BUILDING THE FOUNDATION
FOR A
STRONGER
COMMUNITY

OUR BLUEPRINT
FOR TODAY

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

2018

UBF
United Black Fund
of Greater Cleveland Inc
Our Blueprint For Today

We are builders. That’s what we do. And, like any good builder we work from an accurate, reliable blueprint. A proven plan. Having laid a strong foundation for our pyramid, represented in our Building the Foundation for a Stronger Community report, we are building up the pyramid with Skills Enhancement, Economic Development, Collaborations, Advocacy, Investment and finally, Program Replication.

But, like any builder, it’s important to not just focus on individual pieces and parts, but to keep an eye on the bigger picture—understanding how things are supposed to look when you are finished. Working with the end goal in mind.

We are helping to solve some of the nation’s biggest problems, by focusing right here at home. Our leadership with United Way of Greater Cleveland in the Race Equity Project is just one example of our ability to bring together community leaders to develop local solutions to a national issue. We are now co-chairing a 23-member leadership group to address the issue that poverty is a direct result of racism, and to shed light on racial inequities as it relates to the creation of poverty in Northeast Ohio. August A. Napoli, president and CEO, United Way of Greater Cleveland, announced this initiative at his annual meeting. The unified efforts of both organizations is considerably more powerful than either of the organizations acting alone.

Year of Expansion

2018 represented a year of significant expansion for UBF. We took on the awesome responsibility of acting as fiduciary agent for a major cultural exhibit, The Soul of Philanthropy Cleveland (TSOPCLE), which will educate and inform audiences about the rich history of African American charitable giving. The characteristics, impact and legacy of charitable giving by our people is an untold narrative in the story of American Philanthropy. Black communities have significant giving power. TSOPCLE Exhibition, in 2019, will create a vehicle to tell the stories of philanthropy and empower communities of color. UBF’s role engages our collaborative power as a trusted organization to help make things happen. We are able to bring together people from all across Cleveland’s communities—all walks of life—in partnership with some of the largest institutions and smallest community volunteers.

Making All Things Possible

All of this work is made possible by donors like you.

UBF is taking a role of empowering some of our most philanthropic communities to work collectively around social issues. We are meeting the donors where they are in terms of the culture and nature of their institutions, while emphasizing our common interests in solution-oriented work.

Your support is needed today, more than ever. We ask you to become an important member of our community of donors who support United Black Fund of Greater Cleveland. Together, we can continue to follow our blueprint for success, building the foundation for a stronger community.

Cecil J. Lipscomb
Executive Director

George Sample
Board President
Elements of Our Proven Plan

Process of Ascension

Exciting developments like The Soul of Philanthropy Cleveland exhibit stretched UBF, but it also allowed us to seek out new relationships and new opportunities to work with organizations striving to make a difference in our communities. Our role in these new partnerships takes many forms—financial support, of course, but also ensuring good operating practices, maximizing resources for optimal results, following a clear mission and achieving excellence.

Walking these organizations through a process of Ascension, lifting them up by way of that extra support, is one of the things of which we’re most proud.

For example, Khenu, one of the organizations highlighted in last year’s report, is now in line to receive a significant grant.

Another example of our delivery of expanded service is how we work with our Coders kids. We took the coding program and made that into more of a structured environment, where the kids voted in leadership and they have jobs and responsibilities within the program. It helped the Richmond Heights School Coders ascend into a more robust organization.

Process for Innovation

Working with a board committee created specifically for launching our process for innovation, we challenged our internal operations to bring on initiatives such as the development of our enhanced fund model.

“Innovation always circles back to operational excellence. You have to be good at the things that are common in what you do, before you can say I’m going to go and innovate. Operational excellence is the catalyst of innovation, as well as the result. We are innovating intentionally, based on our foundation of operations,” says Cecil J. Lipscomb.

Elephants of Our Proven Plan

Entrepreneurship in Education

When asked to describe the state of Black entrepreneurship in 2018, Dominick Ard is, founder of ACT House, a unique incubator that helps prime young African Americans for entrepreneurship, said, “I believe it’s flourishing, yet it continues to find its footing. Confidence is increasing; however, an untapped opportunity exists to disrupt education models in Black communities to infuse entrepreneurship as a tool of systemic change.”

An additional example of UBF involvement in that kind of education model is our support for the GEISAS Saviours program, highlighted in this report.

