



Strong Today. Stronger Tomorrow. Strongest Together.

When we align talent, experience, passion, and purpose,
we build what's next. And we build it better.

INSIDE

- Voices from YMCA, United Way, INROADS, UNCF, and more
- Unlocking new models for Education, Health, and Financial Resilience
- Real Stories. Real Momentum. Real Impact.



FACTS & FORECASTS

An in-depth look at the communities we serve.

COLLABORATION IS UNDENIABLY CRUCIAL FOR INNOVATION, PRODUCTIVITY, AND SATISFACTION IN VARIOUS FIELDS.

These numbers reveal both the power of collaboration and the hurdles that come with it. As technology, teams, and expectations evolve, so must the ways we connect—intentionally, efficiently, and with purpose.

70%

of transformational change efforts fail due to lack of collaboration and poor cross-functional teamwork

(Source: Harvard Business Review)

86%

of employees and executives cite lack of collaboration or ineffective communication for workplace failures

(Source: Fierce Inc.)

75%

of employers believe collaboration directly impacts company financial performance

(Source: Queens University of Charlotte)

92%

of leaders say collaboration is critical to driving innovation

(Source: Deloitte Human Capital Trends)

81%

of employees say collaboration improves their ability to deliver on time and increases job satisfaction

(Source: Slack Future of Work)



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Trust, Alignment, and Action are Reshaping What's Possible for Communities



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BlueSKY Collaborative Partners (BCP) is a national full-service fundraising consultancy, specializing in brand-focused, strategic leadership and customized solutions in areas that are critical to your success.

Our team is an extraordinary group of thought leaders with unique perspectives, based upon incredibly diverse backgrounds, lived experiences and long tenure with some of the largest and most impactful organizations in the world. The BlueSKY team has extensive relationship networks, and will employ a local, regional and national approach to fundraising, relationship management and strategic engagement.

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Vision without action
is merely a dream.
Action without vision
just passes the time.
Vision with action
can change the world.

Joel A. Barker



@blueskycollaborative

WHY WE BUILD

If the past few years have taught us anything, it's this...

Lasting change doesn't happen in isolation. It happens when people come together — across streets and sectors, across data and discipline, across bias and belonging — to build something that lasts.

Not just for the *moment*, but for the *movement*.

That's the spirit behind this issue — and the heart of what we call Building with Bold Ambition. Because bold doesn't mean loud. It means focused. It means showing up for the hard stuff, staying in the room when things get messy, and building with care — not ego.

The stories in these pages reflect that. They celebrate not just what's being built, but how — with trust, alignment, and a shared belief in better. Because when people lead with purpose, and choose to build together, momentum follows.

You'll also notice a new voice in this issue. Actually, two of them — both penned by **Kennedy Hollins Jones**, who joins BlueSKY as a writer, editor, and humanities strategist. Kennedy brings deep experience in arts, history, and cultural practice — and a sharp eye for how stories can challenge, connect, and propel us forward. Whether collaborating with the Smithsonian, Brown, or MoMA, she's always working at the intersection of narrative and impact. And now, we're lucky enough to work alongside her.

You'll be seeing more of her work in future issues — and we're better for it.

We're building a team — and a future — rooted in connection, creativity, and care. And we're so glad you're here for it. Because when you build with bold ambition, you don't just create programs... you create momentum.



Erik

Erik M. Klaver
Chief Creative Officer

STRENGTHENING THE GLOBAL Y MOVEMENT

Founded in 1844 in London, England, the YMCA has grown into one of the largest volunteer and youth organizations in the world, serving more than 45 million people in ~120 countries.

Ys in the U.S. play an important role in strengthening the global Y Movement through international YMCA partnerships that deliver innovative solutions to address youth and community needs at home and around the world.



ABOVE

Suzanne McCormick,
President and CEO,
YMCA-USA

FAR LEFT

James and Evelyn Sills

LEFT

Hon. James H. Sills, Jr.
at United Way Delaware

IT'S MY "Y"

In fall of 2024, I was beyond honored by the opportunity to serve as a new member of the **YMCA of the USA's National Board of Directors, led by Chairman George Leis.** For over 175 years, the Y's mission has been to put Christian principles into action, through programs that build Mind, Body and Spirit for all.

It was also wonderful to continue my professional relationship with an amazing leader, **YMCA President and CEO Suzanne McCormick**, who helped launch my nonprofit career. I first met Suzanne during her impactful tenure as President and CEO of United Way Suncoast in Tampa, FL. In 2015, she hired me for a role serving Tampa Bay area United Way Major Donors and key stakeholders. Suzanne would later become U.S. President of United Way Worldwide, and I was fortunate to serve as Managing Director-Individual Philanthropy, engaging with donors in the U.S. and around the world. Suzanne was always fearless, incredibly forward-thinking, and very supportive! I'm excited to continue our professional relationship through the upcoming launch of a major economic mobility initiative, led by a coalition of nonprofit, education, and community-based organizations. Highlights of this work—in Health, Education, and Financial Resilience—are featured throughout the Spring '25 issue of the Magazine.

Although I previously had a 20+ year career in private industry, I truly found my purpose through leadership opportunities in the Nonprofit and Higher Education sector.

But my love for the YMCA and United Way goes beyond professional experiences—it's deeply personal. As children, my siblings and I grew up hearing stories about the YMCA's 80+ year impact on my father James H. Sills, Jr.'s life. A native of Raleigh, NC, and an only child, my grandparents divorced when he was 10, and my grandmother moved to England to work for the Red Cross and USO. Falling on hard times, my father and grandfather lived at the historic Raleigh YMCA, sharing one room for several years. Leaders of the YMCA provided guidance, support, and mentorship, helping him get on a more positive path.

After high school, my dad enrolled at **Morehouse College** and was mentored by **Dr. Benjamin E. Mays**—the longest-serving President of the college and a former YMCA leader. After graduating from the Atlanta University Graduate School of Social Work, my parents and a young son (my older brother Jim)—knowing no one—moved to Wilmington, DE, and were immediately directed to the historic Walnut Street YMCA. There, staff offered housing advice and helped my family establish a deep community network.

Throughout his 65+ years in Delaware, Dad served as an elected official, NAACP President, School Board member, and tenured professor at the University of Delaware. The primary constant in his life—the Walnut Street YMCA—served as a hub for community events and was the site of his victory party after being elected Wilmington's first African American Mayor.

Dad built a memorable and productive career committed to "a Wilmington that works for all," and was recently honored with a statue in his likeness. The event, hosted by Delaware Congressional, State, and City officials, included YMCA-USA's Michael DeVaul, National Executive Director of the YMCA Boys and Men of Color strategy. It was a humbling honor for my Dad, who has always held to Dr. Mays's belief that "men have a responsibility to act as leaders and to engage in public service... to strive to live constructive, honorable lives."

This responsibility guides our entire family, and I'm honored to help advance the transformative work of global nonprofits like the YMCA and United Way. Special thanks to **Courtney S. Lynch** and **Shamika L. Mazyck** at **Quarles & Brady, LLP**, for their thought leadership and support. We invite you to explore the work of our impactful clients, key collaborators, and major stakeholders advancing economic mobility in the United States!



Julie Sills Molock
 Founder and CEO, BlueSKY Collaborative Partners



Quarles

Shared purpose, meaningful results.

PULLING TOGETHER MAY BE OUR BEST PRACTICE.

Shared purpose is a defining feature of our firm and culture. It binds our firm with clients, colleagues, communities and causes. Shared purpose is a powerful thing because vital outcomes are reached — and meaningful results are achieved — when you and your goals are fully understood ... and when we all pull together to achieve them.

QUARLES IN BRIEF

Since 1892, Quarles has provided legal solutions to a wide range of clients on a national stage. Led today by a dynamic and diverse team of lawyers and business professionals, Quarles is a multidisciplinary Am Law 200 firm with approximately 550 attorneys practicing at the top of the profession in Chicago, Denver, Indianapolis, Madison, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Naples, Phoenix, St. Louis, San Diego, Tampa, Tucson and Washington, D.C.

Our clients include major national and multinational corporations, emerging companies, educational and research institutions, municipalities and government agencies, charitable organizations, industry executives and high-net-worth individuals. They are industry leaders in technology, energy, financial services, health care, insurance, pharmaceuticals, real estate and manufacturing, to name just a few.

The way we work together, guided by our core values and service principles, aims to make a tangible difference in your world.





COURTNEY LYNCH

PARTNER

Thoughtful, long-view business law counsel with a special focus on nonprofits, **Courtney Lynch** is an established business and nonprofit attorney who guides clients through a variety of transactional matters, focusing on affordable housing, religious and charitable activities, small to middle market business and health care. She helps clients with entity formation, corporate governance, tax exemptions, reorganizations, mergers and acquisitions (M&A), regulatory compliance, and contract preparation and negotiation. Courtney also advises on the acquisition, financing, disposition and restructuring of strategically significant assets. Her clients include:

- Affordable housing developers, syndicators, investors and lenders
- Religious organizations
- Public charities
- Private foundations
- Long-term care facility owners and operators
- Small to middle market businesses
- Community associations

As a deal lawyer, Courtney understands the value of building bridges that enable her clients to achieve their legal and business goals. She places a special emphasis on becoming a trusted partner and advisor to her clients, allowing her to better contribute to their success.



SHAMIKA MAZYCK

ASSOCIATE

Responsive, thorough and innovative health care regulatory counsel **Shamika Mazyck** advises pharmacies, wholesale drug distributors, drug manufacturers, practitioner groups, home infusion providers and a variety of health care-related entities. She comprehensively understands home health, Nurse Compact, pharmacy and practitioner scope of practice laws. Shamika has had conversations with regulators throughout the country about licensure requirements for entities that provide limited in-home services (e.g., clinical trial monitoring or vaccine administration). Her unique insight allows her to identify licensure barriers and assist with resolving and defending compliance concerns.

With a background in environmental consulting and occupational health and safety management in acute care facilities before launching her legal career, Shamika focuses on:

- Health care regulatory analysis and compliance
- Health care regulatory due diligence assessments for private equity firms
- Health care licensing analysis
- Health care contracts

Clients appreciate the extensive knowledge of the operational realities of health care providers that Shamika brings to her legal counsel. Adept at building relationships and leading multidisciplinary groups of people, she develops comprehensive regulatory compliance programs and procedures built on collaborative decision making and innovative solutions.

