



Meeting the Moment

March 2020 to March 2021 Impact Report

Dear TechTown Partners, Supporters and Friends —

When TechTown launched in 2004, we could have never envisioned the pivotal role the organization would play nearly two decades later. From creating Detroit's first small business COVID-19 emergency relief fund to bringing a wealth of business support resources online to deepening programming specifically designed to build a more inclusive tech ecosystem, TechTown has been a lifeline for Detroit's startups and small businesses during the pandemic.

And we couldn't have done it without our community. Nearly 200 of you donated to the Detroit and TechTown Small Business Stabilization Funds, helping 700 neighborhood small businesses keep their doors open. Hundreds more continued to support TechTown's work throughout the year. And you've been patronizing and celebrating Detroit's local businesses throughout the COVID-19 crisis.

Our report this year is a little different than those in the past. We're reflecting on our work from March 2020 - March 2021 so we can tell the story of Detroit's small businesses during this most difficult year of COVID-19 and the ways TechTown rose to the occasion to support them. We may not have pictured this moment 17 years ago, but by being intentional about developing a small business ecosystem that opens doors for everyone, we were ready for it. I am honored to share this snapshot of our efforts and impact over the last year. It is the blueprint for the work ahead.

Sincerely,



M. Roy Wilson
Chair, TechTown Board of Directors



Dear TechTown Partners, Supporters and Friends —

There is nothing I could say that could capture the emotions of this year. It was devastating. It was terrifying. It was heartbreaking. But I take solace in the fact that, even in the midst of such awful circumstances, our community came together, as it always does. TechTown, too, stepped up to help where we were needed most. Even before Michigan shut down in March, we began leveraging our depth of experience and relationships to quickly get \$1.2 million out the door to small businesses in Detroit, Highland Park and Hamtramck, the majority of which were owned by entrepreneurs who identify as part of Black and Brown communities and she/her/hers. We backed up that effort with an array of resources developed by TechTown and a myriad of great partners to ensure that we'll regain the momentum that was building across Detroit before the crisis.

I'm not going to pretend this will be easy. But even national researchers (and [The New York Times](#)) have noticed that Detroit's entrepreneurship ecosystem has got something special. We're proud to be one of the bedrock organizations of this ecosystem — 17 years and counting. But, even more importantly, we're grateful that our 17 years of experience positioned us to meet the moment for Detroit's small businesses and tech startups when they needed us most.

Now, let me be very clear: TechTown isn't just leading a small business recovery. We are leading an equitable small business recovery. Black- and Brown-owned businesses anchor our comeback strategy, just as they anchor our neighborhoods. We need to change racist policies and remove barriers so everyone has access to the support they need to sustain and grow their businesses. As we plan our path forward, we're committed to rebuilding a better, more inclusive economy. We know our commitment is broadly shared, and that makes me very optimistic about our future. We got this, Detroit.

Sincerely,



Ned Staebler
President & CEO



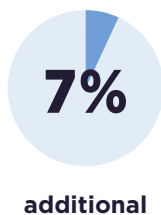
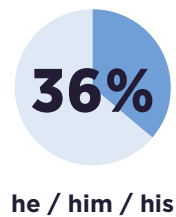
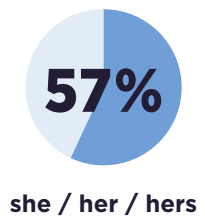
I invite you to visit
[techtowndetroit.org/
2020-2021impact](https://techtowndetroit.org/2020-2021impact)
**to view TechTown's
2020 financial
statements, our
Board of Directors
and funders.**



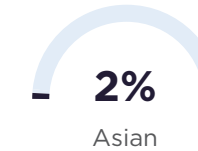
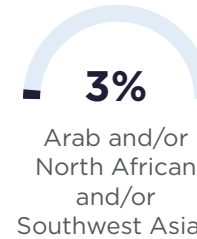
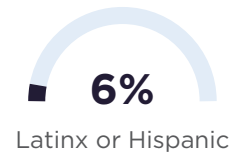
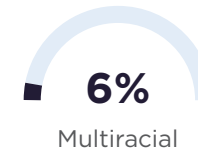
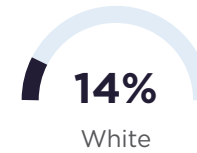
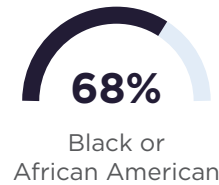
TechTown entrepreneurs served March 2020 – March 2021



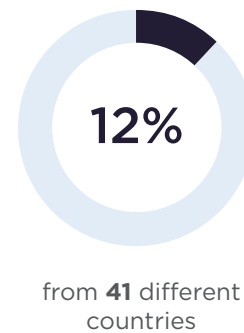
PRONOUNS USED



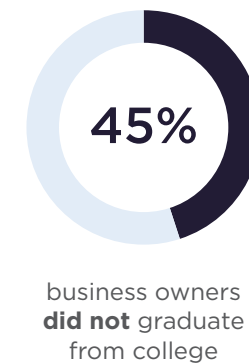
RACE / ETHNICITY



IMMIGRANTS TO U.S.