Bail Reform and Social Justice

Bail reform acts are beginning to emerge in many states in response to growing awareness nationally about the effects of pretrial detention on poor defendants who are not able to post even small amounts of bail. While, Black defendants remain over-represented in the jail population and continue to be held longer than white defendants, bail reform acts have helped shrink some of those racial disparities.

UBF is exploring ways to advocate for bail reform in Northeast Ohio in collaboration with a national advocacy organization, The Bail Project, which is launching in our city. This is an important issue for our community as we work with local leaders like Holley and Rob Martens toward the goal of meaningful and long-lasting reforms to combat mass incarceration at the front end of the system.

Bail reform is part of the big picture. But, we are always paying attention to the small ways which social justice and equity are at work in our community. Our support of Women of Hope helps homeless women, many of whom are returning to the community from incarceration, find stability and a path to change their lives.

Fund Development

We are also working with the Cleveland Foundation to expand our use of donor-advised funds. Thankfully, we have people like Bracy Lewis, whose gift in 2018 focuses on helping people at the community level. Other individuals and families have also created donor-advised funds. We thank Timothy L. and Latrice Y. Tramble, who set up a donor-advised fund within UBF to provide scholarships to send young people to college. And, Karleen Gray created a fund in memory of her late husband Kenneth “Kenny” Gray, longtime UBF board member, to support efforts in workforce development and meeting basic needs.

From these proven elements, we lay the foundation for success. And we build the capabilities of our agency partners to accomplish great things.
Women of Hope

HOPE = Hold On, Pain Ends.

Just changing the “m” in homeless to “p” gets you to hopeless. And that pretty well sums up the situation for many homeless women from various backgrounds who have similar histories of unemployment, low self-esteem, substance abuse and sexual trauma.

According to Census Data and the Department of Education’s definition of homelessness, there are around 23,000 people who experience homelessness every year in Cuyahoga County. There’s an undeniable need for an organization whose mission is “connecting homeless women and families in transition to help and hope, through housing and supportive programs.”

That organization is Women of Hope.

Women of Hope was founded to provide safe housing and supportive services for homeless women and their families. They currently operate two homes:

Ariya’s House is a safe supportive house for homeless women who have experienced some form of trauma and in need of safe housing and programs to assist in setting and obtaining transitional goals. Ariya’s House can accommodate five women; two bedrooms with two in a room, and one single.

The Shady Oak House for Homeless Families is an affordable, single family, 3-bedroom house, located in a quiet neighborhood. The resident family is a part of Women of Hope’s Firm Foundations program. If they go through the classes with preparation to become homeowners, they have the option to buy the house.

In addition to housing, there are a range of supportive services including peer-to-peer mentoring, support groups, wellness programs, and workshops specific to women in transition in areas such as parenting, financial stability and job readiness. “We have a workshop called “Strengthening The Inner Me (STIM),” says Sheila Locatelli, executive director and founder of Women of Hope. “We go to the Northeast Reintegration Center with an 8-week program and serve an average of 9 to 10 women each session. In addition to conducting the program four times a year at the prison, we also do this program at the house, and at the VA Domiciliary Shelter.”

Women of Hope is managed and operated entirely by volunteers—there is no staff—although some of the volunteers receive small stipends for their work. “A couple of our board members and volunteers are social workers, so they have a network of resources we can send our women to,” says Locatelli. “When we have an overflow need for facilitators or any other types of services, we have what we call “Friends of Women of Hope.” They are volunteers—many come from my church—who fill in the gaps when we need additional help in different ways.”

Even with that kind of volunteerism and frugality, the costs of operating two homes and a wide range of programming continues to be a challenge. “We strive to identify sponsors and dedicated donors to enable us to increase the number of women we serve,” says Locatelli. “Part of our grant from UBF will allow us to have a presence at events in the Greater Cleveland community. We look to partner with organizations to provide community resource information, preventive materials, and help us identify women and families in need of our program.”

“We have partnerships with other agencies such as the Women In Transition program at Tri-C,” says Sherrel Britt Turner, Program Coordinator (below with binder). “You don’t have to create everything and be original to be effective. If we can’t do it in here, there’s probably an organization out there. As long as it’s out there, and we can use it to benefit our ladies, that’s what we’re going to provide.” The result for homeless women is access to safe, affordable housing, the means to live successfully in recovery, and tools and resources to develop plans for overall wellness.

“We’re like a family. And I never really had a family before, so it’s awesome, says Patricia Graf. “I participate in all of the programs and they keep me accountable to help me build confidence and self-esteem, and to change my life.”

