



2019 IMPACT REPORT

TECHTOWN IS DETROIT'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP HUB.

We're a different kind of incubator and accelerator, with a full suite of programs for both tech and neighborhood small businesses. We work with businesses at all stages, helping startup, emerging and established companies develop, launch and grow.

TechTown was founded in 2000 by Wayne State University, Henry Ford Health System and General Motors. In 2004, TechTown incorporated as a nonprofit and established its headquarters in a landmark 1927 Albert Kahn building just north of the Wayne State campus.

Originally founded to support tech-based spinoffs from the university, we soon realized that our incubation and acceleration strategies for tech companies could help strengthen neighborhood small businesses and commercial corridors across Detroit.

Today, we offer a full suite of entrepreneurial services for tech and neighborhood businesses, with satellite offices across the city. Our five-story building serves as an entrepreneurial hub, housing the TechTown administrative offices, our coworking community, meeting and event space, and numerous businesses and organizations working across sectors to drive progress in Detroit. TechTown works in close partnership with Wayne State's Office of Economic Development, the university's hub for catalyzing business activity in Midtown and across the Detroit region.



FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS CHAIR

TECHTOWN PARTNERS, SUPPORTERS AND FRIENDS,

When Wayne State and our partners founded TechTown in 2000, we knew we were building an organization that would change Detroit. A global pandemic was not in our plans, of course, but I could not be prouder of the ways we've helped our city's startups and small businesses weather the crisis. Our work in 2019 helped bring us to this moment. With 538 companies served, 27 jobs created and more than \$23 million in startup and growth capital raised in a single year, we are continuing to strengthen Detroit through the power of startups and small businesses. I am pleased to share our 2019 accomplishments with you. They lay the groundwork for our work to come, and the ways we will move forward, together.

Sincerely,

KAN,

M. Roy Wilson Board Chair



FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

TECHTOWN PARTNERS, SUPPORTERS AND FRIENDS,



The pivot. In basketball, it's a turn on a dime. For businesses, it's a shift in your model. In both, it's about being nimble, maneuvering around obstacles, finding your opening. It's also about and this is critical — keeping one foot rooted firmly on the ground.

At TechTown, we've advised hundreds, if not thousands, of businesses on their pivots. And over 16 years, we've made plenty of them, too.

2019 was a year of pivots for TechTown — drives toward openings and opportunities, informed by our years of experience and anchored in our mission to help startups and small businesses across Detroit — and of Detroit — start, stabilize and grow. When Isaiah worked his way around Bird (like I said, of Detroit), it looked easy. But the truth is, that move was years in the making. I am so proud of the work TechTown has done to help Detroit's small businesses weather challenging times. I'm equally proud of all the work we did that prepared us for those moments. We drove hard in 2019. Please enjoy the highlight reel.

Sincerely,

Ned Staebler President & CEO

IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

2007-2019

1,573 Jobs created

2,863 Companies served

\$168,168,259 Raised in startup and growth capital 2019

27 Jobs created

538 Companies served

683 Coworking members and tenants

\$23,224,736 Raised in startup and growth capital



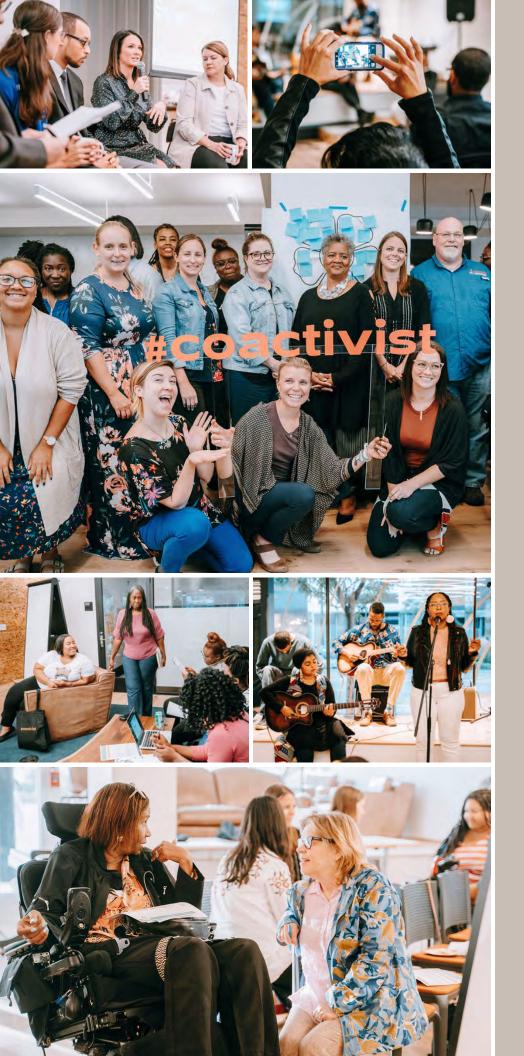
TECHTOWN DETROIT INITIATIVES CO.ACT DETROIT

