

Nonprofit Capacity-Building & Innovation

Co.act Detroit

Background: In December of 2017, TechTown Detroit was awarded a three-year grant from the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation for \$4.75 million to launch the Center for Nonprofit Support at 6568 Woodward Avenue, just five blocks from the current TechTown building. Partners in the launch of the Center include the Michigan Nonprofit Association and Michigan Community Resources locally, as well as Community Wealth Partners nationally. Detroit's nonprofit community is both diverse and expansive, addressing the myriad needs and opportunities across southeast Michigan with relevant and impactful programming. However, many of these nonprofit organizations struggle to sustain themselves and fight a constant uphill battle to keep their doors open and invest in their staffs' long-term development. At the same time, countless opportunities for nonprofits in our region to collaborate, leverage efforts and deepen their impact go unrealized, either for lack of knowledge of one another's work or lack of capacity to solidify connections. Through the establishment of Co.act Detroit (formerly known as the Nonprofit Center for Support), the Foundation, TechTown and our community partners will meet these challenges of our nonprofit sector head-on.

Brand Identity and Communications: Co.act Detroit is currently refining the communications plan and continuing to increase awareness about Co.act Detroit programming through local and national media platforms. Co.act Detroit continues to grow our online engagement and audience. We will relaunch our podcast series in fall 2021 to align with our evolving program strategy. We have also partnered with Issue Media for part of the Nonprofit Journal series, which amplifies the stories of nonprofits across the region.

Programming: Co.act Detroit continues to offer all of our programming virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our work to connect nonprofits to information and resources transcends the physical space and we continue to see an increase in the request for our services. We are currently designing a participatory design strategy with our nonprofit community to inform the safe use of the space in accordance with public health and safety considerations. We will release a survey in fall, followed by focus groups to better understand the evolving space needs of nonprofits. Activate Fund grantees and Earned Revenue Accelerator participants have completed their projects. The Activate Fund developmental impact report from Pacific Community has been completed. Co.act will host Activate Fund peer learning cohorts in the fall.

Co.act Detroit continues to collaborate with other nonprofit intermediary organizations to provide COVID-19 relief. Co.act Detroit also received a \$55,000 grant from the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation to underwrite the cost of 2 cohorts of the Indiana University Fundraising in a Crisis certificate program. Both cohorts have been completed. More than \$16,000 in scholarships were provided to support organizations with limited professional development resources as well as traditionally overlooked professionals. Co.act Detroit has been received a \$212,500 grant from to the Kresge Foundation to serve as the intermediary partner for the KIP:D program, which supports transformative projects that tap into the vision and creativity of Detroiters to improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods.

Strategy & Fund Development:

Co.act Detroit is in the process of completing a 2 year impact report as well as a strategic framework to inform and drive our work for the next 3 years. We recently completed a fund development needs assessment and a case for support is in process. Both elements will inform a fund development plan as Co.act seeks to diversify funding and ensure sustainability for the initiative. Co.act is preparing to submit a new multi-year funding request to the Wilson Foundation to support our work through 2024.

Place-Based Economic Development

Placemaking

OED is excited to help welcome our students, faculty, staff and neighbors back to campus this fall through placemaking. We placed flexible bistro seating outside the Undergraduate Library and in Woodward | Warren Park, which will remain in place through at least the end of September. We also coordinated an inspirational art installation in Woodward | Warren Park called The Path of Encouragement, which will culminate in a Detroit Month of Design event on Saturday, Sept. 11th featuring TechTown-affiliated small businesses, Wayne State Art & Art History faculty, and a performance by Wayne State Theatre and Dance. Additionally, we continue to engage our placemaking community through our PlaceMakers email listserv and Instagram page.

Mobility

Beginning Sept. 1, Wayne State is subsidizing four-hour Dart and annual MoGo passes for all enrolled students, as well as full- and part-time employees, allowing them to ride DDOT and SMART buses, the QLINE streetcar, and MoGo bikes for free. To participate, Warriors will need to download the Dart app and enter an eligibility code, or sign up using their Wayne State email address on a customized MoGo webpage, and follow the instructions provided. These new benefits were made possible by several pilot programs dating back to 2014 and multiple Wayne State departments including Parking and Transportation Services.

To promote these new benefits, we:

- Offered four (two in-person and two virtual) Orientation sessions;
- Invited providers participate in FestiFall;
- Ran multiple stories in Get Involved and Today@Wayne;
- Put up posters in campus housing, the Mike Ilitch School of Business and Medical School;
- Created art for the digital displays in the Student Center; and
- Created art for the DOSO building displays.