The need is there, but so is hope.

Thanks to your donation, UBF is able to provide funding that eases the burden, and makes it possible to say “yes” to women who want to come in but have no money. “UBF funding has helped us to accept the women as they work on their “goal plan,” says Sheila Locatelli (far right in blue top). “And we are here to help them move forward with that plan.”
Creativity and Entrepreneurship Combine for the Greater Good.

In 2018, there were nearly 2.6 million African American-owned businesses in the U.S. and there have emerged countless platforms, programs, initiatives and conferences in place to support such exponential growth. To maintain this momentum it is essential that our young people recognize that entrepreneurship is a way toward economic mobility and earning potential.

The Greater Expectations Intercontinental Sacred Arts Society (GEISAS—pronounced Jesus) is a sacred creativity organization that inspires excellence in ministry and social impact through the arts, entrepreneurship and education. Your donations to UBF are helping us to support the GEISAS SAVIOURS program.

“The arts, entrepreneurship and education,” says Brandon Lipford, founder. “It means a lot to us that our students walk away with not only knowledge and experience, but they also have a sense of why it’s important. That is, what impact they should make in the betterment of their community as they use their skills to pursue entrepreneurial ventures.”

SAVIOURS is a unique social entrepreneurship program that inspires young people to engage compassion and creativity through the arts, while empowering them to make a positive social impact as entrepreneurs. It is available to high school students in grades 10 through 12. The program is facilitated in 12-16 week after-school sessions, during the fall and spring semesters. A special summer program runs mid-June through mid-July. SAVIOURS students learn and engage in social entrepreneurship; network with local business leaders, artists, and entrepreneurs; work in multiple creative art forms; and may also earn college credit.

“People kept telling me to get a hobby, because I was bored and didn’t know what I liked to do, then I discovered SAVIOURS,” says Dawnielle, a high school senior. “I’ve been coming back to SAVIOURS since 10th grade. I like the environment and the way it has opened my eyes to business opportunities and what an entrepreneur is. It’s a great program. My idea is to start a business called Unite Nation for families who can’t afford cable, but want to watch college and professional sports. I want to become a computer science engineer so maybe I could start my website by doing that.”

Traditionally, low income communities do not have a legacy in terms of business. These students don’t have the networks that students from other communities have. “We are teaching our kids that you are ground zero to make a generational change that will ultimately impact your own kids,” says Lipford. “Think about it in that way, and give yourself a mission that’s greater than you.”

Through an integrated learning experience SAVIOURS students develop character, an entrepreneurial mindset, and artistic skills to cultivate the creativity and consciousness needed for 21st century leadership.
Black Environmental Leaders

Getting Down to Earth With Environmental Awareness.

Environmental advocacy is a relatively new concept in the African American community. Certainly, Black leaders have been at the forefront of mainstream environmental movements. But there really hasn’t been an environmental awareness program targeted specifically for the African American community.

Until now.

“We organized ourselves in 2016, after the National Wildlife Federation and the Alliance for Great Lakes did a “Chat-and-Chew” in Detroit, Toledo, and lastly, Cleveland,” says Kent Whitley, co-chair. “Over the next year, Jacqueline Gillon and I coordinated monthly meetings with member organizations to start this group. We have members from Environmental Health Watch, NAACP, Alliance for Great Lakes, Construction Green Team, Cleveland Office of Sustainability, Outdoor Afro, City of Cleveland, Emerald Cities, Sierra Club, Western Reserve Land Conservancy and Cleveland Interfaith Power & Light.”

The organization that emerged is Black Environmental Leaders Association (BEL). Black Environmental Leaders stand as stewards of the natural and built environment through collaboration and partnership, to raise awareness and advocate for economic and environmental justice.

“The strength of our group is that we have varied backgrounds and interests—scientists, political activists and community organizers,” says Whitley.

As with any new enterprise, getting organized and developing a solid strategic plan was a monumental hurdle to overcome. Thanks to your donation, UBF was able to step in and provide funding for the development of a foundational strategic plan.

“UBF funding fueled our strategy for the next two years” says co-chair Jacqueline Gillon. “It’s helping us raise consciousness through community education. UBF helped put us on the right path.”

“A lot of big words like “sustainability” get used,” says Whitley. “But environmental justice is really done on the ground. It’s about living in a clean, healthy and safe environment—it’s even about abandoned houses. What people fail to realize is that the majority of environmental issues affect the African American community first, and the most. Environmental justice encompasses everything, not just land, water and air.”