Co.act Detroit officially opened its doors in June 2019 with Coactivists Unite, a two-day launch event. More than 300 members of Southeast Michigan's nonprofit community came out to interact with local and national presenters and celebrate this vibrant new space designed to foster collaboration, innovation and co-learning in the nonprofit sector.

Co.act grew out of a partnership that included TechTown, the Michigan Nonprofit Association and the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation. TechTown's years of matching small businesses to resources, our extensive Professional Services Network and Ask an Expert programs, and our experience creating events and spaces for community and relationship building all informed the Co.act model.

The community has embraced Co.act as a long-awaited resource. "Co.act is an incredible organization with vision," observed one nonprofit executive director. "Nonprofits do some really important work with unique challenges, but they don't often have the bandwidth to reach out. Places like Co.act offer a great service to help nonprofits be successful."

In addition to **workshops focused on sharing best practices for nonprofit operations,** Co.act's 2019 programs and activities included: **Co.Lab Connect** (free one-on-one consultations with nonprofit service providers); a **Corporate Social Responsibility conversation series** discussing the evolving role of corporations in the community; and a **Nonprofit Wellbeing series** focused on wellness, mental health and ways nonprofit professionals can build more sustainable relationships with their work. The Nonprofit Wellbeing series kicked off with Strategies for Impact Without Burnout, led by internationally known consultant and thought leader Beth Kanter, author of *The Happy Healthy Nonprofit*.





TECHTOWN DETROIT INITIATIVES DETROIT URBAN SOLUTIONS

Detroit Urban Solutions — founded by TechTown, Wayne State and NextEnergy — formally launched in April 2019.

MedHealth

Now in its fourth year, MedHealth convenes innovators, providers, payers, funders, health systems, economic developers and businesses to accelerate innovative solutions that improve quality of care in Southeast Michigan and Southwest Ontario.

In 2019, MedHealth:

- Delivered its third annual MedHealth Summit at Ford Field
- Partnered with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to host MedHealth Startup Day. Representatives from the FDA, CDC, Department of Commerce International Trade Office and NIH shared resources and knowledge.
- Partnered with VentureWell to deliver the **ASPIRE Medtech** Accelerator Program at TechTown

Erie Hack

Erie Hack unites coders, developers, engineers and water experts to generate solutions to Lake Erie's biggest challenges. Launched in 2017 and run for a second time in 2019, the program is led by the Cleveland Water Alliance in collaboration with partners in Detroit; Toledo, Ohio; Erie, Pennsylvania; Buffalo, New York; and Windsor, Ontario.

The **Erie Hack Regional Semifinals** were held at Cobo Hall in June 2019 and saw five Metro Detroit teams compete for an opportunity to move on to the finals. In October, we also hosted a "Forbes Edition" of Erie Hack at the Forbes Under 30 Summit held at the Masonic Temple in downtown Detroit.



With Paul Riser Jr.

as inaugural director, the urban tech and smart city consortium led a full slate of accelerators, hackathons and events designed to identify promising solutions to challenges facing Detroit in the areas of healthcare, water tech, mobility, energy and more.