WHO'S NEWS



BlueSKY is powered by a wide orbit of brilliant collaborators — strategists, creatives, educators, and changemakers who bring bold ideas to life, often making waves well beyond our shared work. **Who's News** spotlights the moments and the people shaping what's next — and reminds us how lucky we are to be part of their story.



The Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) Board of Regents appoints Matt McNair as Chancellor

As Chancellor, **Matt McNair** will serve as the chief executive officer of NSHE, working closely with the Board and institutional presidents to support students, strengthen communities, and help guide the future of higher education across the state. NSHE includes two research universities, a state university, four community colleges, and one environmental research institute, serving more than 100,000 students each year.

“Mr. McNair brings the kind of experience and perspective we need to lead a system as diverse and far-reaching as NSHE,” said Amy J. Carvalho, Chair of the Board of Regents. “The Board was looking for someone who not only understands what’s at stake for Nevada students and families, but who can also build strong partnerships and deliver real results. We believe he is the right person to help shape the future of higher education in our state.”

Regent Susan Brager, Chair of the ad hoc Chancellor Search Committee, said the decision followed months of work and input from across the state. “The search process gave us the chance to listen to a wide range of voices, from campus leaders to community members,” Brager said. “Mr. McNair stood out not just for his leadership background but for the way he engaged with the issues that matter most to Nevadans, like access, accountability, and student success.”

The selection follows an extensive national search led by the Board’s ad hoc Chancellor Search Committee, with support from an executive search firm. Three finalists participated in public forums held in both northern and southern Nevada before being interviewed by an advisory group and the search committee. The process also included opportunities for feedback from students, faculty, staff, and other interested parties, leading to the committee’s final recommendation to the Board of Regents, which approved the appointment at a special meeting.

Mr. McNair will assume the role of Chancellor, succeeding Interim Chancellor Patricia Charlton, who has led the Nevada System of Higher Education since September 2023.

WHO'S NEWS



Honoring Leadership and Legacy: Dr. Zerita Buchanan Joins Harvard's Board of Fellows

Since 1867, Harvard School of Dental Medicine (HSDM) has been a cornerstone in dental education, leading efforts to integrate oral health with broader medical sciences. Its Board of Fellows brings together distinguished leaders to help shape the school's strategic direction and mission.

This fall, HSDM welcomed several new members to this esteemed group, including **Dr. Zerita C. Buchanan**, DDS, MPH. A fourth-generation dentist and proud Spelman College graduate, Dr. Buchanan brings a powerful blend of clinical expertise, public health insight, and unwavering advocacy for diversity in dentistry.

After earning her DDS from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Dr. Buchanan completed a Master of Public Health at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Her passion for health equity and mentoring underrepresented students has made her a nationally recognized voice in the field. **A recent video from the NBA All-Star Weekend** captures this spirit in action, as she teamed up with BlueSKY Collaborative Partners to elevate conversations around equity and inclusion in dentistry.

As a member of the Board, Dr. Buchanan will help guide HSDM's evolution in education, research, and clinical innovation. Reflecting on the appointment, she called it an honor to give back to an institution that helped shape her journey—one she continues through her Atlanta-based practice, Dental Dreams, LLC.





Faith in Action: Renaldo Pearson Leads with Purpose at Fountain Baptist

Renaldo Pearson, ACNP, brings a dynamic blend of faith, civic engagement, and strategic leadership to his role as Executive Minister at Fountain Baptist Church in Summit, New Jersey. Serving alongside the senior pastor and trustees, he functions as both Chief Operating Officer and Chief of Staff, ensuring the church's operations align with its mission of spiritual growth and community impact. With over a decade of experience in nonprofit leadership and consulting, Pearson has collaborated with prominent organizations such as Morehouse College, Harvard University, and the National Council of Churches. His expertise in leading capital campaigns and securing major philanthropic investments has advanced numerous social impact initiatives.

Beyond his administrative acumen, Pearson is deeply committed to social justice and civic activism. His leadership in movements for voting rights and democratic reforms underscores his dedication to equitable systems. This commitment extends to his strategic role at BlueSKY Collaborative Partners, where he focuses on faith-based initiatives and civic engagement strategies.

At Fountain Baptist Church, Pearson's multifaceted background enriches the congregation's pursuit of spiritual excellence and societal transformation. His holistic approach to ministry—integrating faith, operational leadership, and advocacy—embodies the church's vision of "Pursuing the Greater," fostering a community both spiritually grounded and actively engaged in addressing today's challenges.



WHO'S NEWS



Connecting Legacy to Opportunity: Kellye Blackburn Launches SpelhouseJobs.com

In today's challenging job market, where many HBCU alumni face uncertainty, community-driven support is more important than ever. **SpelHouseJobs.com** was created in response, offering Spelman and Morehouse alumni a platform to connect with career opportunities, network, and support one another. **Kellye Blackburn**, Managing Partner for Career and Program Development and a proud BlueSKY Collaborative member, and Morehouse Alumnus **Marcus Hunter**, Managing Director for Operations and Platform Development, bring legacy and leadership to their roles. A third-generation Spelman alumna, Kellye's roots run deep. Her grandmother, Willie Dobbs Blackburn, and five great-aunts—including opera legend Mattiwilda Dobbs—hold the record for most sisters to attend Spelman. Her great-grandfather, civil rights activist John Wesley Dobbs; her grandfather and father—Dr. Benjamin Allan Blackburn II, Emeritus Morehouse Trustee; her brother; and cousin—the first Black Mayor of Atlanta, Maynard Jackson—are all Morehouse alumni.

As former Director of Career Planning and Placement for Non-Business Majors at Morehouse, Kellye launched the first annual Career Fair in 2008 to support students and alumni during the Great Recession. That tradition continues. In partnership with Morehouse alumnus Marcus Hunter, she helped develop SpelHouseJobs.com. With 750+ alumni already engaged, the call to action is clear: "Calling all Spelman and Morehouse alumni! The best way we can empower ourselves is by showing up for each other."

SpelHouseJobs.com offers career coaching, job postings, professional development, and peer networking. Upcoming features include webinars, networking events, and the SpelHouseJobs mobile app. With Kellye's leadership and the power of community, SpelHouseJobs.com is more than a platform—it's a bridge between legacy and opportunity. Join the movement at www.spelhousejobs.com or contact kellye@spelhousejobs.com.





WELCOME TO BLUESKY

Tyrome "Ty" Smith brings over 25 years of experience helping leaders and teams navigate complex challenges with clarity, innovation, and purpose. A trusted advisor in both corporate and startup environments, Ty has developed national education programs for the Department of Defense, supported technology transfer initiatives, and coached product teams through every stage of growth. He has served as faculty and entrepreneur-in-residence with TechStars and the University System of Maryland's I-Corps program, and currently teaches in Bowie State University's entrepreneurship program. His expertise spans corporate strategy, lean startup methodology, innovation ecosystems, and organizational transformation. A respected thought leader, Ty is a frequent keynote speaker and panelist on innovation, leadership, and diversity. He serves on the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) MEP Advisory Board, helping shape national policy and practice. BlueSKY is honored to welcome Ty as a collaborator, bringing his systems thinking, entrepreneurial mindset, and human-centered leadership to every engagement.

Mark Savage is a visionary healthcare and operations executive with over 20 years of experience leading transformative initiatives across public and private sectors. As CEO/COO and Co-Founder of Jobs America, Inc., he built the infrastructure and strategy that scaled the company to a \$70M enterprise supporting 1.2 million healthcare enrollments annually. His leadership drove 6x revenue growth, a 40% boost in employee engagement, and major gains through tech modernization. Mark has partnered with Fortune 100 companies and government agencies to deliver innovative solutions in value-based care, crisis response, and Medicaid/Medicare services. At Vibrant Emotional Health, he led the nation's largest crisis center and secured \$28M in new funding by turning around underperforming operations. He excels in digital transformation, labor-management collaboration, and KPI-driven accountability. Mark holds an MBA from Howard University and a BA from Morehouse College. BlueSKY is proud to welcome him as a champion for equity, innovation, and mission-driven impact in healthcare.

Angela Wilbourn is a visionary fundraising strategist and social impact architect with over 35 years of experience advancing equity, inclusion, and opportunity across philanthropy, education, healthcare, and the arts. She has raised tens of millions for mission-driven organizations by forging deep relationships, curating purpose-driven donor experiences, and aligning institutional values with bold, inclusive strategies. From UNCF to Benioff Children's Hospital to the Oakland Museum of California, Angela has led national initiatives that elevate underrepresented voices and build lasting impact through corporate alliances, major gift campaigns, and community-centered storytelling. A proud alumna of Spelman College and The George Washington University, Angela is Founder and Chief Officer In Purpose of The Pierce Group and CEO of ORIGIN50, a global network for changemakers. She also serves as Principal Curator of ORIGIN50 Pebble Beach and advises nonprofit boards and Fortune 500 leaders alike. Her work bridges strategy and spirit—creating spaces where generosity becomes a catalyst for transformation. BlueSKY is honored to welcome Angela, whose wisdom and warmth will help shape a more just and vibrant future.

The Power of Partnership

Unlocking Health & Wealth

Rethinking the Purpose of Family Offices in a New Era



After years of collaboration at Black Ambition—the entrepreneurial organization founded by Pharrell Williams—Shane Orange (left) and Jeremiah Baker (right) have officially joined forces to amplify their shared mission: helping entrepreneurs not only succeed but thrive.

Rooted in the small towns of Dublin and Hinesville, Georgia, Shane's story is one of resilience, community, and quiet determination. Growing up in humble surroundings, he found his earliest lessons not in textbooks, but in the rhythms of working-class life, the enduring spirit of rural communities, and the steadfastness of military families. Today, those formative experiences shape every aspect of his work. With a relentless work ethic, a profound sense of duty, and an unshakable commitment to honesty, Shane honors the legacy of his greatest influences—his mother and father—whose teachings continue to guide his path.

& Wealth Era of Legacy

Jeremiah's commitment to service and leadership is deeply rooted in his upbringing. Raised in a small town in upstate New York, Jeremiah grew up in a home that welcomed and cared for 56 foster children over the years. His parents, Glenn and Linda, began fostering after the loss of their newborn son and went on to adopt two half-sisters before having Jeremiah seven years later. Despite not graduating from high school, they built multiple businesses to support their large, unconventional family—modeling resilience, compassion, and entrepreneurship.

That experience shaped Jeremiah's worldview and instilled in him a belief that leadership is not about titles, but about service and impact. He became the first in his family to graduate college and eventually founded a successful advertising agency that helped businesses achieve over \$2 billion in exit value. But even with professional success, his heart has remained with helping others rise—especially those who, like him, come from humble beginnings.