Accomplishing their goals will require comprehensive approaches to demonstrate how we can create a healthier environment for ourselves. They look toward building relationships across environmental disciplines and generations of leaders in order to form partnerships and collaborations. In addition, they will be promoting minority business and career development opportunities as seen through an environmental lens.

“Our Black culture has a unique sense of how we learn things,” says Whitley (above, right). “We need a place where we can share with each other about our world. We have to be ready to listen and learn. You can feel the changing energy in neighborhoods when you honor the earth, tear down abandoned houses and plant trees in their place.”

The Black Environmental Leaders Association provides a network of environmental information and resources, relevant to the Black community, to advocate, incubate and inform. For example, even though the deadly hazards of lead-based paint are well documented, nearly half a million children, the vast majority living in urban neighborhoods, are exposed to high levels of lead, resulting in behavioral and learning disabilities, BEL will use information like this as a springboard to expand Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion by marketing to environmental organizations.
Collaborations

The Race Equity Project
United Black Fund partnered with United Way of Greater Cleveland to launch a new effort to design and implement strategies to address race, equity and inclusion in the community.
The initiative, which addresses the root causes of poverty and aims to bolster racial equity and reduce systemic racism, goes beyond simply using data to categorize needs and current conditions for people of color, but instead creates community-based solutions to needs expressed by members of the community.

“The day-to-day reality of racism is louder and deeper than any number on a page,” says Augie Napoli, president and CEO, United Way of Greater Cleveland. “It walks hand in hand with poverty, and it rears its head in housing, in employment, in healthcare and in so many other areas.”

“The Equity Leadership Council brings the right people to the table to elevate the discussion about meaningful, long-term solutions for members of our community,” said Helen Forbes Field, executive vice president and general counsel for United Way. “United Way and United Black Fund are uniquely positioned to have the reach and breadth to convene the thought leaders on race in Cleveland.”

These community leaders include representatives from higher education, government and nonprofit organizations. Their task will be to create the framework of the project, develop a project plan and launch the timeline.

Your donation to UBF helped us to engage with the National Equity Project, Oakland, CA, to facilitate community-based focus groups to develop a toolkit based on their feedback. The toolkit will address the needs in Greater Cleveland neighborhoods, and provide a guideline from which organizations and community-based agencies can work.

“The work related to racial equity is tough, but it is necessary for our region to achieve its economic and social potential,” says Cecil J. Lipscomb, executive director of UBF. “To neglect our responsibility of identifying barriers and limitations imposed on certain groups of people is an injustice and needs to be intentionally removed from how we do business as a region.”

Greater Than the Sum of the Parts
It’s no secret—we are greater working together than any of us working alone. In 2018, we teamed with a number of partners to move forward with big ideas and accomplish great things.

The Soul of Philanthropy Cleveland (TSOPCLE)
This breakthrough cultural event reframes portraits of philanthropy, through highly innovative presentations. The exhibition will create a vehicle to tell the stories of philanthropy and empower communities of color, and the event will be made more interactive with a robust offering of talks, panel discussions and public forums. Funding for TSOPCLE will be housed at the United Black Fund.

The United Way of Greater Cleveland
UBF is proud to be a federated agency of the United Way of Greater Cleveland. Their partnership annually allows UBF to target and support grass roots organizations.

Richmond Heights Coders
Our activities in 2018 included Engineering Day competitions at Rockwell Automation, visits to the Great Lakes Science Center and Hyland Software. The Coders, now in their fourth year, have been supported by PNC Bank, the Ohio Department of Education and United Way.

Grant Writing Class and Spur Project
To help grass roots organizations ascend in their ability to deliver services, UBF sponsored free three-day Grant Writing Workshops. Our collaborating partners included 2Eeasch e-Network, Seal My Record and Mt. Pleasant NOW Development.

The Association of African American Cultural Gardens
UBF has been actively involved in the development of this interpretation of the African American experience… with an eye to the future. UBF provided funding support in phase one, completed in 2016. This year we worked with the Association to provide additional board and strategic support for phase two.

Social Venture Partners
A two-way collaboration: we worked with Social Venture Partners (SVP) to identify and target nonprofit funding opportunities from diverse communities. And, we consulted and engaged African American lead organizations to seek funding from SVP members.