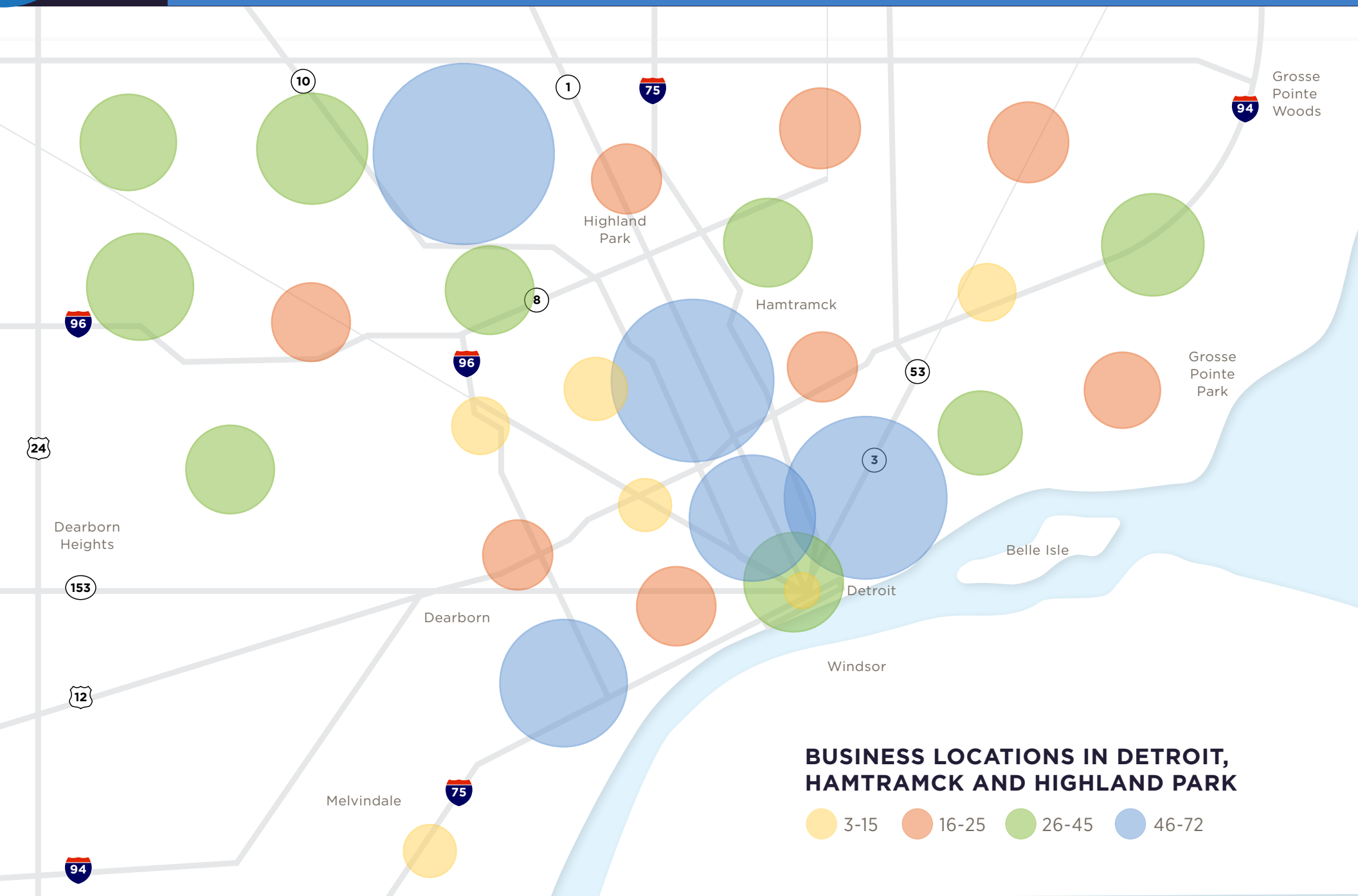
EDUCATION LEVELS



Percentages reflect rounding to the nearest whole percent, which may sometimes lead to totals slightly more than or less than 100%.



TechTown entrepreneurs served March 2020 – March 2021



We deployed **immediate financial support**

In the early days of the crisis, we knew Detroit’s most vulnerable businesses and nonprofits didn’t have time to wait for state and federal relief programs. We stepped up with quick, easy-to-apply-for funding to get them through those first weeks and months.

When COVID-19 hit, TechTown immediately stepped up to create Detroit’s first small business emergency grant program. The **DETROIT SMALL BUSINESS STABILIZATION FUND** launched on March 18, 2020, and quickly deployed grants of up to \$5,000 to the city’s most vulnerable small businesses — low- to moderate-income businesses with 10 employees or less. The **TECHTOWN STABILIZATION FUND**, launched three weeks later with support from the New Economy Initiative and Bank of America, extended funding to Hamtramck and Highland Park and included service businesses, freelancers and other businesses left out of other major relief programs.