MedHealth Startup Day More than

350 attendees and over

240 one-on-one meetings between innovators, healthcare providers, payers and investors

> MedHealth Summit More than 175

members of the healthcare community from across the state attended

ASPIRE Medtech Accelerator Program

healthcare innovation teams from Michigan and across the U.S., plus

international teams

Erie Hack 2.0 More than 250

innovators on

52 competing teams from across the region, including

> 14 from Detroit

Erie Hack High School Competition & Challenge

high school students formed

30+ teams, including

> 6 from Detroit

Detroit Fintech Challenge More than

> 210 participants



Motown Musicians Accelerator Program received applications from 409 artists across 114 zip codes

Detroit Fintech Challenge + Fintech Bay

The **Detroit Fintech Challenge** is an annual competition that unites innovators, coders, corporate partners, students and others to create enduring solutions to the biggest challenges in the financial, payments, banking and insurance sectors.

In 2019, two of three winners were from Metro Detroit, including UBook Freight, which received a one-week trip to Silicon Valley for personal meetings with fintech experts and investors while participating in the **Detroit Fintech Bay Silicon Valley Accelerator program.**

Detroit Urban Solutions and TechTown also launched a partnership with the Global Fintech Consortium. The Consortium's **Detroit Fintech Bay** hub was located at TechTown. Our organizations partnered on the Flagstar Mortgage Tech Accelerator, which housed fintech startups at TechTown and accelerated their strategic growth in areas of automotive, mortgage and blockchain.

Motown Musicians Accelerator Program

TechTown and several partners launched a uniquely Detroit accelerator in 2019. The **Motown Musicians Accelerator** helps Detroit-based musicians take their careers to the next level. This 12-week program includes one-on-one coaching and mentorship, industry networking, and a \$20,000 grant per artist. The Motown Accelerator is a partnership of TechTown, gener8tor, Motown Records, Motown Museum and Capital Music Group.

Two inaugural accelerator programs were launched and executed — one for music artists and another for music tech-focused entrepreneurs in Detroit.

Suai Kee, Detroit native and former Motown artist, was selected as Program Director.

The first cohort launched in August 2019 with four artists: **Charity, Asante, Kaleb the Intern** and **MYNA.**



SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES **PIVOT POINT** PROFESSIONAL SERVICES NETWORK

TechTown's Professional Services Network (PSN) began in 2016 as a mini-referral service, matching TechTown small business clients with pro bono professional services. As TechTown grew, so did the need for the network.

The PSN features a broad network of business professionals from firms both large and small. The majority of members are small service businesses who are seeking opportunities to work with their community. The PSN has served as a mechanism to build rapport and initiate peer-to-peer learning and coaching. With the ease of onboarding and formalizing a relationship with TechTown, we have been able to diversify the types of service providers in the network.

"It's great to have resources and mentors on my entrepreneurial journey," observed an Ask an Expert client. "I appreciate the great insight from someone that has had some of the same experiences and pitfalls that I've had."



In 2019, with the support of JPMorgan Chase (whose Service Corps spurred the original PSN concept), TechTown hired Joanna Dueweke-Perez as its first-ever Professional Services Network manager. Under Joanna's leadership, the PSN has become a multi-tiered program that provides more robust pro bono support for businesses, while streamlining our Open Office Hours consultations with TechTown team members and our free Ask an Expert consultations.

86 Members of the Professional Services Network 356 Open Office Hours with TechTown team members 195 Ask an Expert consultations

SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURS AND SMALL BUSINESSES

SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES RETAIL SERVICES

The Retail Services Team and their wide roster of experts provide expertise through classroom training, small group learning and one-on-one coaching.

In 2013, TechTown launched **Retail Boot Camp**, a 10-week intensive course for Detroit retailers ready to open their brick-and-mortar businesses. Over the years, RBC has expanded into an extensive, hands-on retail services program.

As of 2019, the program has three full-time staff and an entrepreneurin-residence dedicated to supporting retailers for "one hour, one week or one year."

They also curate pop-up opportunities, including **The SHOP** — a monthly marketplace at TechTown — and the **Noel Night Winter Art and Retail Market,** in partnership with Wayne State University's Office of Economic Development and Art & Art History Department.