We are also exploring opportunities to advertise our partnerships on the transit systems themselves (on buses, bus stops and MoGo stations; Wayne State already advertises on QLINE station screens). Additionally, we are in the process of hiring a campus Transportation Ambassador, a student assistant position focused on helping students take full advantage of their mobility options. Previous Transportation Ambassadors coordinated group rides to Downtown, the Zoo, the mall and grocery

shopping, and held open office hours in the Student Center during which time s/he would help students plan their trips.

10 Year Anniversary

Strategic Planning: OED is charged with developing a university-wide economic development strategy to guide, elevate and communicate Wayne State’s substantial—\$2.4 billion in 2019—annual economic impact. This work is informed by and respond directly to: Wayne State’s 2022-2027 Strategic Plan; national and university-specific economic development best practices; conversations with internal and external stakeholders; and local needs—including those articulated in Detroit Future City’s recently released “The State of Economic Equity in Detroit” report. We anticipate having a complete strategy in late September and hope our work will serve as a model for how universities can help their communities thrive post-pandemic.

Communications Campaign: OED is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year. We are celebrating with a communications campaign highlighting University and OED accomplishments. Our campaign officially launched with WSU Giving Day on April 8th. We are currently focused on highlighting our—Wayne State and OED—accomplishments via social, campus and external media: the Today@Wayne and the Today@Wayne podcast, an external press release, and tv and radio interviews. Other campaign deliverables include a video and website update. Through this work we hope to increase our visibility, fundraise and, ultimately, be more impactful in our work.

Talent-based Economic Development

Detroit Revitalization Fellows, a program of Wayne State University

Launched at Wayne State University in 2011, the Detroit Revitalization Fellows (DRF) program has placed talented, mid-career professionals at local organizations at the forefront of the city and region’s civic, community, and economic development. This select group of doers engaged in a rigorous two-year leadership development program while serving full-time at their host organizations. DRF has been generously funded by the Kresge Foundation, Ford Foundation, Hudson-Webber Foundation, Fred A. and Barbara M. Erb Family Foundation, Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, Skillman Foundation, DTE Energy Foundation, the Max M. & Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the PwC Charitable Foundation, Rock Ventures, and Wayne State University.

Acknowledging the changes occurring across the city since 2011, in April 2019 the program embarked on a strategic assessment. DRF partnered with The Work Department and Public Sector Consultants to engage nearly 100 diverse stakeholders including current and alumni Fellows, funders, Advisory Council members, current and previous employers, coaches, other sector leaders, and residents via phone interviews, surveys, focus groups, and strategic planning sessions. The goal was to understand and develop a vision for how the fellowship could make a greater impact while continuing to nurture and promote the leaders Detroit needs now. The assessment is complete and the executive summary and five-year strategic plan will be publicly shared when appropriate.

In May of 2020, DRF staff along with OED leadership made a significant strategic shift in line with prospective funding priorities to solely support increased alumni programming. In August of 2020, DRF successfully obtained respective funding for the remainder of the 2020 year. While the nation grapples with navigating both a health and social pandemic, DRF will execute programming that supports its network of 80 Alumni fellows during these times via virtual means. DRF will continue to pursue ongoing funding to support 2021 Alumni programming.

Alumni Engagement:

To honor the implications posed by COVID 19, the DRF program began hosting a series of virtual Alumni check-ins in late May of 2020. Since then, Alumni fellows from all four cohorts have had the opportunity to connect with each other on a weekly basis. Over the past year Fellows have been enjoying and taking advantage of the flexibility that surrounds these meaningful check-ins and have found the opportunity to connect to one other and discuss topics of their choosing, share much needed resources and simply embrace their network to be essential in facilitating community building which has been especially valuable during this time of the COVID19 pandemic and social unrest across the nation.

Based on data taken from ongoing Alumni COVID-19 surveys along with feedback from DRF's Alumni council, formal and informal Alumni Engagement curriculums are developed, with respect to funding, to further support the leadership/professional development journeys of the Alumni network throughout 2021.

Fellows convened in late February 2021 to engage in the last workshop of the current "Adaptive Leadership" series – the February 2021 "Adaptive Leadership" session served as a continuation of the sessions that were hosted in October 2020 and culminated the first Adaptive Leadership workshop series for the 2020 – 2021 Alumni programming curriculum.