TOTAL JOBS/EMPLOYEES
supported by Stabilization Funds

2,364

LOCAL JOBS/EMPLOYEES
supported by Stabilization Funds

2,013

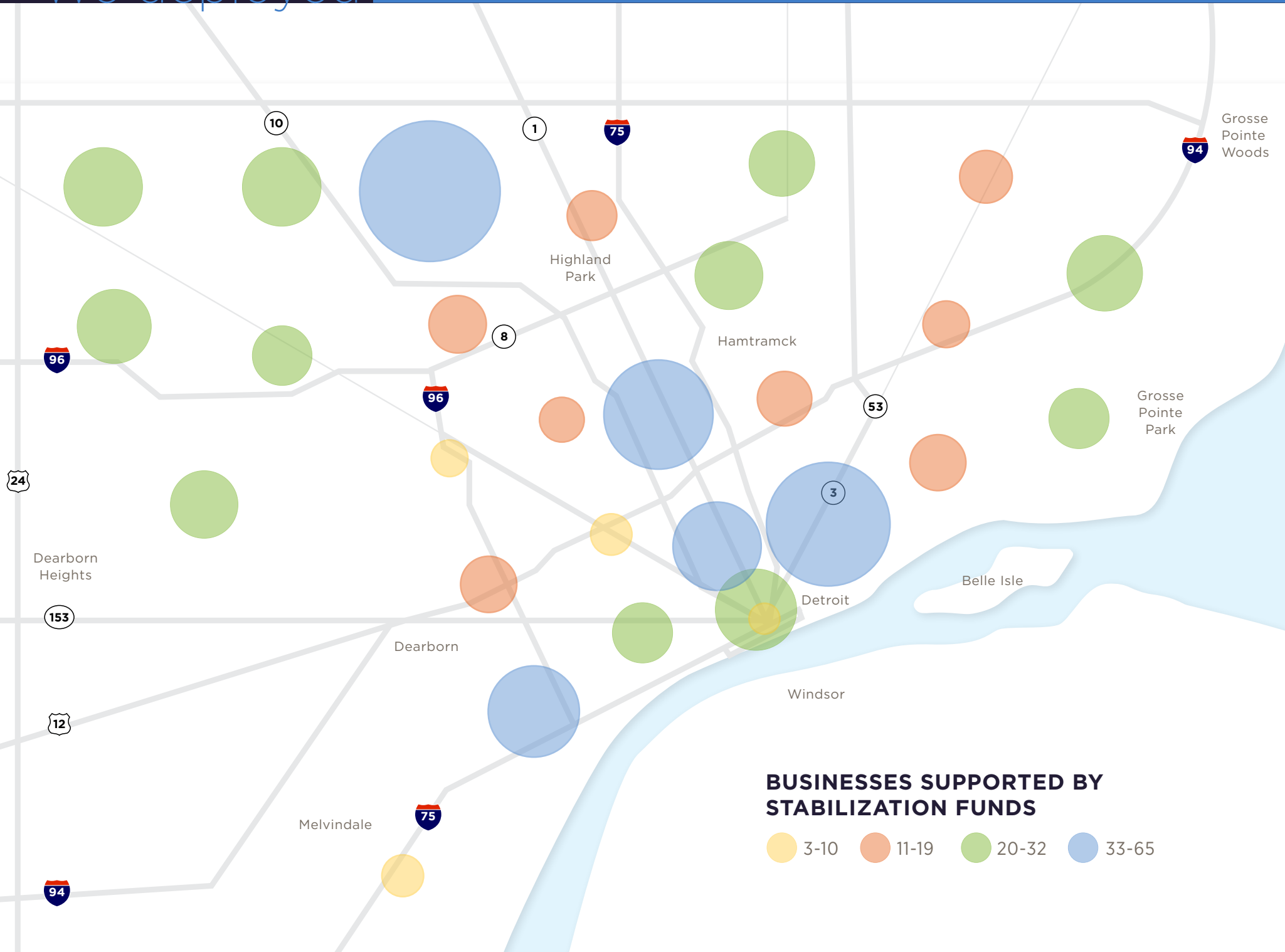


SPOTLIGHT

When TechTown and our partners launched the Detroit Small Business Stabilization Fund, our entire community stepped up. And Tommey Walker stepped way up. Creator of the iconic “Detroit vs. Everybody” fashion brand, Tommey created a new line, “Everybody vs. COVID-19,” and donated 20 percent of the proceeds to the fund. “We’re all fighting the same fight, and this came upon us very quick, and it was heavy,” Tommey told us when he launched the line.

“Along with us helping ourselves, we want to help our peers. And that’s why we felt as if it was the perfect partnership.” All told, the effort raised (drum roll, please) more than \$14,000 to help Detroit small businesses in the early days of the crisis.

We deployed **immediate financial support**



We deployed **immediate financial support**

STABILIZATION FUNDS

TOTAL DEPLOYED
for Stabilization Funds

\$1,181,000
awarded

TOTAL BUSINESSES
supported by Stabilization Funds

697

AMOUNT DEPLOYED
for Detroit Small Business
Stabilization Fund

\$606,000
awarded

BUSINESSES SUPPORTED
by Detroit Small Business
Stabilization Fund

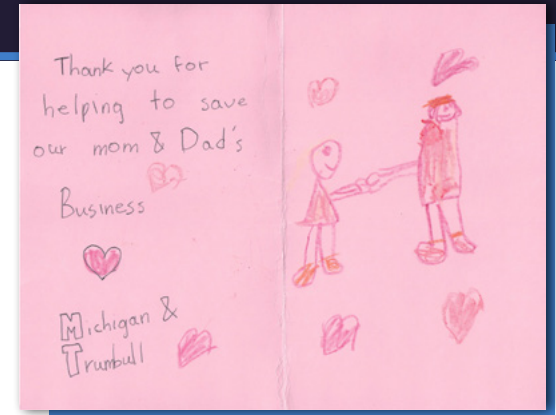
350

AMOUNT DEPLOYED
for TechTown
Stabilization Fund

\$575,000
awarded

BUSINESSES SUPPORTED
by TechTown
Stabilization Fund

347



UTILIZATION OF APPLICATIONS
in non-English languages

17

Spanish, Bengali, Arabic

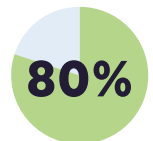
IMMIGRANT-OWNED
businesses supported



HOME-BASED
businesses supported



BRICK & MORTAR
businesses supported



We deployed **immediate financial support**

Co.act helped sustain Southeast Michigan nonprofits with the **ACTIVATE FUND NONPROFIT FUNDAMENTALS GRANTS**, seeded by the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation. Co.act made the application process more flexible due to the pandemic, awarding nearly \$1.2 million in July to strengthen the operations of local organizations while also enhancing the broader nonprofit ecosystem.