Over the past five years, Shane and Jeremiah have served as trusted advisors and mentors to a wide range of founders, supporting them through the highs and lows of building businesses. Their shared experience at Black Ambition revealed a common thread: entrepreneurs, particularly those from underserved communities, were not getting the level of strategic, emotional, and operational support they truly needed. Instead of standing by, Shane and Jeremiah leaned in.

What began as individual efforts to uplift entrepreneurs evolved into a powerful partnership. Together, they created a broader, more sustainable support system—one that extended beyond business plans and pitch decks. They built a community rooted in trust, where entrepreneurial families and family offices could grow together, share resources, and support one another.

Driven by a deep passion for service, Shane and Jeremiah have made it their mission to fill the gaps they once saw too often ignored. With complementary strengths, aligned values, and a shared vision for the future of entrepreneurship, their partnership marks the beginning of a new era of inclusive innovation and empowered founders.

The Paradox of Prosperity

The rise of family offices has been meteoric, fueled by liquidity events, inheritance, and the accumulation of vast fortunes. Yet, beneath this financial success lies a paradox: while wealth has increased, many families feel a sense of fragmentation and disconnection.

The very structures designed to manage and preserve wealth often overlook the emotional and relational well-being of the families they serve. Take the Rockefeller family, for example. Their pioneering approach to family governance, philanthropy, and structured communication has allowed them to maintain unity across generations. By placing equal importance on family cohesion and financial stewardship, they've turned their family office into a hub for legacy, not just money management. (Chernow, 1998)

When Wealth Becomes a Wall: Misconceptions & Mental Health

A pervasive myth persists: "You have money, so you don't have problems." This misconception silences the genuine struggles of ultra-high-net-worth (UHNW) families. (Dr. Lami) Mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and substance abuse are prevalent but often go unaddressed due to stigma and fear of public scrutiny. A study by Harbor London highlights that children of affluent families are at a higher risk of mental health challenges, emphasizing the need for open conversations and support systems. (Harbor London study, 2025). Additionally, research on affluenza has shown a correlation between wealth and increased psychological distress in young adults. (Luthar, 2003)

The Pritzker family, heirs to the Hyatt Hotels fortune, has made strides in breaking this silence. Several members have actively supported mental health advocacy, funding initiatives that seek to destigmatize emotional struggles. Their example illustrates how wealth can be used as a tool to foster both individual and communal well-being.

Disconnection at the Core: Why Most Families Don't Share the Same Problems

Each family's journey with wealth is unique. Some inherit it, others build it, but few are prepared for the complexities it brings. Generational divides, differing values, and lack of shared experiences can lead to emotional fragmentation. Without a unified approach to wealth and well-being, families often find themselves navigating challenges in isolation.

This was evident in the Getty family. With a legacy steeped in oil money, they have faced both public scrutiny and personal tragedy. However, the family's more recent efforts to align wealth with values through philanthropy and private therapy illustrate a pivot toward reconnection and emotional restoration. (Pearson, 1995)

A Flood of Vendors, A Drought of Vision

The wealth management industry is replete with advisors, consultants, and vendors offering solutions. However, many of these services focus solely on financial metrics, neglecting the human aspects of wealth. The case of Anthony Ritossa, who misrepresented his credentials to host lavish wealth conferences, underscores the need for discernment in choosing partners who align with a family's values and vision. (How Britain's 'Diva of Divorce' Wins Bumper Payouts for Spouses of the Super-Rich). Moreover, industry reports frequently discuss the challenges of aligning client values with financial advice. (Capgemini, 2023)

In contrast, the Johnson family behind Fidelity Investments has developed a values-aligned approach. Their focus on preparing heirs through financial education and fostering open family communication illustrates how clarity of purpose can outshine superficial service offerings.

Unlocking Health and Wealth: A Holistic Model for Families

True wealth encompasses more than financial assets; it includes emotional well-being, strong relationships, and a sense of purpose. Family offices should adopt a holistic approach that integrates mental health support, open communication, and shared values into their operations. By doing so, they can create environments where families thrive both financially and emotionally. (Galbraith, 2000)

The Walton family, whose fortune stems from Walmart, exemplifies this. Their deep investment in philanthropic endeavors and emphasis on family participation in such initiatives have strengthened intergenerational ties. Their holistic view of wealth includes the well-being of both the family and the broader community.

The Coalition of the Willing: Building with Intention

Change begins with those willing to challenge the status quo. Families committed to holistic well-being can form coalitions to share experiences, resources, and strategies. Collaborative efforts can lead to the development of best practices that prioritize both wealth preservation and family harmony.

The example of the Brin family, through Bayshore Global Management, highlights the potential of intentional wealth stewardship. Though largely private, their focus on technology, social progress, and philanthropy signals a purposeful deployment of capital that reflects values beyond financial gain.

Superpowers of Family: Celebrating Unseen Strengths

Every family possesses unique strengths—be it resilience, creativity, or a commitment to service. Recognizing and celebrating these "superpowers" can foster unity and purpose. By focusing on what makes them strong, families can navigate challenges with confidence and cohesion.

These strengths become a family's true legacy, offering a compass for future generations. Families like the Rockefellers and Waltons have shown that legacy isn't just what you leave behind financially—it's the culture, values, and identity that you build and sustain over time. (Hughes, 1997)

Conclusion: Redesigning Legacy for the Next Century

As we look to the future, it's imperative to redefine what legacy means. Beyond financial wealth, legacy encompasses the values, relationships, and well-being passed down through generations. Family offices have the opportunity—and responsibility—to support families in building legacies that are rich in meaning, connection, and health.

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[*How Britain's 'Diva of Divorce' Wins Bumper Payouts for Spouses of the Super-Rich*](#)

Stronger by Design



Trust, alignment, and action are reshaping what's possible

Three years ago, BlueSKY launched with a simple, powerful and BIG idea: Connecting for Good. It was a belief that bringing together the right organizations with the right intentions would create something bigger than any one effort alone. And we practice what we preach, convening experts from fields that may rarely collaborate and all with the same intention — to do more, better.

Today, that belief is no longer theoretical. It's happening—every day, across communities—through trusted relationships, lasting partnerships, and real, measurable impact. What began as the idea of Connecting for Good has become action: Building for Good.

From global organizations like **United Way** and **YMCA** to local efforts like **Concordance** and **Athletic Heart**, we're helping partners connect, build, and strengthen the networks that expand opportunity, deepen leadership, and lay a foundation for lasting community success.

The difference is visible. Organizations that once worked in parallel are now collaborating. They're amplifying what works—not for headlines or accolades, but because they believe in something bigger: the power of connecting and building, together, for greater good.

for communities.



“Collaboration isn’t just a strategy—it’s the way forward. Working alongside the YMCA and others has shown what’s possible when organizations align around a shared vision. I’m excited to build on this momentum and deepen our collective impact in the years ahead.”

— **Franklyn Baker**
President & CEO
United Way of Central Maryland

LEFT TO RIGHT: Jarrett Royster, President and CEO, YMCA of Delaware; J. David Brown, President and CEO, Capital District YMCA; Michelle Taylor, President and CEO, United Way Delaware; Michael DeVaul, National Executive Director, Boys and Young Men of Color; Franklyn Baker, President and CEO, United Way of Central Maryland

STRONGER
BY DESIGN



The Strength of Collaboration

Over time, a natural structure emerged that reflects what communities need most to thrive — **three interconnected pillars: Education, Health, and Financial Resilience.**

These pillars aren't abstract — they represent the real, everyday needs of families, neighborhoods, and communities. Every family. Every neighborhood. Every community. When these pillars have support, they lead to Economic Mobility — and a strong, sustainable future. Over these three years, our focus has been to ensure each pillar is supported by trusted partners who are doing the work — not theoretical partners, not future partners, but organizations with deep roots, proven models, and a shared belief that communities deserve better.

Like a professional scout building a winning team, we evaluate experience, potential, and chemistry—keeping veterans sharp while elevating rookies with bold ideas and breakout potential. Our job is to spot the players, see the matchups, and create the conditions for game-changing collaboration.



Through a mission-focused plan and the dedication of passionate individuals, we've laid the building blocks—funding, resources, connections, and support—so local leaders can shape and sustain the work to fit their unique strengths and needs. We've also strengthened the foundation, ensuring the right organizations bring this shared vision to life.

But the ambition to build stronger communities means nothing without experts from every field, collaborating in ways they may never have imagined.

With a focus on Economic Mobility and a passion for Connecting for Good, we've united leaders across sectors—big thinkers with the drive and know-how to turn bold ideas into action, anchored in three vital areas critical to expanding opportunity and creating lasting change.

Real Momentum, Real Impact

The results are already clear. Communities that once faced challenges in isolation are now working in tandem — sharing what works, building on strengths, and accelerating progress. This is an all-in effort: connecting programs with passion, intent with impact, and reach with resources.

Building Networks for Good means stepping across lines and beyond boundaries so entire communities thrive — not as a moment, but a movement. Each success story is unique, because each community is unique. But one thread ties them together: when we build together, we build stronger.

And this is just the beginning. The model we're building — with communities, not for them — is designed to grow thoughtfully and sustainably. We are passionate, focused organizations aligning our strengths around a shared purpose. As more partners join, the network grows.

Each new connection, each shared solution, makes us stronger — today, tomorrow, and especially together.

STRONGER
BY DESIGN

EDUCATION

Building Pathways to Opportunity

Education is the gateway to opportunity and a key to economic mobility. We're strengthening that pathway at every stage — from early learning to higher education access to career preparation. This is what Building with Bold Ambition looks

like. Across the country, organizations like United Way, YMCA, UNCF, and the 1890 Universities Foundation are delivering real, measurable impact — not in isolation, but along a shared continuum of opportunity. United Way's United for Childcare lays the foundation early, expanding access to affordable, enriching care. YMCA's Boys and Young Men Strategy picks up during critical adolescent years, creating culturally grounded pathways to thrive. UNCF opens doors to higher education, while the 1890 Universities Foundation ensures historically Black land-grant institutions remain engines of innovation and mobility. This isn't about doing everything — it's about building on what already works, aligning efforts that matter, and scaling bold solutions together.