In May and July of 2021, DRF staff along with DRF's Alumni Council successfully hosted a hybrid Alumni Engagement event – the first DRF Alumni virtual gathering of 2021 and DRF's first in person event since the COVID 19 pandemic. To keep the DRF Alumni Network engaged throughout 2021 and the ongoing pandemic, the virtual gathering was hosted by Cohort 3 Fellow, Ritchie Harrison and the Alumni Council and focused on engaging in cross-cohort building activities across the Alumni network.

In late August of 2021, DRF staff, with the aid of the Alumni Council, hosted another in-person cross-cohort event for the DRF Alumni Network – Alumni Fellows and their families convened and enjoyed outdoor roller skating at Detroit's Outdoor Skate Park, Rollout Detroit.

As we all continue to navigate the implications posed by both the global and national pandemic, DRF staff will continue to maintain a nimble programming curriculum that optimally meets the Alumni network's ongoing leadership/professional development needs while prioritizing everyone's health.

Ongoing collaboration/receptiveness towards the Alumni programming curriculum will be achieved through the partnership and ambassadorship of the Alumni Council which has and will continue to convene monthly or bi-monthly throughout 2021.

Funding: The fellowship submitted a \$150k Alumni grant proposal to the Wilson Foundation and was successfully awarded respective funding, fully supporting the program's 2020 Alumni programming

budget. Given implications on programming and scheduling posed by the COVID-19 Pandemic, DRF requested a respective budget extension from the Wilson Foundation and was successfully awarded that extension until April, 1 2021 to further support program operations in early 2021.

DRF staff, WSU Foundation Relations, and OED's development team submitted concept plans to the Ford Foundation in early 2021 and was formally invited to apply for funding in August of 2021. Subsequently, a formal proposal to support ongoing Alumni Engagement and the planning for a community/resident leader cohort was submitted to the Ford Foundation with hopes of receiving a financial award by mid-late September.

DRF and its fundraising team have been recently successful in engaging the Ballmer Foundation, the Kresge Foundation the Kellogg Foundation and the Rocket Community Fund to further support the 2021 – 2022 operating budget and the long-term financial sustainability of DRF.

Partnerships: In 2020, DRF convened five local talent/leadership development programs/organizations to explore possible connections across our work. The group continues to convene virtually throughout 2021 and has served useful in thinking through the shifts talent/leadership programs/organizations need to consider as we all work to navigate the impacts of COVID-19 on our organizations and program participants. Most recently, the group reconvened in May 2021 and will reconvene in September/October of 2021.

Raising DRF's Profile: The Detroit Revitalization Fellows is now regarded as the longest-standing mid-career urban fellowship program in the country. The staff is regularly looked to for guidance from other organizations that are considering launching their own fellowship programs, and to share its expertise. Fellows are consistently being recognized for their contributions to the future of Detroit and the region, and being given increasingly influential professional opportunities.

Media Outreach

In Q2 2021, there were a total of 22 media hits on economic development topics across 23 outlets, representing 6% of the university total and 7% of the university tier 1 total. TechTown Detroit had a total of 40 media hits across 60 outlets in Q2 2021

Highlights and trending topics:

- University of Michigan, Michigan State, Wayne State boosted state's economy by \$19.3 billion in 2019 (*Mlive, Center Square*)
- Wayne State to Anchor Detroit's Choice Neighborhoods Initiative in Corktown (*Detroit News, dbusiness*)
- Kelly Kozlowski honored in Dbusiness's 30 in their thirties (*dbusiness*)
- TechTown Detroit in the news:
 - TechTown receives \$545,600 grant to support Detroit Urban Solutions program (*Crain's Detroit Business*)
 - TechTown Startup Fund (*Comcast Newsmakers, Michigan Chronicle, MITechNews*)

Submitted by: Ned Staebler, Vice President for Economic Development

- Ned Staebler highlights TechTown's efforts to help during COVID-19 pandemic (*WXYZ*)
- TechTown Detroit receives \$755,000 federal grant for medical technology (*Crain's Detroit Business*)
- Paul Riser speaks about empowering groups to solve problems in Detroit's neighborhoods (*WXYZ*)

TechTown Programs

TECH PROGRAMS

Capital Program

Despite economic uncertainty, under the direction of Dr. Dawn Batts, our team's Capital Strategist, our clients have had outstanding results with over \$2 million in funding as of August 30. *Note, the Business Accelerator Fund (BAF) was not offered during most of Q1.*

Capital raised and sources:

- Detroit Maid: \$12,000 Invest Detroit Ventures + Venture For America grant
- For Her Cosmetics: \$10,000 Rebrand Cities + \$2,000 DTE grant
- Ilera Apothecary: \$45,000 Level One Elevate Grant
- Induiro: \$2,500 BAF + 5,000 individual investor
- Kaimon: \$10,000 BAF
- Livegistics: \$1,000,000 Black Ambition
- Repela: \$993,788 Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)
- Rivet: \$35,000 BAF
- Thinking Habitats: \$25,000 BAF

STEEP Detroit

The NSF-funded STEEP Detroit program for 50 Black women the founders in two cohorts (Spring and Summer). The Spring cohort completed their intensive training phase in May and will complete the entire program in December. The Summer cohort will complete their intensive training phase in September and complete the entire program in March 2022.