The Retail Services Team also developed **Best Boards,** a digital, image-rich, 24/7 resource for marketing, display and design ideas (www.pinterest.com/ techtowndetroit).

2019 MILESTONES:

- Refined RBC curriculum and program tools in collaboration with Wayne State University Executive and Professional Development instructional design faculty
- Expanded the RBC model in a pilot with the Center for Women and Enterprise in Rhode Island
- Received design recognition for The SHOP during UNESCO Detroit Month of Design and the American Institute of Architects Detroit Celebration of Architecture
- Led 12 workshops including "Designing Your Business from Pop-Up to Permanent," a four-part series for Motor City Match awardees — in collaboration with the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation



Celebrated **100th** Retail Boot Camp graduate

9 cohorts and 130 total graduates through 2019

Hosted 98 vendors and 550 customers at The SHOP

Participating small businesses generated over \$25,000

in revenue at the Noel Night Winter Art and Retail Market

SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES SWOT CITY

SWOT City provides intensive, customized support to brick-and-mortar small businesses in Detroit neighborhoods.

SWOT City served a record number of current and aspiring small business owners in 2019 more than 500 — through one-on-one coaching, public workshops offered in English and Spanish, Open Office Hours and a pilot of our Ask an Expert program in Detroit neighborhoods.

Client milestones included the grand opening of **Fusion Flare Kitchen and Cocktails,** the first sit-down restaurant to open in the Joy-Southfield community in Northwest Detroit in 20 years. Fusion Flare is also the first business that SWOT City served in City Council District Seven we have now helped small businesses open and grow in all seven council districts.

SWOT City also supported the development and grand opening of **Detroit Pepper Co.,** a family-owned and operated carryout restaurant serving fresh, healthy lunch and dinner options. The restaurant is expected to be a catalyst for emerging development on the East Warren corridor. Building a community partnership with the recently launched East Warren Development Corp. has been critical to our success on East Warren, and the organization provided several client referrals in 2019.

During the second half of 2019, SWOT City supported entrepreneurs impacted by the City of Detroit's streetscape improvement projects along commercial corridors in Northwest and Southwest Detroit with a **series of workshops** and **weekly drop-in consultations,** as well as one-on-one marketing consultations offered in English and Spanish in partnership with the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation. We also worked directly with TechTown alumni and clients to evaluate and help prepare applications for the City's Livernois Construction Mitigation Loan Fund.



Fusion Flare owner Mashelle Sykes offers a clear illustration of the ways SWOT City utilizes our broad network - and goes the extra mile - to support our clients. "Initially, I wasn't looking for help," says Mashelle. "I met Warren Galloway, a SWOT City portfolio manager, through my hair stylist. From there, Lawrence Jackson, another portfolio manager, helped me with my financial business projections, which was a huge help. After that, Micah Loucks became my ongoing portfolio manager, and he's amazing. Micah has done everything from helping us curate our menu and finding our POS system to washing dishes the day of our grand opening, even though it wasn't his job. SWOT City helped make my business the success it is today."



Fusion Flare Kitchen and Cocktails

First sit-down restaurant

to open in the Joy-Southfield community in Northwest Detroit in

> 20 years

swot City has now helped small businesses open and grow in all 7 council districts

A record

entrepreneurs served through one-on-one coaching and public workshops offered in English and Spanish

TECHNOLOGY-BASED PROGRAMS

DTX Launch Detroit

Twenty-one promising entrepreneurs participated in this year's DTX Launch Detroit student tech accelerator.

The startup teams' innovations included a virtual reality-based music service, a haptic device designed to help visually impaired people navigate unfamiliar surroundings, and an app that helps students plan and achieve their way to college.

Global Innovation through Science and Technology Initiative

TechTown was selected as an official incubation partner for the inaugural U.S. Department of State's Global Innovation through Science and Technology (GIST) initiative, managed by the VentureWell Foundation.

As part of the program, TechTown hosted entrepreneurs from West Bengal, India; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; and Tbilisi, Georgia looking to expand their operations to the United States. TechTown's GIST entrepreneurs had access to the incubator's network and resources during their stay, including a dedicated entrepreneur-in-residence. They also attended several conferences, including the 2019 Net Impact Conference, the Forbes Under 30 Summit and TEDxDetroit.