TOTAL FOR THE ACTIVATE FUND
Nonprofit Fundamentals Grants

\$ 25 grants totaling
\$1.18 million

Co.act also launched the **DETROIT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MINI-GRANT** program in partnership with Community Development Advocates of Detroit, providing general operating grants to support the crucial work of Detroit community development and neighborhood organizations.

ROUND 1

\$50,000

in general operating grants given
to **11 Detroit-area nonprofits**
(\$4,545.45 each)

ROUND 2

\$300,000

in grants secured to
support delivery of
COVID-19 relief services



SPOTLIGHT

While bookstores across the country have shuttered over the past decade, Source Booksellers has remained a staple of Midtown/the Cass Corridor for nearly 20 years. A grant from the Detroit Small Business Stabilization Fund helped ensure this well-loved neighborhood business would make it through the pandemic. Owner Janet Webster Jones learned about the opportunity from Midtown Detroit, Inc., and she used her grant to pay bills that were due at the end of March, after she had to shut her doors to customers. Source Booksellers has remained busy throughout the pandemic, taking online, email and phone orders and converting a portion of the store to a fulfillment space. They also continued to host their popular readings and events virtually. In the fall, they opened the store to a limited number of customers, and they continue to encourage in-store pickup. "When the shutdown came, everyone rocked back like a punch from a boxer," says Janet.

"The TechTown grant was immediately available when we really needed it. It allowed us to pay the rest of our March publishers and some of the other smaller expenses, and we were able to mow on through."

We focused programming on the most urgent needs

TechTown shifted our program model to meet the immediate needs of small businesses most impacted by the pandemic, including entrepreneurs in Black and Brown communities.

313 STRONG is a coaching initiative designed to stabilize small businesses financially, while helping them navigate the pandemic economy. Built in collaboration with six other Detroit business service organizations and micro/small business lenders, 313 STRONG focuses intensively on building core business acumen through three critical areas: money, marketing and management.

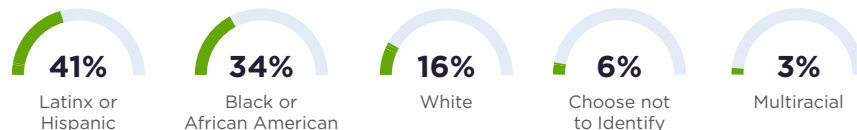
313 STRONG BUSINESSES SERVED
that remained open during COVID-19

100%

313 STRONG BUSINESSES SERVED
that are owned by immigrants

35%

RACE / ETHNICITY



SPOTLIGHT

Sibling duo Jerome B. Brown and Samuel VanBuren opened their family-owned and operated restaurant, Detroit Soul, in 2015 to provide customers fresh, made-from-scratch soul food that "leaves a smile on their face and in their heart." Jerome and Samuel reached out to TechTown's 313 STRONG program as they considered an expansion beyond their 8 mile location to Jefferson Chalmers. TechTown's Warren Galloway provided coaching on capital funding strategies for the expansion, while Lawrence Jackson provided sales projections and accounting support. The expansion plans are moving forward, and Jerome says TechTown's support has been key:

"The 313 STRONG program allowed us to identify pain points and growth barriers and then create specific actions and implementation plans to overcome the targeted issues. The outcome was implementing proof of concept ideas that we used in the business immediately. I recommend any business seeking opportunities to grow become a part of TechTown."

We focused programming on the most urgent needs

NAVIGATING THE NOISE: We moved our Open Office Hours (OOH) and Ask an Expert (AAE) programs online, continuing to provide free, one-on-one consultations on pressing business needs when they were needed most. With services in English and Spanish, we assisted clients in securing personal protective equipment and developing other strategies to remain open safely; helped business owners navigate grants and loans, including the Paycheck Protection Program and Economic Injury Disaster Loan; and consulted on business-saving capital and marketing strategies. Questions ranged from “How do I communicate important operating updates to customers?” to “Do I have the right setup for curbside pickup?” OOH and AAE also provided a safe space for clients to share ideas and find an empathetic ear.

