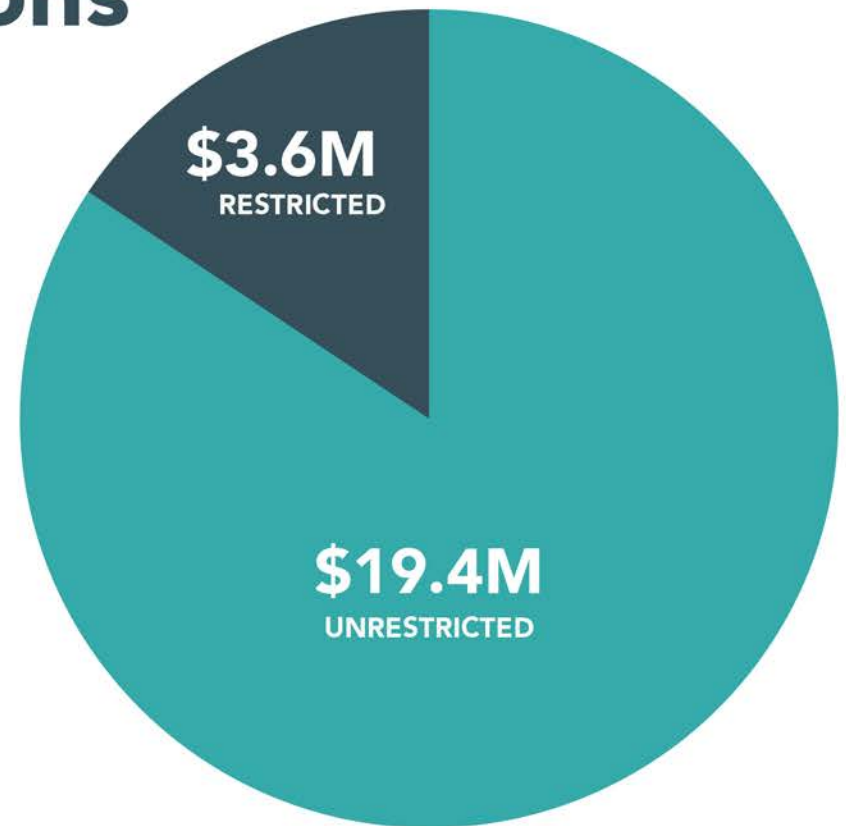
TOTAL GIVING IN FY2024 & FY2025

Multi-year, flexible support best equips our partners to innovate and show up for community in the ways that they know work. This became increasingly important in 2025 as we began to bear witness to federal funding retrenchment in essential social services.

INCLUDING \$4M

IN EMERGENCY GRANTS

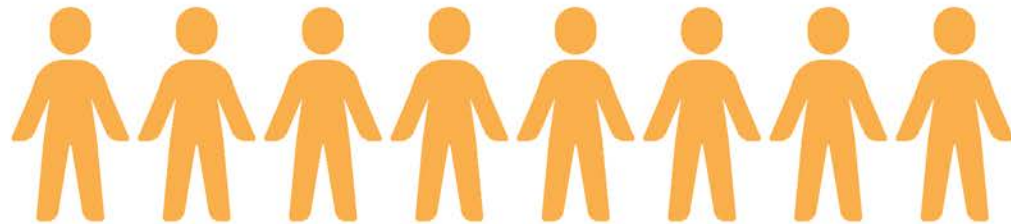
Rapid-response funding deployed to address urgent community needs.



FUNDING TYPE BREAKDOWN

Rest is justice. Rest as liberation.

Since our Rest is Justice biennial featuring the 2023 Eugene A. Miller Fellowship cohort, we've continued to grow our advocacy for individual rest and collective well-being. While welcoming eight new fellows in 2024 and four in 2025, we've partnered with Monica Marie Jones to weave stronger fellowship supports into the program. Rest is an essential leadership practice, particularly during this crisis of sustained nonprofit leader burnout and unprecedented stress. We are grateful to the Miller Fellows and their teams for all that they teach us.