Start Studio

Fall 2021 Cohort Start Studio launched August 25. Sixteen startups will receive support and instruction for twelve weeks. The Start Studio Showcase will be held on November 18.

Incubator

The TechTown Incubator program launched June 8. It is a program that provides a COO and 90 days of deep technical support for high-potential companies. There are currently eight participating companies.

ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION

Tech Town Strategy Sessions

Formerly Open Office Hours - Name has changed to Tech Town Strategy Sessions

We are proud to announce that the Open Office Hours name is changing to Tech Town Strategy Sessions. This change reflects our commitment to engaging the Entrepreneurial Community with strategies needed to increase

Submitted by: Ned Staebler, Vice President for Economic Development

business acumen and development. During a Strategy Session, a TechTown team member helps prioritize business goals and directs entrepreneurs to the appropriate programs and resources based on the entrepreneurs' needs. We held 157 Tech Town Strategy Sessions (Formally known as Open Office Hours) during the covered period of May 14, 2021, Through August 30, 2021.

Ask An Expert

The Ask An expert program provides access to subject matter experts for specific business advice in the areas of HR, Marketing, Finance, Law and Business Operations. Experts are recruited from TechTown's Professional Services Network and from the Detroit entrepreneurial ecosystem. During the covered period of May 14, 2021, and August 30, 2021, we held 96 appointments. The inquiries came from clients who were in Start-up mode (50) or (52%), Idea or Development (26) or (27%), Growth (18) or (19%) and Expansion (2) or (2%).

Tech Town Training Series

We continue to work on improving the customer experience for our on-demand professional development workshop series which is designed to help entrepreneurs build core business acumen and problem solve real-time business challenges. 39 businesses accessed the training portal from May 14th Through August 30.

Topics Covered:

- May 2021 - From Food Cost to Pro Forma. Financial Building Blocks to creating a Value Based Food Business
- June 2021 – Recordkeeping Strategies to retain documents critical to your business.
- July 2021 – Improving Distressed Assets

Building Business Podcast

A series of interviews to provide Business Builders with insight from business service professionals and industry leaders. In this review period, we recorded Interviews with

- Christina Devlin – Retail Strategist – TechTown Detroit
- Warren Galloway – Capital Strategist TechTown Detroit
- Shawntay Dixon – Director of Entrepreneurial Programs – Great Lakes Women's Business Council
- Dr. Dawn Batts – Capital Strategist – Tech Town Detroit
- Justin Erickson – Coordinator Detroit Neighborhood Entrepreneurship Program

SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES

313 STRONG

The 313 STRONG team has welcomed Financial Strategist, Jaunice Keller to the team. Jaunice brings strong experience in finance and community/economic development as a former financial counselor with Matrix Human Services and as a former CRA officer with Sterling Bank and Trust and Comerica Bank.

From May- July 2021, 313 STRONG team member and Bicultural Business Strategist, Mayté Penman, co- led a team of Duke Engage Fellows to complete an organization-wide assessment, interviewing 26 internal and external stakeholders to provide recommendations for improving Spanish-language accessibility across the organization. Those budgeting, operations and staffing recommendations are under review by TechTown leadership and include suggestions such as: adding a single-page Spanish language website to the TechTown website; major organization and program collateral and social media

consistently translated in Spanish; culturally diverse, non-native English language speaking staff recruitment; consistent closed captioning and simultaneous translation services for TechTown events.

313 Strong hosted, Zoyes Creative Group and Design Core Detroit on August 24 at 6 p.m. for an interactive branding workshop for small businesses. 14 businesses were in attendance for this virtual event.