**STRONGER
BY DESIGN
EDUCATION**

The YMCA

Quiet Power in Communities



YMCA of the USA

Suzanne McCormick, *President and CEO*

Before wellness became an industry, before social services were systematized, and before most nonprofits existed in their current form—there was the YMCA. Founded in 1844 in London, the Young Men's Christian Association began as a simple idea: provide a safe, supportive place for young men navigating the industrial revolution's harsh realities. What started as a refuge soon became a movement—spreading across continents, adapting with the times, and embedding itself in the hearts of communities worldwide. Today, more than 180 years later, the Y is still here. Still listening. Still building.

In over 10,000 U.S. communities, the YMCA serves 11 million people annually through 2,600 branches. Globally, its reach extends to 40 million individuals in 120 countries. But the Y's true impact isn't just in numbers—it's in the lives it quietly transforms and the communities it helps strengthen.

At its core, the Y is about belonging. It's where kids get help with homework, parents find affordable childcare, teens land first jobs, and older adults stay connected and active. Over the years, the Y has become one of the country's most adaptive, community-centered organizations. Its programs respond to local needs—because those needs don't look the same in rural Mississippi as they do in Chicago or Seattle.



www.ymca.org



Its work spans five interconnected focus areas:

- **Youth Development:** Engaging more than 4 million children and teens annually in programs that support academic achievement, leadership, life skills, and mentorship.
- **Healthy Living:** Encouraging wellness through fitness, mental health initiatives, and nutrition education—meeting people where they are to help them lead healthier lives.
- **Social Responsibility:** Mobilizing over 230,000 volunteers each year to support everything from disaster relief to food distribution. In 2022 alone, the Y served more than 22 million meals and snacks to families facing food insecurity.
- **Community Building:** Creating inclusive spaces where people from all walks of life can connect, grow, and find common ground.
- **Workforce & Life Readiness:** Offering training, career support, and financial literacy—particularly for youth and adults navigating economic barriers.

The beauty of the Y's model lies in its balance: deeply local, yet powerfully connected. Each YMCA branch is rooted in its own community, guided by local leadership, and supported by a national infrastructure that shares resources, best practices, and vision.

This structure allows the Y to pivot quickly in response to crises—whether that's delivering meals during the pandemic, offering virtual learning support, or expanding mental health services in response to rising youth needs.

Perhaps most importantly, the Y shows up for the long haul. It doesn't arrive for the press release and disappear after the grant ends. It builds relationships, cultivates trust, and stays—year after year, generation after generation.

At a time when so many institutions feel distant or transactional, the YMCA remains profoundly human. It believes in potential. It fosters connection. It meets people where they are—while helping them see where they could go next.



United Way
of Central Maryland

**STRONGER
BY DESIGN
EDUCATION**

United for Childcare

Transforming the System from the Ground Up

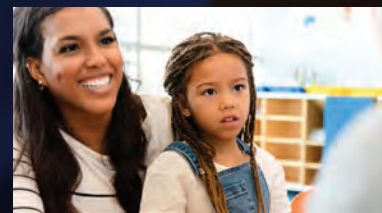


United Way of Central Maryland
Franklyn Baker, *President and CEO*

Childcare is more than a convenience—it's a cornerstone of economic stability, educational equity, and community well-being. But for too many families, access to quality, affordable childcare remains out of reach. The pandemic didn't create this crisis, but it laid it bare: a fragile, underfunded system dependent on underpaid workers, inaccessible options, and skyrocketing costs that leave parents—especially women and low-income families—struggling to stay afloat.

United Way of Central Maryland's United for Childcare initiative is stepping into this gap with a bold, systemic approach. Rather than treating childcare as a patchwork service, United for Childcare is reframing it as essential infrastructure. The goal is ambitious: to build a sustainable model that expands access, elevates providers, and unlocks opportunity for children and caregivers alike.





At the heart of the strategy are United Way Family Centers—community-based hubs that provide high-quality, affordable childcare in neighborhoods where access has historically been limited. These centers, currently operating in Baltimore City and Howard County, use innovative funding models and a replicable framework designed to inspire and inform similar efforts nationwide. But the work goes beyond bricks and mortar. United for Childcare is cultivating a movement—one that strengthens the childcare workforce, introduces youth to careers in early childhood education, and supports small business owners who operate care centers with the tools and mentorship they need to thrive.

The impact is already visible: more families are gaining access to consistent, developmentally enriching care; more providers are receiving the recognition and compensation they deserve; and more community leaders are aligning around the idea that childcare is a public good, not a private burden. The initiative also centers equity at every turn—recognizing that Black and brown families, single mothers, and low-wage workers are disproportionately affected by childcare deserts and rising costs.

United for Childcare isn't just responding to a crisis—it's redesigning the future. It reflects a belief that when we invest early, we invest wisely. High-quality early education is linked to better academic performance, higher earnings, and stronger communities down the line. And when parents have access to care they trust, they're better able to pursue education, employment, and stability.

This is what it means to build with bold ambition: to take on the systems that no longer serve us, and replace them with models that do. With United for Childcare, United Way of Central Maryland isn't just filling gaps—it's building bridges. Bridges between parents and opportunity, between caregivers and careers, and between today's children and tomorrow's thriving communities.



United Way
of the Midlands

**STRONGER
BY DESIGN
EDUCATION**

Young Men United

Empowering Futures, Transforming Communities



United Way of the Midlands
Sara Fawcett, *President and CEO*

In 2022, United Way of the Midlands, located in Columbia South Carolina, launched Young Men United (YMU), a workforce development initiative designed to support college-capable male high school students beginning in the 10th or 11th grade. With a holistic approach that includes family engagement, one-on-one mentorship, and career-focused development opportunities, YMU aims to equip young men with the tools they need to succeed — in school, work, and life.

What began as a pilot program with just 18 students and partnerships with two schools has quickly grown. Today, YMU serves more than 100 students across five schools throughout the Midlands, reflecting its growing impact and the demand for this kind of targeted support.

In 2024, the University of South Carolina, YMU's external evaluator, conducted focus groups to evaluate the program's effectiveness. The results were overwhelmingly positive. One student shared, "Just meeting the people... maybe it didn't change my life, but it changed who I am. I think it made me a better person and helped me see things from a different angle."



www.uway.org/ymu



A key component of YMU is its emphasis on career readiness. Through paid internships and job-shadowing experiences, students gain real-world exposure while developing both technical and soft skills. In Summer 2023, 10 students participated in internships. By Summer 2024, that number had doubled to 20. Each internship offered 30 hours of work per week over eight weeks, with students earning \$15 an hour. Additionally, 16 more students completed week-long job-shadowing opportunities, receiving a \$500 stipend. Internship and job-shadowing sites included Lexington Medical Center, City of Cayce Police, Dominion Energy, Fisher Phillips law firm, Columbia Museum of Art, SC Department of Employment and Workforce, and many more!

The support doesn't stop at the workplace. As one participant explained, "When you start a job, they want you to have the right shoes, the right attire — but you've got to go out and buy that. YMU staff said, 'We'll go with you to the store, and we'll cover the cost.' That right there was a green flag for me. They're not just telling us what to do — they're helping us along the way."

Survey results back up the students' testimonials. According to a Youth Survey conducted by the University in 2024, more than 90% of the young men reported that YMU had helped them set goals for their future (98%), make plans to achieve those future goals (98%), develop budgeting and financial skills (93%), and learn how to work towards achieving a career that they want (93%). More than 80% of the young men reported that YMU helped them figure out which careers and future education match their interests and abilities (83%) and what they want to do after high school graduation (81%).

At its core, Young Men United is about more than academic support — it's about creating lasting, generational change in the Midlands. By bridging opportunity gaps and surrounding young men with guidance, resources, and community, YMU is not only helping students build brighter futures, but also shaping a stronger, more equitable region for us all. For more information or to donate visit uway.org/ymu.



**STRONGER
BY DESIGN
EDUCATION**

UNCF

A Moment to a Movement



UNCF (Strategic Impact Investment Fund)

Marc A. Barnes PhD CFRE, SVP, SIIF and Principal Gifts

Gia Soublet PhD CFRM, VP SIIF

A Moment to a Movement is a transformative effort to secure a sustainable, impactful future for historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and their students. Long pillars of excellence and economic mobility, HBCUs continue to uplift communities nationwide. Yet chronic underfunding threatens their lasting impact. This campaign turns a pivotal moment into a movement—tackling financial challenges and empowering HBCUs to thrive through scholarships, endowment growth, program funding, operational support, and annual fundraising.

Core Values

- › **Access to Education:** The campaign is committed to leveling the playing field, giving students in need the same opportunities as their peers at other institutions.
- › **Sustainability and Growth:** Focusing on endowment growth and sustainable funding, the campaign supports the long-term success of HBCUs for generations to come.
- › **Community and Empowerment:** Investing in HBCUs means investing in communities and future leaders—empowering students, faculty, and institutions to contribute meaningfully to society.



- › **Innovation and Excellence:** By supporting programmatic initiatives, the campaign fosters innovation at HBCUs, driving excellence in academic and institutional practices.

Campaign Pillars

- › **Pooled Endowment Fund:** The campaign focuses on sustainability through a pooled endowment fund designed to grow each UNCF member institution's endowment by \$10 million. This fund generates unrestricted, perpetual revenue—giving HBCUs greater financial stability, autonomy, and the ability to invest in long-term priorities. It transforms financial insecurity into a path toward independence and sustainability.
- › **Programmatic Support:** Key initiatives like the Transformation Project and HBCUv aim to enhance the academic experience at HBCUs. These programs elevate standards and infrastructure, making institutions more competitive and attractive—turning a moment of need into a movement of excellence and innovation.
- › **Scholarships:** Scholarship support remains central—ensuring deserving students can attend college regardless of financial barriers. This investment expands access and helps students reach their full potential.
- › **UNCF Operations and Annual Fundraising:** Sustaining operations allows UNCF to continue delivering critical financial support, services, and advocacy. Strengthening annual fundraising increases flexible, unrestricted revenue to meet urgent needs—from emergency aid to strategic initiatives that drive institutional and student success.