Music service **Raxplay** was awarded the \$15,000 GM Go prize at the DTX Launch Showcase, and founders **Isaac Lymon** (Washtenaw Community College) and **Carlos Shields-Davis** were accepted into the inaugural **gBeta Musictech Accelerator.**

WSU INNOVATION STUDIO, POWERED BY TECHTOWN

Revamped, relocated and reopened in September 2019 in the Industry Innovation Center, the **WSU Innovation Studio**, *powered by TechTown*, is a collaborative space that sparks Wayne State students' entrepreneurial journeys through brainstorming, coaching and training. Building on the successful Blackstone LaunchPad program, housed for many years at Wayne State's Adamany Library, the Innovation Studio offers drop-in work days, a design thinking library, workshops and roadmapping sessions, a curated events calendar, and a pipeline to TechTown programs, including Ask an Expert and DTX Launch.

2019 MILESTONES:

- Skilled-Tec referred to TechTown's Start Studio (first place winner at Start Studio Showcase)
- Hexient accepted to TechTown Incubator
- Client Sui selected for TechTown's Launch Detroit 2020





DTX Launch Detroit 7th year with a cohort of 21 promising entrepreneurs

promising entrepreneurs forming

8 teams from colleges and universities across Michigan

Global Innovation through Science and Technology Initiative

TechTown was selected as 1 of 10

official incubation partners for the inaugural U.S. Department of State's Global Innovation through Science and Technology (GIST) initiative managed by the VentureWell Foundation

> WSU Innovation Studio, powered by TechTown Engaged over

> > 400 student entrepreneurs



RADICAL INCLUSION IN TECH

TechTown's programs and services are designed with inclusion in mind — because no matter how good the offerings are, they don't matter if they exclude people.

In 2019, that focus on inclusion was front and center in the research of Dr. Marlo Rencher, TechTown's director of technology-based programs. Dr. Rencher released her "Radical Inclusion in Tech" report to highlight five key strategies for inclusion, along with ways to implement those strategies and examples of what they can look like in practice. This project was supported by VentureWell and includes research conducted in Atlanta, Memphis and Miami.



RADICAL INCLUSION IN TECH



Check out the report at techtowndetroit.org/ radicalinclusionintech



"This research investigates the best practices of organizations who effectively engage underrepresented people in tech entrepreneurship spaces such as incubators, accelerators, coworking spaces and conferences. The intent is to share these practices to help startups, entrepreneurial ecosystem partners and government agencies to nurture inclusion, and ultimately belonging, in tech entrepreneurship."

> Dr. Marlo Rencher, TechTown Director of
> Technology-Based Programs

TECHNOLOGY-BASED PROGRAMS **PIVOT POINT** START STUDIO

Start Studio addresses Detroit's unmet demand for idea-stage tech startup assistance.

Like most tech incubators/accelerators, TechTown has historically served startups with evidence of traction, such as a business model, a minimum viable product or investments. But as we began assessing gaps between needs and opportunities for women and minority tech entrepreneurs in Detroit and Southeast Michigan work that took off after we hired our first diversity and inclusion entrepreneur-in-residence in 2017 — the idea for Start Studio began to take shape.

The concept — and the name — is based on a recurring refrain: "I have this crazy tech idea, but I don't know where to start."

Start Studio is a 12-week incubator designed for innovative thinkers and doers experiencing barriers to participation in traditional incubator offerings. Through a combination of one-on-one coaching, technical assistance and group learning, Start Studio guides participants through testing, research and the creation of a sample tech product. Graduates pitch their companies at a culminating showcase.





BRICKLAYR, an online construction equipment rental platform, was the first Start Studio Showcase winner. Founder Brian Pollyn of Oak Park was awarded a package of cash and services valued at \$10,000. "Start Studio helps you understand who your customers are, discover their problems and create the solution," says Brian. "The networking, resources and mentorship were really phenomenal."