Retail Boot Camp

Retail Boot Camp Alumni, Katrina Wilson hosted her grand opening of Crème Brûlée on July 12 with Small Business Services Director, Amanda Saab in attendance. More information on the business and its grand opening, can be found here: <https://www.dbusiness.com/daily-news/dbusiness-daily-update-creme-brulee-opens-in-detroits-milwaukee-junction-detroits-alerje-receives-grant-from-nsf-and-more/>

Retail Boot Camp, TechTown's flagship 12 week retail accelerator, culminated in a pitch competition-style Showcase took place on Tuesday June 22nd. Five standouts each won a \$5,000 Kickstarter award for their business; Tiffany Cartwright of Amarra Naturals, Epsy Thomas of Naturally FLYY Detroit, Jessica Kwaili of Black Diamond Beauty Supply, David Lopes of Plant Based Market Detroit, and Joshua Ashford of Webdroid: LABS. This year, for the first time, we also instituted a People's Choice award, in which over 1,200 participants voted! Ashley Adams of Simple Dot Natural received the \$1,000 award. More information on the pitch winners can be found here: <https://techtowndetroit.org/retail-boot-camp-2021/>

The Shop

The Shop will resume in person in September for Hispanic Heritage Month featuring businesses in southwest Detroit.

Retail Services team members, Carrie and Christina Devlin completed the WhizBang coaching and retail Certification program. The retail services team also attended RetailX Conference in Chicago, IL as part of their professional development and ongoing learning.

The Retail services team is hosting The Break Room: a virtual roundtable discussion for Retail Boot Camp alumni to gather and share successes, struggles, suggestions and resources. Recent outcomes of this work include facilitated and peer-to-peer pitch support for three Retail Boot Camp alumni, with one program alum winning a \$2,000 grant from Dell Technologies

TechTown Operations

Coworking/Office Space

TechTown will welcome a new Collaborative Workspace Director (Kimberly Watts) on Sept. 20. Kimberly brings significant management experience and is extremely well-connected in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in metro Detroit. She will be most immediately tasked with maintaining strong occupancy numbers and growing our coworking and meeting room booking activity.

TechTown's reputation as an inclusive, affordable and safe facility continues to drive interest in our coworking memberships and private office leasing. As of September 1, building occupancy is at 93%. Our

Member Appreciation Month campaign in June featured a variety of small but meaningful touches that supported our local business community while also providing perks to members and tenants. Weekly offerings included local business gift cards, TechTown mugs, lunch on us, and virtual TechTown impact and neighborhood tours featuring local small businesses (in partnership with Detroit Experience Factory). We received positive feedback from participants (one example below):

“The TechTown experience is phenomenal. Your team, facilities and service offerings feel curated for the modern Detroit entrepreneur. Thank you for being a reliable and invaluable resource to so many.”

As TechTown’s frontline workers (and the only staff reporting in-person during the past year), the Collaborative Workspace Team and the Facilities Team have not only kept the building operational – they have thoughtfully and effectively supported our community of building users while minimizing negative impact to building revenue. Our Covid safety protocols remain in place (universal masking, temperature screens, safety waivers, contact tracing, disinfecting, limited room capacities, etc.), and we are in the process of installing air purifier units in our shared meeting spaces to supplement an already robust air filtration system throughout the building.

Human Resources

TechTown has initiated two important Wayne State connections through the development of its latest HR-driven programs: an organization-wide intern program and a mental wellness program.

In response to staff feedback about burnout and requests for additional capacity, the HR department built an entirely new intern program to support multiple departments with WSU student interns. We will welcome 6 WSU student interns for a 4-month internship term beginning Sept. 8.

As part of a suite of new mental wellness offerings for staff, TechTown is working with Wayne State’s Mental Health and Wellness Clinic to provide group counseling sessions for TechTown staff – particularly those doing direct client work in the field. The program will kick off in October 2021.

TechTown recently formalized a set of organization-wide culture goals in response to culture audit surveying and focus groups conducted earlier this year. Organizational leadership has committed to the following by 2022YE:

- **Big-picture awareness:** Improve “I understand the long-term strategy of this organization” from 62% to 80%.
- **Burnout:** Reduce percentage of employees who feel burned out from work by 10%.
- **Training:** Improve overall rankings of the Training, Development, Time + Resources category from 62% to 80%.
- **Communication:** Improve overall rankings of the Culture and Staff Communications category from 70% to 80%.

Data + Systems

TechTown’s internal cross-departmental Data Working Group is currently working to develop a list of organization-wide metrics that can be tracked monthly or quarterly to help staff and board leadership monitor the organization’s performance and position. We are well-positioned to capture more data with more thoughtful intention, due in large part to the work of the Systems Innovation Team (which is currently interviewing candidates for its open Systems Innovation Director position). We expect to have a final list of metrics ahead of TechTown’s December board meeting.