Groundbreaking Updates

Sharing Exciting Initiatives from Across the Nation



Morehouse College
Dr. David A. Thomas, *President*



Spelman College
Rosalind "Roz" Brewer,
Interim President and Chair Emerita



Claflin University
Dr. Dwaun J. Warmack, *President*



Morehouse College celebrated Founders Day with the groundbreaking of a new 300-bed residence hall, marking the first new student housing on campus in over two decades and reinforcing its commitment to student success and campus growth. (CREDIT: Morehouse College)

 [CLICK HERE](#) TO LEARN MORE



Spelman College has opened its new facility for its Center for Innovation & the Arts—the first new academic building in nearly 25 years—designed to foster interdisciplinary learning and celebrate the creative contributions of Black women. (CREDIT: Natrice Miller/ AJC)

 [CLICK HERE](#) TO LEARN MORE



Clafin University celebrated the grand opening of its new student center, a dynamic hub designed to enhance student life with expanded dining, wellness, and activity spaces—symbolizing Clafin's continued investment in student experience and campus transformation. (CREDIT: Larry Hardy/TheTandD.com)

 [CLICK HERE](#) TO LEARN MORE



**STRONGER
BY DESIGN
EDUCATION**

1890 Universities Foundation

Sowing Seeds for the Future



1890 Universities Foundation

Dr. Jewel H. Bronaugh, *President & CEO*

Luwanda Jenkins, *VP, Partnerships and External Relations*

The 1890 Foundation was created in 2016 to continue and amplify the legacy of HBCU land-grant universities by mobilizing resources and forging partnerships that extend their reach and impact. Including four of the top 10 HBCUs in the country, these land grant universities were established in 1890 and are now at the forefront of agricultural research and technological advancements in health and wellness and environmental justice that break down barriers to opportunity. Contributing \$5.5 billion in economic impact and generating more than \$52 billion in lifetime earnings for each graduating class, these land grant HBCUs are showing us the breadth and depth of what educational and community-based missions can look like.

In a moment where we know many communities are being left behind due to issues of access or legislation changes, we have seen **these 1890 institutions act not only as educational centers but also catalysts for creative and positive communal change.**



www.1890foundation.org



Through collaboration, advocacy, education, and fundraising, The 1890 Foundation works to build a strong network of resources to fortify and extend the work these institutions are already doing. Through the Foundation's administration of the Centers of Excellence (COEs) at the 1890 Institutions Program, which was established to harness the collective expertise and resources of the 1890 land-grant universities, Tuskegee University is developing and sharing best practices, innovations, technologies, and personnel across an 18-state region to address the profitability, sustainability, and prosperity challenges of small farmers, ranchers, and forestland owners, with an emphasis on socially disadvantaged and underserved.

Other universities such as North Carolina A&T State University, Prairie View A&M University, and Florida A&M University are also producing cutting-edge research, coupled with community impact-driven work that continually exemplifies that these are more than educational centers but change agents.

Over a century ago, seeds were planted to create educational opportunities for students of color, and since then these universities have grown into dynamic educational pillars within their communities that stretch toward a better future. To sustain this work, 1890 Foundation is committed to forging connections across universities with corporate partners like Microsoft and Walmart, and government organizations in order to deepen and amplify the influence of these vital institutions. 1890 Foundation's work is essential for providing the resources these universities need to continue to enrich and positively change their communities in the face of increasing precarity. We at BlueSKY Collaborative are so excited to join in this work of empowering institutions to be the change we need and invite others to join us as well.



**STRONGER
BY DESIGN
EDUCATION**



Andrew Young Foundation (Atlanta, GA)

Building Legacy: The International Institute for Peace and Reconciliation



Andrew Young Foundation
Andrew Young, *Chairman*
Gaurav Kumar, *President*

Some leaders make history. Others build the future. Ambassador Andrew Young has done both—again and again.

At 93, Andrew Young's legacy spans civil rights, global diplomacy, economic development, and spiritual leadership. Now, that legacy is taking physical form in the heart of Atlanta with the creation of the **Andrew Young International Institute for Peace and Reconciliation**—an ambitious, living monument to peace, equity, and global understanding.

The Institute will serve as a permanent convening space and educational hub, welcoming students, scholars, and leaders from around the world. Located in historic Vine City, adjacent to Rodney Cook Sr. Park and near the birthplaces of Dr. King, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Julian Bond, it is anchored in both legacy and location. BlueSKY Collaborative Partners is honored to support the Institute's mission by helping shape and share its story as part of a broader national movement for sustainable community transformation. The space will include more than 80,000 square feet of galleries, archives, classrooms, and convening halls designed to carry forward Young's belief in diplomacy, empathy, and economic empowerment.



www.andrewyoung.org



And this isn't *just a museum*. The Institute is designed to be a dynamic driver of ideas and impact—with programming that spans youth peace education, international collaborations, conflict resolution summits, and global leadership development. A partnership with the Wholistic Peace Institute will bring Nobel Peace Laureates into direct dialogue with middle and high school students. Through exhibits, lectures, and town halls, students will not just learn about peace—they'll practice it.

Globally, the Institute is already forging relationships with peace-building centers like the Soongsil Institute for Peace and Unification in South Korea and INSEAD in France. These partnerships will fuel a cross-cultural curriculum rooted in empathy, conflict resolution, and lived experience.

At home, the Institute is also a tool for community revitalization. With a focus on local hiring, college partnerships, and youth internship programs, the Institute will serve as a springboard for new research, new jobs, and new voices. Atlanta's identity as an international city—already home to more than 50 higher ed institutions and the world's busiest airport—will gain a powerful new chapter.

Architecturally, the space is nothing short of symbolic. Drawing inspiration from the Great Library of Alexandria, the Basilica of Our Lady of Peace in Côte d'Ivoire, and the U.S. Capitol, the design reflects a reverence for knowledge, spirituality, and democratic ideals. Sustainability is central, with ADAM Architecture leading the charge on climate-conscious design and long-term resilience.

Inside, visitors will encounter more than 3,000 pieces from Ambassador Young's personal archives: speeches, artifacts, awards, and original media—curated to inspire future generations to lead with purpose.

From a seat at the U.N. to the streets of Atlanta, Andrew Young has always believed peace isn't passive—it's practiced. Now, that practice has a permanent home. The Andrew Young International Institute isn't just a tribute to a remarkable man. It's an invitation to join him in building something bigger: a more peaceful, just, and connected world.



INROADS

Pathways to Power: Building Generational Momentum



INROADS

Reba T. Simmons, Chair,
National Board of Directors

For more than four decades, INROADS has been changing the face of leadership by doing something bold: preparing and positioning students of color to not just enter the workforce—but lead it. What began as a vision to open doors for underrepresented youth has grown into a national engine for economic mobility, helping thousands of scholars and interns access high-impact careers and opportunities that were once out of reach.

The INROADS model is grounded in relationships: long-term investments in young people, corporate partnerships that value equity, and a leadership team committed to evolving with the times. That commitment was reinforced with the recent election of Reba T. Simmons as Chairwoman of the National Board of Directors. Simmons, a respected banking executive and longtime advocate for equity in education and employment, brings not only strategic expertise, but a deep understanding of the systemic shifts still needed to create lasting change. Her appointment signals a new chapter for INROADS—one that balances legacy with bold ambition for what's next.





INROADS doesn't just prepare students for the workforce—they prepare them to transform it. Their programming is designed to equip emerging leaders with more than just resumes. Through rigorous training, mentorship, and real-world experience, students build the confidence, skill sets, and networks they need to compete—and win—in spaces that have historically excluded them. And by partnering with companies ready to invest in long-term equity strategies, INROADS helps shape more inclusive cultures from the inside out.

This isn't theory. It's impact at scale. INROADS alumni now lead Fortune 500 teams, launch innovative startups, and drive equity from boardrooms to classrooms. **The ripple effects are generational—because when one student is given the tools to succeed, entire communities move forward.**

In partnership with initiatives across the country focused on economic mobility and racial equity, INROADS is helping ensure that opportunity doesn't depend on zip code or last name. It depends on potential—and the willingness of organizations to nurture it. As a proud collaborator and amplifier of INROADS' mission, BlueSKY helps ensure stories like these resonate with both legacy partners and the next generation of changemakers.

With leaders like Reba Simmons at the helm and a renewed focus on innovation and expansion, INROADS is not just preparing students for jobs—they're preparing them to lead systems change. That's how you build a better workforce. That's how you build a better future.

Leading with Heart

Celebrating a Dedication to Service and Impact

The BlueSKY Team was thrilled to attend the celebration of Lauren E. Sills, who was recently honored by her alma mater, Padua Academy, in Wilmington, DE, with the prestigious Suaviter Sed Fortiter Alumnae Award. This recognition celebrates Padua alumnae who embody the school motto “suaviter sed fortiter” (softly but strongly), in the way they care for God’s people and creation. Lauren’s professional journey has taken her from Education to Advocacy to Philanthropy, all with a clear dedication to Servant Leadership. Congratulations to fellow honoree Martha C. Holladay, in recognition of her 50 years of extraordinary service to the phenomenal Padua Academy students!







STRONGER
BY DESIGN

HEALTH

Advancing Community Well-being

Health is the foundation for every aspect of a thriving life — impacting everything from learning outcomes to long-term economic stability. Yet far too often, preventable conditions go undetected, and systemic inequities go unaddressed. That's why our partners are advancing bold, community-connected solutions that meet both individual and systemic needs. Health isn't a standalone issue — it's the thread that connects education, opportunity, and resilience. This is the kind of innovation that defines Building with Bold Ambition. Athletic Heart is redefining youth athletic screening by detecting hidden cardiovascular risks—ensuring young athletes, especially in underserved communities, have access to life-saving care. TruLite Health helps close equity gaps by addressing bias in clinical delivery, ensuring care reflects each patient's full identity. Together, they're shifting healthcare from reactive treatment to proactive well-being—because where health leads, opportunity follows.





STRONGER
BY DESIGN
HEALTH



Athletic Heart

Redefining Sports Cardiology from the Sidelines to the System



Athletic Heart

Joe Rogowski, *President and CEO*

When an athlete collapses mid-game, headlines are made. But long before crisis strikes, there are quiet opportunities to save lives — and that's where Athletic Heart comes in.

Founded by industry leaders including former NBA Player's Association medical director Joe Rogowski, Athletic Heart is a mission-driven organization changing the way we think about heart health in sports. It's not just about preventing tragedy. It's about reimagining athlete care—proactively, comprehensively, and equitably.

Their approach begins with **Pillar 1: Athlete Cardiac Onboarding**, a high-touch screening process that goes far beyond the typical sports physical. In just under an hour, collegiate and professional athletes undergo both an echocardiogram (ECHO) and an electrocardiogram (EKG), allowing clinicians to detect dozens of potentially life-threatening cardiac issues. From hypertrophic cardiomyopathy and long QT syndrome to various structural anomalies, the screenings are designed to catch what others miss. It's early detection, not late intervention.



www.athletic-heart.com



But the innovation doesn't stop there. **Pillar 2: Organizational Health** takes the care model upstream — embedding cardiac expertise into the policies and systems that support teams, leagues, and schools. Athletic Heart is working to expand capacity through data-informed partnerships, quality control systems, and ongoing support for medical professionals, addressing both the limited number and short-staffing of sports cardiologists across the country.