APPOINTMENTS
for Open Office Hours (OOH)
and Ask an Expert (AAE)

1,001

OOH APPOINTMENTS

782

people who would
RECOMMEND OOH

89%

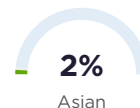
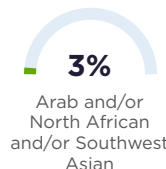
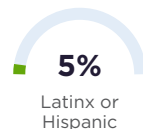
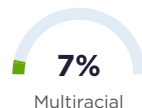
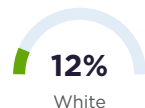
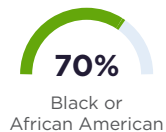
AAE APPOINTMENTS

219

people who would
RECOMMEND AAE

81%

RACE / ETHNICITY



SPOTLIGHT

Over the past two years, Maurizio Dominguez has been shooting and editing short film documentaries and promotional videos for social media, as well as filming on set for professional theater productions. He knew it was time to turn this work into a “real” business, but he wasn’t sure how. He signed up for a TechTown Open Office Hour to get some advice. Four half-hour meetings later, Mexicut Films is a registered LLC in Michigan, and Maurizio has established accounting practices that have set him up for success. He’s also launched a website with work samples and started building his social presence on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

“Techtown’s support helped me understand the requirements to register my business and offered helpful tips on how to organize my business accounts and keep track of expenses and payments,” Maurizio explains. “They helped me file the necessary paperwork to register my LLC, and helped me connect with accountants and other community programs that offer resources for new and developing small businesses.”

WORKSHOPS ADDRESSING COVID-19 ISSUES: TechTown, MedHealth and Co.act held numerous virtual workshops to address vital concerns during the pandemic, including making business model and operating changes, managing cash flow, applying for the Paycheck Protection Program and managing the uncertain regulatory landscape in medtech.

**TECHTOWN WORKSHOP
ATTENDEES**

825

**CO.ACT WORKSHOP
ATTENDEES**

2,241

**MEDHEALTH WORKSHOP
ATTENDEES**

271

**MOTOWN MUSICIANS ACCELERATOR
EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROGRAM:**

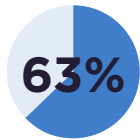
The entertainment industry suffered greatly during COVID-19, and creative artists often fell through the cracks of state and federal relief programs. This two-week virtual accelerator helped musicians identify, understand and secure resources to withstand the crisis.

CO.ACT EARNED REVENUE ACCELERATOR: As demand for nonprofits' services increased and traditional revenue sources like fundraising events dwindled, the importance of diversifying funding streams became clear. Co.act launched its first Earned Revenue Accelerator Pilot cohort in March 2021 with an intensive virtual curriculum focused on helping six Wayne County nonprofits grow existing revenue-generating products and services to become more sustainable and self-sufficient.

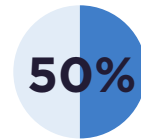
We worked to remove barriers

We created and adapted our programs to make them even more inclusive and accessible.

Tech participants in 2020 who identified as
PEOPLE OF COLOR



Tech participants in 2020 who identified as
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN



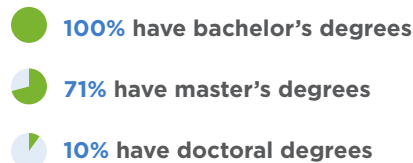
We continued expanding our intentionally inclusive and accessible tech entrepreneurship programs, launching **STEEP (STEM ENTREPRENEURIAL EXCELLENCE PROGRAM) DETROIT**, a 10-month incubator that supports Black women entrepreneurs in STEM, science, tech and beyond as they aspire to increased growth, measurable sustainability and capital investment in their businesses. STEEP Detroit is a collaboration with the Julian C. Madison Building LLC, Wayne State University's STEM Innovation Learning Center and Midwest I-Corps, and builds on the inclusion-focused work of our Start Studio program for early-stage entrepreneurs, as well as TechTown Incubator and other programs that coach clients through attaining recurring revenue and accessing capital.

**ROUND 1
STEEP
DETROIT
COHORT**

**ACCEPTED
APPLICANTS**

23

EDUCATION LEVELS



SPOTLIGHT

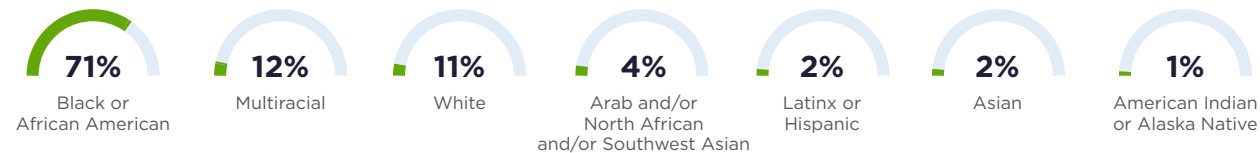
Morgan Phillips-Spotts joined TechTown's STEEP Detroit program on a whim. She'd launched Momo's Book Club, a subscription book box for kids, five years earlier but intensified her focus on the business this past year. "I really wanted to talk to people who could help me scale and give me a better foundation to help me grow. I was looking for community and advisors," she says of STEEP Detroit. The goal of Momo's Book Club is to make young readers' libraries as diverse as the world. When Morgan started STEEP Detroit, the company had about 200 active subscribers. Since moving through the program, she's gained 55 new subscribers and feels poised to substantially grow. She's actively pursuing funding and working on an app that will enhance her product. "I think the biggest thing that I'm more confident about is my business idea and the direction I'm going," Morgan says.

"But everything I've learned helps me to be a stronger entrepreneur. Now I feel like I have the knowledge and confidence to start pitching my business to gain capital and future investors."