Jewish Federation
UBF leadership attended the Thomas and Joann Adler Civic Leaders Israel Mission in 2017 with 40 other civic leaders. We continued to work as a team in 2018 to share lessons learned from the Mission with the Greater Cleveland community. Future opportunities for collaboration were made visible. For example, UBF’s engagement with the Western Reserve Historical Society resulted in that museum agreeing to host The Soul of Philanthropy Cleveland exhibit.

The Bail Project
UBF initiated a relationship with a national advocacy organization, The Bail Project, which is launching in our city. This is an important issue for our community as we work toward the goal of meaningful and long-lasting reforms which will help shrink some of those racial disparities as it relates to incarceration.

Cleveland Foundation
UBF Executive Director Cecil J. Lipscomb lead sessions in the 2018 Common Ground Conversation—“Why Does Place Matter,” in partnership with the Jewish Federation.

“We want to express appreciation to all of the groups in Cleveland who have begun the work in introducing the concept, and we now have the privilege of being integral to phase two of convening a forum and continuing that work,” says Lipscomb.
CBEHF
Cleveland Black Equity and Humanity Fund

The Cleveland Black Equity and Humanity Fund is a sustainable fund, seeded by African Americans and community allies to support and facilitate philanthropic investment in causes and issues that promote and support Black-led social and economic change throughout Northeast Ohio.

The CBEHF intends to address the specific issues impacting the Black community, while expanding the capacity for multiracial coalitions to engage in issues of racial, social and economic justice. The desired outcome of the CBEHF’s activities and investments is an empowered, thriving Black community.

The CBEHF will be managed by, and funds distributed at the direction of, a group of local civic leaders and community stakeholders. The fund will be professionally invested by local investment managers and disbursed by United Black Fund.

SCALE
Strengthening Capacity and Leadership Effectiveness

The Cutting Board Academy

The Cutting Board Academy (TCBA) is dedicated to educating families and communities on the importance of healthy eating through programs of food and nutrition education. With the help of technical assistance and coaching from UBF, The Cutting Board Academy was able to win a $30,000 grant from the Cleveland Foundation to support the launch of its Food Coaching Program. Tiffani Sutton, founder and executive director of TCBA explains “The Food Coaching Program will be offered to senior adults with chronic medical conditions, which can be successfully managed through healthy nutrition and learned behaviors. The goal of the program is to provide food and nutrition education to seniors, which can be the key to leading an overall healthy lifestyle.”

NOBLE
Nonprofit Organizations Building Leadership Excellence

Get with the Program, Inc.

Get with the Program is an organization that promotes and reinforces STEM literacy through hands-on, project-based programs targeting students in grades Pre-K to 12. Get with the Program was a leading partner of UBF’s Richmond Heights School Coders Program this year and was the first organization to benefit from UBF’s ECHO (Employees and Corporations Helping Organizations) initiative. In partnership with UBF, Asurint, an industry leader in employment screening technology, awarded funding raised by Cleveland-based employees to Get with the Program. Jason Williams, founder and CEO of Get with the Program, sums it up this way… “Preparing ALL kids for a future in STEM… little kids, BIG opportunity!”

Funded Agency Partners

Basic Needs
Another Chance of Ohio
BeechBrook
Eliza Bryant
Family Promise
Metanoia Project
Mumford Inc.
Nueva Luz
Project Hope
Women of Hope

Education
America Scores Cleveland
BravoNation
By Leaps and Bounds
Coach Sam’s Inner Circle
David’s Challenge
East Cleveland Neighborhood Center
East Cleveland Public Library
Faith Supportive Community Services
Focus on Education
Gem-N-Me
Giving Life Foundation
Henry Johnson Theatre
Idestead
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Antoinette Anders*
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Bank of America Employee Giving
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Cecil and Erica Lipscomb**
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Amos Mahsua
Metal Alloy Reclaimers, Inc.–Claude Kennard
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Multitude Services–Geri Wallace
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Progressive Insurance Foundation
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Abdul and Timeka Rashid
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Deborah Wimbly-Rahim*
Michelle Winston*
Brenda York
Meriah Zeleny
2018 Community Impact Grants

- **Education**
  - Programs provide knowledge to improve skills, increase ability and likelihood of completion
  - $201,100

- **Coders**
  - Program is a multi-faceted mentoring initiative, introducing students to computer science, coding concepts and other career readiness skills
  - $150,000

- **Workforce Development**
  - Programs provide job training for people entering or returning to the workforce
  - $54,200

- **Basic Needs**
  - Programs are focused on restoring the person/family to acceptable levels of functioning
  - $44,700

Grants Total

- **Grants Total**
  - $450,000

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