Then comes **Pillar 3: Education and Research**. Athletic Heart is collaborating with HBCU medical schools, advancing research on sudden cardiac events in athletes of color, and contributing to national conferences like the Sports Cardiology Summit. By investing in certification programs and career pathways, they're not only expanding the field — they're diversifying it, ensuring more athletes are cared for by practitioners who understand their unique needs.

In a system where over 55,000 cardiac sonographers and 30,000 cardiologists are registered—but fewer than 100 specialize in direct athlete care — **Athletic Heart's impact is both urgent and systemic**. They've built a team that includes cardiologists, tech recruiters, data analysts, and clinical educators, all working together to fill a critical gap in the sports and healthcare ecosystems.

The alignment with the broader Campaign for Sustainable Communities is clear. Athletic Heart isn't just saving lives—they're building pipelines, changing outcomes, and rewriting the playbook for athlete health. It's a model that bridges equity and excellence, data and humanity, and individual care with institutional change.

Because in the end, every community deserves to know that their players, their kids, and their future leaders are protected—not just on the field, but for life.



Elevating Impact, Courtside

NBA All-Star Weekend Fuels Collaboration, Health, and HBCU Pride

The BlueSKY Collaborative Partners team had an unforgettable experience during NBA All-Star Weekend in San Francisco, CA, where we gathered with clients, stakeholders, and programmatic partners to advance bold models for collaboration and fund development. We're grateful to the University Club of San Francisco for the generous hospitality, and to Joe Rogowski and Dr. Merije Chukumerije for welcoming us to the Legends Health Screening—a phenomenal event supporting the well-being of NBA players past and present.



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STRONGER
BY DESIGN
HEALTH

TruLite Health

Tackling Clinical Bias to Advance Health Equity at Scale



TruLite Health

Alan Roga MD FACEP, CEO, Co-Founder

**Shaun Liu, Chief Technology and
Product Officer, Co-Founder**

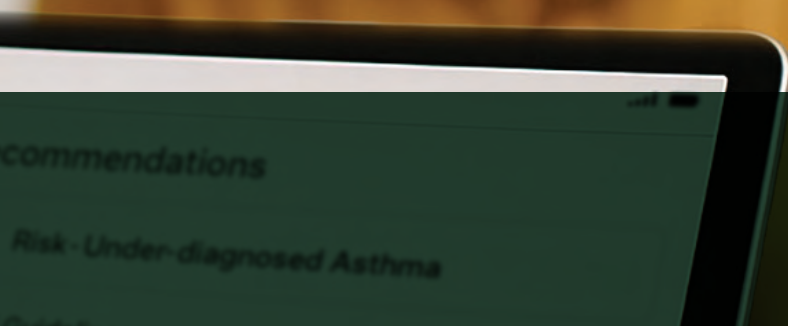
Walter D. Conwell MD MBA, President

Despite years of investment in Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) and cultural bias training, health disparities in the U.S. continue to deepen. Rural adults aged 25–54 are 43% more likely to die than their urban peers. Black women are more likely to survive pregnancy in Mongolia than in the U.S. Native American life expectancy is now lower than in the Congo. These disparities aren't just unjust—they're costly: an estimated 400,000 preventable deaths each year and a projected \$2.8 trillion annual burden on the U.S. economy by 2040.

TruLite Health is addressing a root cause often overlooked: clinical bias. Their platform, Truity™, is the first comprehensive health equity solution designed to work at scale. Integrated directly into Electronic Medical Records (EMRs), Truity delivers real-time, personalized recommendations to clinical teams, powered by more than 6,000 peer-reviewed studies and over 1,000 equity insights. The result: better decisions, better care, and better outcomes—especially for those historically left behind.



www.trulitehealth.com



For Peter—a 50-year-old Black man with asthma—standard care too often fails. Tools calibrated for white patients underestimate his condition, and pulse oximeters may miss the warning signs completely. The result? Missed diagnoses, higher ER visits, and \$5,300 in added costs each year.

TruLite identifies these disparities in real time and guides clinicians toward safer, more effective care.

The platform is already delivering measurable results. In early deployments across multiple healthcare facilities, TruLite has supported improved management of chronic conditions like diabetes and hypertension, increased cancer screenings, and up to two additional years of life expectancy for rural patients. Physician response has been overwhelmingly positive, with 90% satisfaction and implementation timelines as short as 45 days. The platform includes full support, onboarding, and continuous improvement—designed to scale seamlessly within existing systems.

TruLite is also shaping the next generation of providers. The platform is being adopted by Graduate Medical Education (GME) programs, training 40,000 future physicians, half of whom will enter primary care and treat up to 80 million patients annually. It's also being deployed in 1,400 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), which serve 32 million Americans, including 9 million children, 419,000 veterans, and 64% people of color.

In a system strained by rising costs and inequitable outcomes, TruLite offers a scalable, evidence-based solution. By confronting clinical bias directly—where care decisions are made—it's helping build a more just, more effective healthcare system for generations to come.



STRONGER
BY DESIGN

FINANCIAL RESILIENCE

Creating Lasting Stability

Financial resilience is the thread that ties education and health gains into lasting opportunity. Without it, progress is fragile — one setback away from unraveling. We're helping create pathways to economic security and generational wealth — because opportunity without stability doesn't last. That's why our partners are building systems that create not just stability, but momentum. Concordance is breaking the cycle of incarceration, providing returning citizens with the tools — employment, housing, behavioral health — they need to rebuild their lives and reclaim their futures. INROADS is creating pathways to generational wealth, equipping students of color with leadership development and career access opportunities that lead to upward mobility. Bronze Valley is investing in diverse founders building the next generation of tech-driven businesses, while ALX USA is preparing young talent for high-demand digital careers that can lift entire families. Together, these efforts reflect the essence of Building with Bold Ambition: not just helping people get by — but helping them move forward, thrive, and lead.





**STRONGER
BY DESIGN
FINANCIAL
RESILIENCE**



1315 Logistics

Developing the Next Generation of Supply Chain Management Professionals



1315 Logistics
Marcus Monk, *President and CEO*

What if the road to economic opportunity started with an actual road?

In the heart of Memphis—a city synonymous with movement and logistics—1315 Logistics is paving a bold new path. This Black-led nonprofit isn't just connecting communities to supply chain careers. It's redefining what leadership, access, and ownership can look like in one of the country's most essential industries.

The goal is ambitious: 5,000 new careers in logistics, transportation, and supply chain management across ten states and Washington, DC. But the mission is clear—equip individuals from historically underrepresented communities with the education, tools, and support to lead, thrive, and build wealth in a sector critical to America's economic engine.

At 1315, logistics isn't just about moving goods from point A to point B. It's about moving people forward—toward meaningful, well-paying careers. Through a unique blend of workforce development, education, and entrepreneurship support, the organization is making supply chain jobs more visible, viable, and valuable for the next generation of leaders.



www.1315logistics.com



Their model is rooted in access. Through Education Resource Centers (ERCs), 1315 is building what it calls “mega-warehouses for talent.” These centers provide everything from CDL licensing and trade certifications to AI training, sustainability education, business ownership programs, and wraparound services like daycare.

Whether you’re a new driver, a veteran transitioning out of the military, or a young student exploring career options, 1315 ensures the door is wide open—and well supported.

To ignite early interest and hands-on exposure, the 1315 OnRamp initiative uses a state-of-the-art mobile simulator that puts students in the driver’s seat—literally. They plan routes, navigate deliveries, and experience logistics systems in real time. Meanwhile, the College Future Scholarship connects students to top educational institutions with the financial support needed to turn curiosity into credentials. And the Focus on Business (FOB) program helps today’s drivers become tomorrow’s business owners—boosting pay, reducing debt, and keeping drivers on the road and in control.



None of it happens in isolation. 1315 has built a network of partners—from transportation companies like Sterling to higher ed institutions and mission-aligned nonprofits—all lending their expertise to ensure long-term success. It’s a team effort that mirrors the very industry they serve: interconnected, responsive, and built to move.

The need couldn’t be more urgent. More than 70% of today’s drivers are over the age of 40. Nearly half are minorities, but just 21% own the trucks they drive. And as the economy grows more dependent on efficient, resilient supply chains, the workforce behind it must evolve—smarter, younger, more diverse, and better prepared.

1315 Logistics is clearing that path. With innovation, intention, and a deep respect for community, they’re showing the country what it looks like when we build a future that includes everyone—one mile, one driver, one opportunity at a time.



STRONGER
BY DESIGN
FINANCIAL
RESILIENCE

CLIMB USA

Redefining Wealth-Building Through Community Investment



CLIMB USA

Robert Wynn, *President and CEO*

In today's rapidly evolving economy, investment education isn't a luxury—it's a lifeline. It's the difference between surviving and thriving, between being subject to economic forces and having the tools to shape your future. As wages stagnate and traditional pathways to security fade, understanding how financial systems work has become essential—especially for young people and communities historically excluded from wealth-building opportunities.

For all Americans—and especially for our youth—financial literacy is no longer just about balancing a checkbook. It's about decoding systems, reclaiming agency, and learning how to turn everyday dollars into long-term assets. It's the foundation of economic empowerment, upward mobility, and the freedom to build a life on your own terms.

Too many young people graduate high school without even the most basic understanding of how to manage money, invest for the future, or build wealth. This gap perpetuates cycles of financial insecurity and widens the wealth divide across generations. In a world where pensions are rare and self-directed retirement accounts are the norm, the ability to navigate capital markets is a critical life skill.



www.climbusa.org



Investing early and wisely can turn modest savings into meaningful assets over time, but only if individuals are equipped with the knowledge and confidence to participate. Without accessible, equitable investment education, millions are left on the sidelines, watching opportunity pass them by.

Understanding capital markets builds more than wealth. It builds agency. It turns consumers into stakeholders—and fuels the kind of civic participation that reshapes communities from the inside out.

For youth, early exposure to investment principles can unlock a lifelong pathway toward financial independence. It empowers them to dream bigger, plan smarter, and contribute more robustly to their communities and the nation's prosperity. America's economic future depends on the financial literacy of its people. By investing in investment education and encouraging participation in the capital markets, we not only strengthen individual lives—we build a more inclusive, resilient, and competitive economy for all.