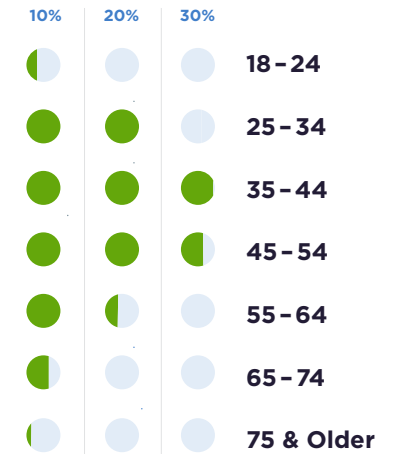
We worked **to remove barriers**

Adapting to a virtual environment and acting on intel that attending live online events was a barrier for many entrepreneurs, we launched the **TECHTOWN TRAINING SERIES**. Our shift from live to an on-demand format, accompanied by an archived digital library, significantly boosted participation. The Training Series also offers opportunities to meet live with our expert presenters in a peer-to-peer format and receive additional one-on-one guidance through Open Office Hours and Ask an Expert.

RACE / ETHNICITY OF ENTREPRENEURS SERVED



AGE RANGE OF ENTREPRENEURS SERVED



Our signature pop-up, **THE SHOP**, launched in virtual format in July 2020. Seeing the opportunity to assist entrepreneurs in making the transition from in-store to online sales, we researched online sales formats, resources, tools and techniques to ultimately create a professional real-time sales platform leveraging Facebook Live. The SHOP: Virtual Edition offered all participants free pre- and post-event sales and technology training.

PARTICIPATING VENDORS

46

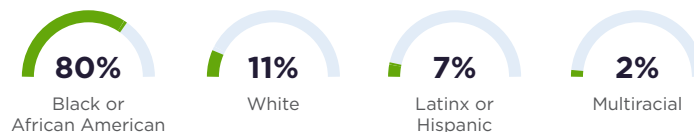
vendors who would recommend THE SHOP: VIRTUAL EDITION

87.5%

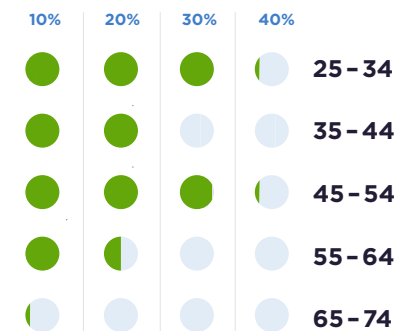
VIEWS across all platforms

1,340

RACE / ETHNICITY OF VENDORS



AGE RANGE OF VENDORS



The **2020 BORDERHACKS HACKATHON**, co-sponsored by MedHealth, focused on WEPass, an app and testing system that would facilitate safe travel between Michigan and Canada, where the border has been closed to non-essential travel for over a year. This virtual cross-border event served as a platform to stimulate new ideas to advance the WEPass pilot.

In partnership with the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy at Indiana University, Co.act launched Fundraising in a Crisis, a professional development certificate program. Offered at a discounted rate with a number of full and partial scholarships awarded, the program was designed for people traditionally excluded from similar opportunities, like leaders of color or those who work at organizations with no professional development budgets. Participating leaders will receive a **CURRENT AFFAIRS FUNDRAISING: CRISIS MANAGEMENT** certificate from the Lilly School, a pioneer institution for fundraising.

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED
to leaders from 29 organizations for Current Affairs
Fundraising: Crisis Management Certificate

\$17,000



SPOTLIGHT

After graduating from Retail Boot Camp in 2019, CommodiTeas tea company owner Katrina Anderson began selling her premium quality tea and beverage-related gifts at The SHOP and other pop-ups. When we invited Katrina to participate in our virtual SHOP, she was hesitant at first, unsure whether she could simultaneously manage technology and create a positive retail experience. But she quickly found her groove. Her presentation evolved into conversations instead of sales pitches, and her clients loved it. Now Katrina is our “Queen of Live”: she’s participated in three virtual SHOPS and hosted two of her own virtual tea parties with over 100 guests each. She plans to make the parties and other virtual experiences a regular occurrence.

“The virtual SHOP taught me to ignore the camera and focus on the clients,” Katrina reflects. “Whatever your ‘location,’ you need to create a memorable experience for the audience. Do not be afraid to show them what makes your face light up. Technology has advanced, but it will never overshadow the radiance of the human spirit. At the end of the day, your reason for starting your business is still paramount. Your passion will always translate, on and off camera.”

We fostered collaboration and partnership

We helped lead a groundbreaking collaborative to coordinate support across Detroit's small business ecosystem and helped Southeast Michigan's nonprofits chart a new path forward — together.

In partnership with Michigan Community Resources, Michigan Nonprofit Association and Council of Michigan Foundations, Co.act developed **A NEW WAY FORWARD: REDEFINING THE NONPROFIT WORKPLACE SERIES AND TOOLKIT**, focusing on responding to the crises of the pandemic and defining in collaborative fashion how the nonprofit sector can define itself moving forward.

Co.act's **COLLABORATION PILOT** awarded seven collaboratives, composed of 170 organizations, with in-kind facilitation, space and other meeting support to help them work together on a shared idea or challenge.