COWORKING SPACE

Our coworking membership grew by almost 50%, with 482 members by the end of 2019. Our space was reconfigured to add eight small offices, 16 dedicated desks and two phone rooms.

Visits were enhanced by numerous customer experience innovations, including building out our Community Ambassador program and upgrading our tenant management system.

TechTown hosted more than 56 field trips, tours and discussions with visiting groups. Groups came from as nearby as the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and as far away as Sub-Saharan Africa (the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders) to hear about entrepreneurship in the United States and the challenges and opportunities faced by small businesses in Detroit.

In addition to hundreds of meetings, conferences, workshops and networking events hosted by outside organizations, we hosted 101 of our own events at TechTown and the Industry Innovation Center, with a combined total of 4,401 attendees.

EVENTS INCLUDED:

- Drinks x Design (with Design Core Detroit)
- Code Jam (with Bose Sound and Capitol Records)
- Detroit Demo Day Application Prep Help days



COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS

The first to wish you a good morning and the last faces you'll see at the end of your workday, Community Ambassadors are the heart of the member experience at TechTown. A mighty team of seven, our ambassadors work hard to ensure that coworkers, office tenants and visitors get the most out of their time at TechTown, the Industry Innovation Center and Co.act Detroit. With one title but many roles to play, they're likely to be found booking meeting reservations, answering phones, fielding questions, delivering packages and providing top-notch customer service and hospitality, all in the same day. And they do it all with a desire to make every person who walks through our doors feel welcome, seen and well served.



was reconfigured to add 8 small offices, 16 dedicated desks and 2

In the third quarter, our space

phone rooms

210,307 visits to our Midtown hub in 2019

Hosted more than 56 field trips, tours and discussions with visiting groups

Hosted 101 events with a combined total of



TOAST OF THE TOWN

On October 10, TechTown celebrated the power of Detroit entrepreneurship at our annual Toast of the Town event.

More than 600 small business owners, startup founders, funders, partners and friends mingled and made meaningful connections while enjoying food and drink from local proprietors. TechTown clients and alumni supplied the sweets, while music from **Motown Musicians Accelerator** artists played through headsets provided to guests. The event also featured local retailers **Umi's Comfort** and **Spectacle Society**, along with a virtual reality station with a game demo from **Raxplay**.

Toast of the Town 2019 raised \$230,000 from individual donors and corporate and foundation support. These funds are vital to TechTown's work, supporting SWOT City, Start Studio, Retail Services, TechTown Incubator and all our programs to help startups and small businesses start, stabilize and scale.

THANK YOU TO OUR TOAST SPONSORS

Presenting Sponsor



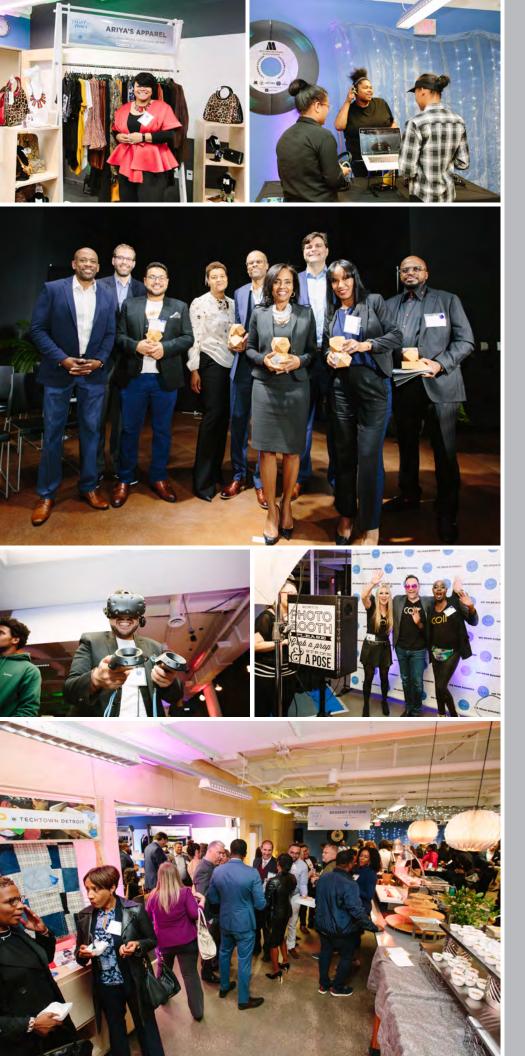
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Accenture Comcast DTE Energy EY Henry Ford Health System JPMorgan Chase New Economy Initiative Vectorform Walker-Miller Energy Services