CLIMB USA is one of several organizations working in concert with BlueSKY Collaborative Partners to redefine the relationship between community wealth and generational opportunity.

Financial knowledge has been gatekept for too long—confined to boardrooms, brokerages, and backroom conversations. But that tide is turning. Today, we have the tools, the data, and the momentum to change the trajectory. What's needed now is intention. It's time to bring investment education out of the margins and into the mainstream—so every young person, regardless of zip code or background, has a shot at real economic freedom.

CLIMB USA is doing just that. We're not just teaching finance—we're building financial fluency as a form of civic power, cultural resilience, and intergenerational hope. Because when young people learn how money works, they learn how systems work. And that understanding becomes the first step toward breaking cycles, closing gaps, and changing lives.

Concordance

STRONGER
BY DESIGN
FINANCIAL
RESILIENCE

Concordance

Reentry, Reimagined: Breaking Cycles, One Family at a Time



Concordance

Dave Steward, *Chairman of the Board*

Susan Stith, *CEO*

For too long, reentry programs have focused narrowly on the individual—offering piecemeal solutions for people returning from incarceration, but rarely addressing the full picture. Concordance is changing that.

Based in St. Louis, Concordance is pioneering a holistic, evidence-informed model that tackles the root causes of incarceration. By blending mental health treatment, substance use recovery, job readiness, education, housing, and family reunification, the organization is rewriting what reentry can—and should—look like.

But it didn't happen overnight. Over the past decade, Concordance has intentionally built a strong operational foundation, investing in research, partnerships, and infrastructure before pursuing expansion. The model has shown promising results, including a significant reduction in recidivism rates among participants—proof that thoughtful, comprehensive support can lead to lasting change.

And now, it's time to grow.



www.concordance.org



With its sights set on new markets like Kansas City and Philadelphia, Concordance is poised to bring its proven approach to more communities. But expansion isn't about scale for scale's sake. It's about sustainable, strategic replication—ensuring every new site can meet local needs while maintaining the fidelity of the model. It's about delivering results, not just reach.

What makes Concordance different isn't just its integrated services or multidisciplinary teams. It's the underlying belief that **transformation is possible—not just for individuals, but for entire families and communities.**

That belief is embodied in their growing network of partnerships, including a recent collaboration with the Girl Scouts to support family reconnection for justice-involved parents and their children. It's also reflected in how Concordance centers dignity in everything it does—from language choices to facility design to the role of lived experience in program leadership.

As part of the larger movement to build sustainable communities, Concordance brings a clear focus: financial resilience through second chances. Employment isn't a checkbox; it's a cornerstone. Stability isn't the end goal; it's the beginning of something greater—a future with possibility, equity, and belonging.

In a system often defined by punishment, Concordance leads with restoration. And in doing so, it's redefining what public safety, economic mobility, and community healing can look like.

Because when we build with people, not just for them—when we address the full story, not just the surface—we don't just lower recidivism. We raise the bar.

BronzeValley

STRONGER
BY DESIGN
FINANCIAL
RESILIENCE

TEC

Bronze Valley

Building the Future of Innovation



Bronze Valley
Neill S. Wright, *President and CEO*

Innovation is everywhere—but opportunity isn't.

That's the gap Bronze Valley was built to close. Headquartered in Birmingham, Alabama, this venture capital firm is more than a funder. It's a force. A nonprofit, early-stage investor that exists to identify, invest in, and elevate high-growth founders from communities that have historically been excluded from venture capital—especially women and people of color.

At its core, Bronze Valley is about unlocking potential. In a world where less than 3% of all venture capital goes to Black and Latinx founders—and less than 2% to women—Bronze Valley is reshaping the startup landscape by changing who gets a seat at the table and who gets to build the table in the first place.

Through strategic alignment and storytelling collaboration, BlueSKY has helped amplify Bronze Valley's powerful model for inclusive innovation. Their investment thesis is straightforward but bold: inclusion drives innovation. By investing in visionary founders across tech, AI, cybersecurity, education, healthcare, and clean energy, Bronze Valley isn't just diversifying portfolios—they're diversifying power, access, and wealth creation.



www.bronzevalley.com



**But Bronze Valley is doing more than writing checks.
It's building an ecosystem.**

Through partnerships with accelerators, universities, and government agencies, Bronze Valley is nurturing a pipeline of talent and support around every entrepreneur they touch. Their signature accelerator programs provide early-stage companies with business training, mentorship, investor exposure, and follow-on funding support—ensuring that great ideas don't die on the vine due to a lack of access.

One such example: Bronze Valley's "100+" model—an ambitious approach to identifying and investing in 100 or more companies with underrepresented founders, connecting them to a regional and national network of resources. It's not just a funding strategy; it's a belief system: that the next unicorn can (and should) come from Birmingham just as easily as from Boston or the Bay Area.

It's also about place. Bronze Valley is proudly rooted in the Deep South—an intentional and strategic choice. They're proving that innovation doesn't only live in coastal cities and that the South's legacy of resilience and reinvention makes it an ideal launchpad for the next generation of entrepreneurs.

Bronze Valley's leadership reflects its mission. The team brings a mix of investment experience, startup savvy, and community commitment. And they're not afraid to challenge the status quo—in fact, that's the point. For founders, Bronze Valley provides capital. For investors, it offers impact. And for communities, it creates ripple effects—generational wealth, job creation, and role models for what's possible.

In a venture capital world still plagued by inequity, Bronze Valley is proving that investing differently doesn't mean sacrificing returns—it means redefining them.

They're not just funding the future. They're forging it—one founder, one startup, one bold idea at a time.



THOUGHTS OF *joy*

Belonging is Bigger Than Us

Last year, our family was blessed to experience the joy and camaraderie of sport at the Opening Ceremonies of the Paris Olympics.

Settling into seats reserved under our names was such an inviting delight, as the usher affirmed this was where we belonged. We were surprised and moved to find that each seat was also sponsored by a country, with a flag waiting to greet us. While the seats were ours, the countries were not. And yet, we raised the flags high, waving them alongside strangers-turned-neighbors. In that moment, it struck me: belonging is bigger than us.

Surrounded by a sea of voices speaking dozens of languages, the sound was rich, layered, and beautiful—a fitting reflection of the diversity represented by the flags. We had come together with a common goal, in a common place, for an uncommon experience.

Watching the parade of floats along the Seine and linking hands with people from around the world affirmed that we were in the right place at the right time. Immersed in cultural variety, celebrating even more diversity before us, the moment was overwhelming and breathtaking. Language barriers faded, replaced by a connection we could feel even if we couldn't fully explain it.

In a time when the world feels fractured—news alerts, and breaking stories reminding us of division and unrest—our yearning for belonging only grows deeper. But belonging doesn't happen by accident. It comes through connection, through collaboration, and through the willingness to raise someone else's flag, even if it calls for us to seek to understand another more deeply. Seeking to understand includes sharing stories, listening in an authentic way, seeking to sit in seats where your environment and neighbor are new, and recognizing the power of shared experiences.

At Blue Sky, our power lies in those connections. We seek out those who bring different flags and perspectives, and we invite them into spaces where they're not just welcomed, but expected. When we create room for others and turn convenings into something unforgettable, we find that collaboration can bridge our gaps and make a lasting impact. And the power of transformative belonging becomes bigger than us. Let's raise our flags to that.



Erickajoy H. Daniels
Chief Purpose Officer

Builders of Tomorrow

At BlueSKY, we believe the most powerful structures are built from purpose, perspective, and people.

Tomorrow's Builders is our window into the minds of those shaping possibility: leaders, builders, and visionaries whose lived experience informs the work they do, and whose influence ripples far beyond their titles. **Authored by Kennedy Hollins Jones**, this issue provides Dr. Chad Womack and Forest T. Harper space for deeper conversations — not just about what they've done, but why it matters. Through their stories, we listen to the voices behind the vision: where they come from, what drives them, and how they're helping design a future that's more just, more equitable, and more connected.



Dr. Chad Womack: Learning, building, and innovating in service to the community

Dr. Chad Womack's accomplishments are many and ranging, from being the first PhD graduate in Biomedical Sciences from Morehouse School of Medicine to heading up the White House-based HBCU Startup and Innovation Initiative and later becoming Vice President of National STEM Programs and Tech Initiatives at UNCF.

However, when I sat down with Dr. Womack, he summed up himself as this, "If you want to understand me, there are three things to know: one, I'm from Philly; two, I'm a scientist; and three, I am an HBCU alum of both Morehouse College and Morehouse School of Medicine. I come from a family with deep HBCU roots."

It's easy to see how those three narrative threads are woven together throughout Womack's life and professional experiences; how they have shaped his core philosophy of service. Dr. Womack is a proud graduate of Morehouse College and Morehouse School of Medicine, and his parents both graduated from the first HBCU – Cheyney University founded in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Womack roots himself in and takes inspiration from his family and upbringing in Philadelphia; and, the possibilities of aligning his love and passion for science, technology and innovation with serving communities.

PHILADELPHIA ROOTS AND PHILLY INSPIRED

Womack was born and raised in the City of Philadelphia to educators both proud graduates of Cheyney University of Pennsylvania (the oldest HBCU in the country). In addition to his parents, He grew up in a community of educators who served as role models and whose core values of academic excellence and community service helped to shape his own.

His parents – Dr. Walter and Jean Womack led by example furthering their own education while working and raising Chad and his sister. His mother completed her Master's degree while working as a full-time elementary school teacher in the Philadelphia school district; while his father earned his doctorate in education while working in higher education administration at Drexel University. Womack recalls how hard both of his parents worked during the days while taking graduate level courses in the evening and completing assignments on the weekend. "These are memories I'll never forget as they left indelible images of persistence and hard work that served me well later on in life. I knew what hard work looked like as my parents exhibited it everyday. I watched my father write his entire doctoral dissertation by hand."

Womack claims Philly as his "orientation to the world". To him, Philly is not just a place or geographical location but an attitude and a way of looking at the world from which he draws inspiration. Growing up in Philly, there were many special places in Philly that Womack remembers well. He remembers the many times his mother would take him to The Franklin Institute – the nation's first public science museum – to experience science and technology at an early age. These visits lit the flame that would fuel Womack's curiosity in the natural sciences and eventually would lead him to a life-long passion for the life sciences.