VALUE OF SERVICES AWARDED

\$125,030



SPOTLIGHT

Detroit Future City (DFC) serves as the backbone organization for the Detroit Neighborhood Housing Compact, a “collective impact” initiative of more than 80 organizations working to increase the availability of stable, healthy and affordable single-family homes for renters and homeowners in Detroit. As part of its work, the collaborative sought to create measures of impact that would demonstrate clear progress toward their goals (like reducing housing cost burden for renters by a certain amount over a certain period of time), explains Kimberly Faison, DFC’s director of community and economic development. With funding and facilitation support through Co.act’s Activate Fund Collaboration Pilot, DFC has been able to host three facilitated sessions to develop the measures. The facilitators will continue to work with DFC to translate the goals throughout the compact. Co.act also connected DFC with national facilitation experts who will help them become even more effective as the compact’s backbone organization.

“That’s the beauty of being able to have facilitation support to work with a collaborative,” says Kimberly.

“We wanted to really put a stake in the ground. Now, we have a clear vision for the work over the next decade. We have a North Star.”

TechTown is a founding advisory member and leading partner in **DETROIT MEANS BUSINESS (DMB)**, a 60+ member public-private coalition initially conceived to support the re-opening of Detroit's small businesses. With a recent \$1 million investment, DMB is refocusing to become a one-stop shop for Detroit's small business owners. DMB aims to drive equity efforts within Detroit's small business community to provide improved access to capital, cross-sector procurement opportunities, expert mentoring, and to identify and remove city, state and federal regulatory barriers to success.

**DMB ASK AN EXPERT
APPOINTMENTS**
hosted by TechTown

162

VOLUNTEERS
from ecosystem partners
offering DMB Ask an Expert support

36

TOTAL BUSINESSES ASSISTED
through TechTown's leadership of
DMB Technical Assistance

753

ENTREPRENEURS REACHED
through DMB TechTown hosted/
co-hosted webinars

480



SPOTLIGHT

The need for coordinated support across Detroit's robust small business ecosystem was never more clear than when the crisis hit. This is why TechTown stepped up as a founding advisory member of Detroit Means Business (DMB). From the coalition's inception, TechTown's managing director of entrepreneurial programs and services, Amy Rencher, has led the DMB Technical Assistance (TA) Committee, which coordinated one-on-one coaching, consultations and an array of resources to help entrepreneurs navigate the rapidly shifting climate of national, state and local ordinances and health standards. TA providers also helped businesses access grant and loan opportunities.

In 2021, under Amy's leadership, TechTown led the formation of a sub-group of local lending and business support organizations to help Black- and women-owned businesses and entrepreneurs of color in Detroit access PPP funds. In March 2021, DMB announced plans to continue beyond the pandemic, serving as a "front door" for Detroiters seeking small business services, with a focus on supporting the sustainability of Black-owned businesses and businesses owned by people of color.

"Hundreds of businesses, the majority Black-owned, women-owned and people of color-owned, are open today because of the coordinated efforts of Detroit Means Business," says Amy.

"I'm proud of our work now, but in 10 years, when we are still patronizing businesses owned by Detroiters who weathered the crisis, that's when we're going to see DMB's lasting impact."

We created a safe and flexible space

With the pandemic came the need to transition our community hub to a space that could safely meet the needs of the many local businesses and organizations who call TechTown home.

With nearly 700 members and tenants who rely on TechTown's coworking and office space to run their businesses and nonprofits, we knew that we had to move quickly during the pandemic to make our building safe for every person walking through our doors. When state orders allowed members and tenants to resume work in our building, we were ready with significant upgrades to our 140,000-square-foot space, including:

- New offices based on increased demand for private space
- Touchless temperature scanners at building entrances
- Touchless security card readers and app
- Plexiglass partitions in dedicated desk areas, front desk area and eating area
- Reconfigured coworking and meeting spaces to ensure adequate distancing
- Directional signage to encourage safer traffic flow throughout the building
- Upgraded air filters
- Daily disinfecting services
- Disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer dispensers throughout the building



View our safe space video at techtowndet.org/safespace

SPOTLIGHT



When TechTown had to shut our doors due to the stay at home order, our Community Ambassadors and Facilities teams snapped into action as our frontliners. The week after the shutdown, while most TechTown employees worked remotely, our Community Ambassadors began coming to the building three times a week to staff drive-through mail delivery for our community. Meanwhile, the Collaborative Workspace and Facilities teams began developing processes and procedures for a safe reopening. Now, TechTown is outfitted with a range of upgrades to keep everyone who comes through our doors protected while still fostering the sense of community for which we're known. Our Community Ambassadors and Facilities teams are now on site regularly, and traffic in the building is beginning to pick up. Andrea Pitcher, our community ambassador supervisor, eagerly anticipates the time when TechTown is once again buzzing.

"I love this place, and I love it when it's full," she says. "I'm looking forward to seeing all the smiles again."



COWORKING CLASSROOM: Recognizing that child care was one of our community’s greatest challenges, TechTown launched the Coworking Classroom in 2020. The classroom provided supervised space for remote learning Monday through Friday. Two educational facilitators worked onsite with each group to support every child’s online learning experience. Sliding scale pricing ensured this resource was accessible to the entire TechTown community.

RENT REDUCTION & SUPPORT: We worked with tenants and members throughout the year to adjust rates and offer rent forgiveness where needed. We also implemented a variety of discounts to make coworking and renting office space more flexible and affordable, including:

- Three new coworking membership options
- Twenty percent discount on all small private offices, dedicated desks and five-day coworking options
- Shorter lease terms



EQUITY WALL: “What can we, as a community, do to create a more equitable Detroit?” That question is posed in a new interactive installation on the main floor of TechTown, designed by staff in response to “Radical Inclusion in Tech,” a research report authored by Marlo Rencher, Ph.D., our director of technology-based programs. The installation invites our community to share their ideas so we can continue to co-create the equitable city we envision.