4TH ANNUAL SALUTE AWARDS

Suzanne Shank, chairwoman, CEO and co-founder of investment banking firm Siebert Cisneros Shank & Co., was honored as *Entrepreneur of the Year* in our Salute Awards, and **Invest** Detroit was recognized as *Small Business Champion of the Year*. EnBiologics and Fusion Flare Kitchen & Cocktails were named *TechTown On Tap* award winners, and Fusion Flare Kitchen & Cocktails received the first-ever *People's Choice Award*, selected by the entrepreneurial community. On Tap finalists included COIF, Mongers' Provisions, Sweet Potato Sensations and TOTAGO.



More than 600 small business owners, startup founders, funders, partners and friends mingled.

\$230,000 raised from our generous sponsors and guests.

> Celebrated 4th annual Salute Awards

COWORKING SPACE PIVOT POINT

NEIGHBORHOOD WORKSPACES

One of the most valuable aspects of coworking at TechTown along with the bright, flexible workspaces and the endless coffee is the serendipitous collisions. Every day, our coworking members connect with new collaborators, funders and ideas that drive their startups, small businesses and nonprofits forward. Wouldn't it be great if neighborhoods across Detroit had spaces like this?

Planned for Osborn, the Lower Eastside, Southwest Detroit and downtown, Neighborhood Workspaces will serve as community hubs for startups, small businesses, nonprofits, sole proprietors and others needing affordable, flexible work environments and seeking access to entrepreneurship support. Collaboratively designed and run, and located in buildings owned by community development corporations, Neighborhood Workspaces will host workshops and events and offer entry points to programs like TechTown's SWOT City and Start Studio, increasing the accessibility of these programs.

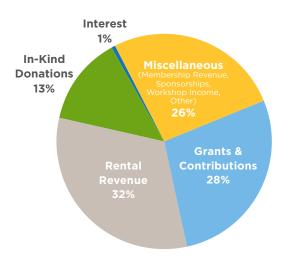
Neighborhood Workspaces are another way TechTown is working to literally open doors for Detroit's entrepreneurs and small businesses — meeting them where they are.



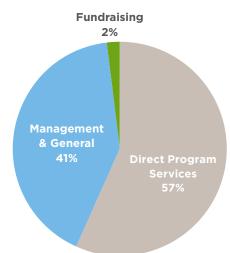
2019 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

	2019 (AUDITED)	2018 (AUDITED)	2017 (AUDITED)
REVENUE			
Grants & Contributions	\$ 2,179,711	\$4,630,889	\$ 7,485,990
Rental Revenue	2,498,171	2,345,140	2,144,625
In-Kind Donations	1,040,259	1,344,544	_
Interest	37,698	15,418	_
Miscellaneous (Membership Revenue, Sponsorships, Workshop Income, Other)	2,043,714	992,820	768,235
TOTAL	\$7,799,553	\$ 9,328,811	\$10,398,850
EXPENSES			
Direct Program Services	\$ 5,510,038	\$ 3,970,595	\$ 4,318,539
Management & General	3,999,325	2,603,761	976,653
Fundraising	181,903	160,495	123,283
TOTAL	\$ 9,691,266	\$6,734,851	\$ 5,418,475

2019 REVENUE



2019 EXPENSES



2019 FUNDERS

DTE Energy Foundation General Motors Invest Detroit Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation

Accenture | Gretchen and Ethan Davidson | Esther Gordy Bullock Edwards Foundation Henry Ford Health System | JPMorgan Chase | Michigan Economic Development Corporation New Economy Initiative | TCF Bank | The Skillman Foundation | Vectorform Walker-Miller Energy Services | Wells Fargo

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