2024: 8 Miller Fellows

\$720K

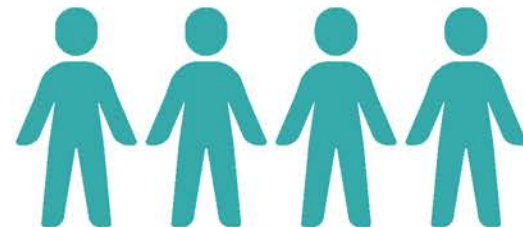
INVESTED IN 2024-25

57

SABBATICALS SUPPORTED TO DATE

\$3M

INVESTED TO DATE



2025: 4 Miller Fellows

Staff

Kate Levin Markel
President

Heidi Alcock
Vice President of Strategy
& Grants Portfolio

Taylor Fisher
Senior Accountant

Marcia Gardner
Grants Manager &
Executive and Board
Administrator

Ashly Jurek
Director of Finance
& Investments

Jonathan Pulley
Director of Grant
Development

Vanessa Samuelson
Vice President of
Learning & Insight

Nikia Washington
Director of Engagement
& Communications

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Dr. Felix M. Valbuena, Jr.
Treasurer

Byna Elliott

Michelle Johnson Tidjani

Kelly Major Green

Donna Murray-Brown

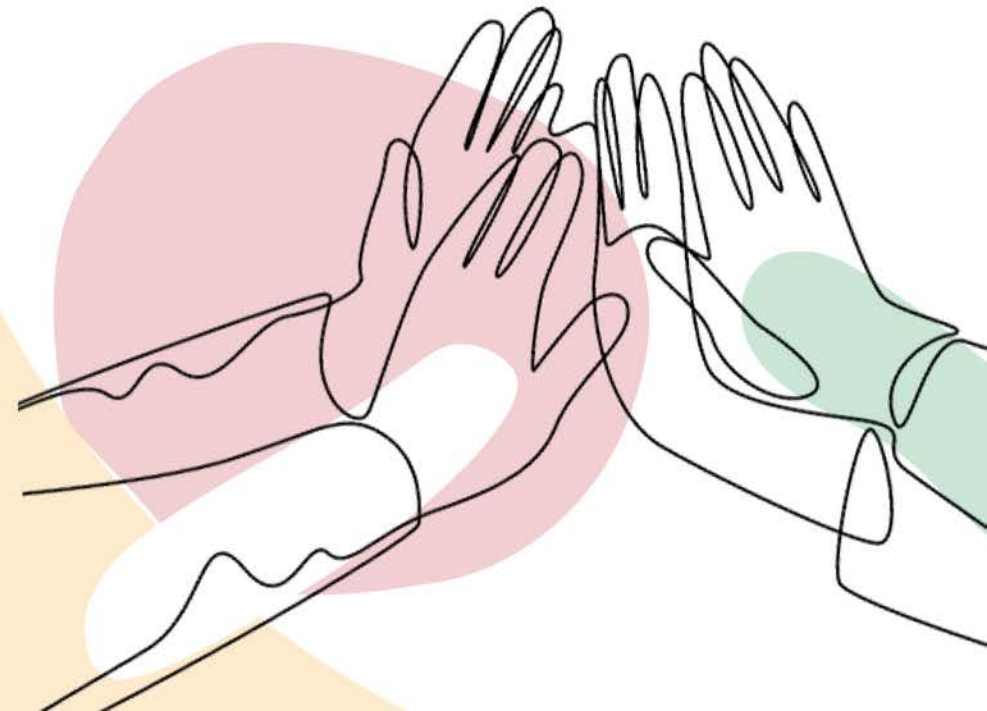
Philip B. Phillips

Kristi D. Plain

Gratitude

We are deeply grateful to our grant partners,
whose love for and unbending commitment to our city
anchors everything we do.

It is a privilege to serve our neighbors,
as we unite to pursue justice, together.





McGREGOR
FUND

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