SPOTLIGHT

Coworking and Professional Services Network member Juan Carlos Dueweke-Perez worked at TechTown until the last possible moment before we closed our doors due to the state stay at home order. For the next several months, Juan Carlos, the owner of digital marketing agency Featherstone, and his partner, Joanna, both worked from home while supervising their two children. They managed OK, but he missed his great desk setup and the locker where he stores his photography equipment, the chance to meet with his staff and clients, and his ability to stay focused on work. Juan Carlos began gradually returning to TechTown after we reopened in summer 2020. When we launched our Coworking Classroom in the fall, he enrolled both his children. They loved being around other kids, and he and Joanna felt freed from the emotional weight of trying to juggle home life, work life and community life. “I’ve seen a lot of other people lose their patience with one another, and with their kids, especially,” says Juan Carlos.

“The Coworking Classroom made it easier for us to have patience with everyone.”

We harnessed the power of individual giving

Throughout the crisis, we leveraged the power of our community to maximize the impact of our work.

We **INCREASED THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL DONORS TO TECHTOWN**, placing a greater emphasis on individual gifts of any size to reflect our value of inclusivity. We're eager to celebrate our donor community with a **DONOR WALL FOR ALL**, a crowd-sourced photo mosaic that will debut at a future date.

NEW INDIVIDUAL
DONORS

367

MONEY RAISED
from individual donors

\$93,450



SPOTLIGHT



With an office on our third floor, Global Ties Detroit has been a member of the TechTown community since 2017. Part of a national network, Global Ties Detroit hosts international exchange programs on behalf of the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development and other governmental organizations, universities and think tanks that promote global exchange and citizen diplomacy. But when the crisis hit, Global Ties Detroit decided to make an impact locally, becoming one of 186 donors to the Detroit and TechTown Small Business Stabilization Funds.

“We recognize the incredibly valuable contributions TechTown provides to the Detroit community and want to do our part in supporting that effort,”

says Global Ties Detroit president Marian Reich. “Additionally, we see TechTown as a model for many of our international delegations who are inspired by the positive impact it has made and continues to make in Detroit and the region.” Marian says she feels that impact herself, on any ordinary day at TechTown: “You can feel the energy and collaborative spirit as soon as you enter the building. I have met so many interesting, innovative entrepreneurs, business and community leaders, journalists, advocates, elected officials and more just going for coffee or picking up the mail. It actually makes me love coming to work!”

We harnessed the power of individual giving

The TechTown **LIMITED EDITION STORE** debuted in November 2020 featuring seven limited-edition brand collaborations that were custom-made by TechTown clients and alumni. TechTown purchased the items in advance to provide financial support during this turbulent time, and all proceeds went right back into the programs and services at TechTown that helped the participating businesses launch and grow. This e-commerce site enabled shopping local to help make the next economy work for everyone.

LIMITED EDITION STORE REVENUE

\$3,509



SPOTLIGHT



Not Sorry Goods is an eco-friendly, inclusive and responsible lifestyle retailer. Co-founders Dy-Min Johnson and Jessica Minnick have a long history with TechTown — we were their first B2B client, they opened their first retail location in our Cass Collective, and they are Retail Boot Camp graduates. When the opportunity came to pay it forward by participating in our Limited Edition Store, they were all in. Not Sorry created an embroidered long sleeve tee with Techtown's slogan for our city's economic comeback: "Rethink. Reimagine. Reinvest." The tees were sustainably sourced and included recycled polyester from water bottles. The embroidery was all done in-house at Not Sorry's Detroit studio. "One of the most important things 2020 taught us was to give back," says Dy-Min.

"We learned that we can all make a difference and create a positive impact in our community."

TOAST OF THE TOWN, TechTown's annual celebration of Detroit entrepreneurship, may have looked different this year, but it was still packed with its signature energy. With Ned Staebler and entrepreneur-in-residence Jeff Ponders hosting live from TechTown, virtual attendees networked via live chat throughout the proceedings, which included a powerful keynote from Ned calling for a post-COVID-19 economy that works for everyone, impassioned Salute Awards video presentations to TechTown clients Mature and Detroit Maid, and the awarding of the inaugural Marlowe Stoudamire Small Business Champion Award to the incredibly deserving Pamela Lewis, director of the New Economy Initiative. Thank you to all our sponsors and individual donors for your support which resulted in another successful Toast of the Town!

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

166

NET RAISED

\$112,339

LIVE VIEWS

787

TOTAL VIEWS

935

SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENTS

2,091



SPOTLIGHT

Detroit's small business community suffered a devastating loss early in the COVID-19 crisis with the death of Marlowe Stoudamire. A life-long Detroiter and one of the city's fiercest champions, Marlowe was an entrepreneur, a community advocate, a consummate relationship builder and, above all else, a family man. He was especially recognized for his visionary leadership of the Detroit Historical Society's Detroit '67 exhibit, and also served in leadership roles at the Skillman Foundation and Henry Ford Health System, as well as in his own marketing consultancy, 2050 Partners.

“Marlowe planted ideas and relationships like seeds,” remembers Donna Givens Davidson, president and CEO of the Eastside Community Network. “Some of them will never germinate, and some of them already have, and some will in the future into something that is much greater than even he could have imagined.”



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