FROM PHILLY TO THE 'HOUSE THAT MAYS BUILT'

Womack recalls his decision to attend Morehouse College in 1984 as a decisive move to the unknown leaving his home in Philly to attend school in Atlanta – a place he had never been. Yet, the possibilities the move presented excited him. As he recalled, “I remember how hot it was when I landed in Atlanta that summer. I arrived at Morehouse’s campus site unseen to participate in the pre-freshmen summer science program.” Needless to say, it was a life changing decision that he still reflects on. Womack recalls, “It (Morehouse College) was where it all came together, so to speak... it was a place where I could grow intellectually, spiritually, and socially. I came into my own as a whole human being, not just Chad the scientist, or the guy interested in science versus Chad, the black man who was trying to figure out what that meant as well.” For Dr. Womack, Morehouse was a place of expansion and integration of his whole self and provided a nurturing environment that fed his mind and his very being.

At Morehouse, Womack thrived as he met other African American students who were equally serious and passionate about their academic growth majoring in science, pre-medicine and other areas. Womack was also blessed to have mentors like **Dr. J.K. Haynes, Professor and long-standing Chair of the Department of Biology at Morehouse College (pictured)**. “It’s hard to put into words how much Dr. Haynes has meant to me and countless Morehouse students over the decades,” Womack says. “JK has mentored hundreds of young Black men (and women) over the years, helping them to achieve their career aspirations in science and medicine. In short, he represents the essence of a Morehouse man, and continues to be one of the great pillars of Morehouse College that should always be celebrated.”



TO HARVARD OR BUST

After a brief stint in medical school, Womack returned to the Atlanta University Center (AUC). He enrolled in a new graduate program at the Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM) eventually becoming the first PhD graduate from Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM). His initial interests in cancer research were eclipsed by the new emerging public health threat posed by the global HIV/AIDS pandemic. “As a first year graduate student, I remember being certain that I was going to explore becoming a cancer researcher. But one day, while I was sitting in a research seminar being presented by Dr. Max Essex from Harvard, I realized that infectious disease research and specifically HIV/AIDS was my calling. This was around 1992 and Dr. Essex was presenting data about the spread of HIV/AIDS in Africa that was devastating.” Womack recalled. “It was like I was in the right place at the right time to be called into service.” As Womack further recalled, by the end of the presentation, he was committed to do his graduate thesis work on HIV/AIDS in Africa and around the world. “So, as soon as he [Max] finished his presentation, I went up to him and asked him if I could join his lab and he said yes.” Womack went on to say, “...and that was one of those watershed moments that changed the trajectory of my life. So off I went to Harvard as a graduate student on a mission to combine my passion for scientific research with service to humanity.”

Womack spent the next five years completing his coursework at MSM, conducting research in the lab at the Harvard School of Public Health (Boston, MA) and traveling to clinics and public health laboratories in India and Africa. His experience at Harvard accelerated his growth as a scientist, while his work with clinics and public health laboratories around the world provided the context for understanding the public health impact of biomedical research. “My graduate research at Harvard and experiences working with HIV/AIDS physicians around the world transformed my thinking about how science and biomedical research directly impacts public health and visa versa.” Womack continues, “I saw first-hand how important my real-world experiences were for me as a scientist and how they helped to broaden my understanding of how science, research and public health impact the course of global pandemics.”

OUT OF THE FRYING PAN AND INTO THE FIRE – FROM HARVARD TO NIH

Womack completed his graduate studies and successfully defended his thesis in 1997 becoming the first PhD graduate in MSM’s history. He was then accepted as a Research Fellow at the Harvard AIDS Institute, which enabled him to extend his graduate thesis work in the same laboratory at the Harvard School of Public Health.



One day while working in the lab, he received a call from a mentor who was at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). “Dr. Milton Hernandez (now deceased) called to ask me if I would consider coming to the NIH and continue my training as a postgraduate fellow there.” Womack continues, “I literally knew nothing about the NIH except that it was located in the DC area and funded biomedical research at universities around the country. But I had great respect for Milton that when he encouraged me to apply for a postdoc position at the NIH, I did.” Little did Womack know that call would lead to an opportunity to pursue postdoctoral training at NIH, and enabled to grow tremendously as a scientist. “My NIH experience accelerated my growth as a scientists and deepened my understanding about how federal policy impacted biomedical research.”

Near the end of his postdoctoral training at the NIH, Womack and two other African American scientists decided to launch a startup biotech company that would focus on developing new nanomolecular vaccine delivery platforms. “This was a thrilling experience. I didn’t think I was an entrepreneur at heart but loved every bit of the experience. I really enjoyed taking the risk of launching a company, becoming an entrepreneur and the pressure of having to learn new things everyday.” In 2004, Womack left the NIH to serve as the Chief Scientific Officer (CSO) of the company and its first investor as well. This experience would launch him into the world of the private sector where he had to raise money for the company, meet investors and business partners while learning how the industry actually works. In addition to launching the company, Womack accepted a position as Assistant Professor in the Department of Microbiology at the Howard University College of Medicine (Washington, D.C.). Womack says, “Returning to an HBCU campus was a great experience. I had a chance to interact with very bright students and serve the HBCU community.”

After a brief stint at Howard University, Womack left DC to take a position at the University City Science Center and bring his company to back home to Philadelphia. “It was a full-circle moment for me and my family. I came back home to develop the company.” But he also returned for family reasons. Reflecting on that time in his life, Womack recalls, “That was a very difficult time in my life. My mother was fighting against breast cancer (and eventually died from the disease in 2009), and my wife gave birth to both of our children. I immediately understood how heavy the wheel of life can be and how precious time is.”

LEADING SYSTEMS LEVEL CHANGE TO SCALE IMPACT

The time Womack spent in Boston was critical as he observed how the impact of dysfunctional K-12 educational system disproportionately affected the communities they were supposed to serve. The windows of Womack’s lab at the Harvard School of Public Health faced the tracks of the municipal transportation system and overlooked a mostly Black and Latino neighborhood. “I began to question why there were so few African Americans and Latino students in the research labs at Harvard when the labs were literally right across the street from communities of color? I began to connect the dots between what I was observing as a lack of representation and equity, and a publicly funded and dysfunctional educational system in a city that boasts some of the world’s greatest higher education institutions. Didn’t make any sense to me.” says Womack.

Womack recalls “One day I asked my wife who had just completed her Master’s degree at the Harvard School of Education and was working in a nonprofit K-12 advocacy organization, why Boston public schools performed so poorly particularly given that they were surrounded by some of the greatest higher education institutions who continue to lead the world with innovations in science and technology? Why can’t we just solve for this by bringing students into the lab?” Womack said after many conversations about this, his wife challenged him to think differently and more systemically about the problem. She implored him to not just think about the problem in terms of individual students but as a systemic problem that required bigger thinking. “I remember how those conversations with my wife helped to broaden my thinking about how to engage the system in new ways that would create change and impact it at scale.” Womack continued, “This led me to think about how to align my passion for science and research with system change... and at scale.”

When he arrived in D.C. as a postdoc at the NIH, Womack brought that same commitment to make systemic change with him to Washington, D.C. He began working with K-12 educators working in D.C. public



schools, City Council members and local tech industry representatives to see how he could make a difference. He helped develop new curriculum for newly renovated McKinley Tech High School – an historic high school that was being re-envisioned as a science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) magnet school. He worked with D.C. Mayor and several City Council members to establish D.C. Innovates as a public-private partnership and nonprofit intermediary setup to support startup entrepreneurs and innovators building tech companies. And, when he left D.C. to return to his hometown Philadelphia, Womack helped to launch the Philadelphia Biotechnology and Life Science Institute at the University City Science Center. The institute was a K-12 STEM education initiative that connected high school students to biomedical research and life science career pathways.

Just when Womack’s biotech company and STEM education efforts were beginning to take off, the Great Recession of 2007 happened. The financial markets fell and both the commercial and philanthropic capital was no longer available. Womack’s biotech and K-12 STEM educational ventures no longer had sources of funding. “I felt like the rug had been pulled out from underneath me at that time...” Womack explained. “I could not have predicted any of it but I knew I had to get through it somehow. So I realized that I had to pivot.” Womack began to connect with colleagues around the country who were similarly concerned about STEM education, technology, innovation and how the Black community was not engaged, and in some cases, actively being left out of these important conversations. “It was a difficult time in my life with the loss of my mother and financial considerations. Yet I felt fortunate to have a network of friends and colleagues, and to have witnessed the election of our nation’s first African American President.”

Through his networks, Womack built relationships with several thought leaders around the country. Eventually, Womack connected with Jonathan Holifield and Mike Green and together they founded The America21 Project – a nonprofit dedicated to addressing unmet economic needs for underserved communities through STEM education and workforce development, entrepreneurship and access to capital. Womack and his colleagues took their message of tech-based economic development to different cities around the country including Philadelphia, D.C., Atlanta, Pittsburgh, Portland and Seattle talking with various stakeholder groups in each city. “The experiences we had with The America21 Project were critical for me as it gave me an opportunity to get to know some outstanding people doing great things to help move their communities forward in places I had never been.” Womack said. “Those experiences also helped me to understand how all of the various forms of capital play a critical role in developing communities. I also got to see how disconnected our communities are from the wealth-building innovation ecosystems like Silicon Valley.”



Womack’s work with The America21 Project eventually led him to his engagement with the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). When President Obama was elected, he created a new position – Chief Technology Officer with the charge of leading the White House’s Tech Inclusion Initiative. With support from President Obama, the new CTO held several meetings with thought leaders and stakeholders to get insights on how to increase representation and equity in the tech industry. “I was fortunate to have the opportunity to be in the room and, in some cases, lead discussions about how Tech Inclusion had to include HBCUs as an essential component to their strategy.” Womack said. From these discussions emerged several projects that the White House supported as official Tech Inclusion projects and Womack’s project – The HBCU Startup and Innovation Initiative was one of them. “The HBCU project I proposed was accepted and adopted as a component of the White House’s strategy and it was a wonderful experience to have the full weight of the White House and corporate sponsors.” Womack shared.

At the same time, one of Womack's colleagues encouraged him to consider applying for the job as Director of STEM Programs at UNCF. "I jumped at the opportunity to join the UNCF team as it would provide a powerful platform where I could combine my passion for HBCUs, STEM education, tech entrepreneurship in a supportive environment. Also, it was clear that the vision I had for STEM education and tech-entrepreneurship required significant capital and UNCF was an organization that clearly knew how to raise money". Womack joined the UNCF in October of 2012 where he launched the White House



Tech Inclusion effort as the HBCU Innovation, Commercialization and Entrepreneurship Initiative. The first HBCU Innovation Leadership Summit was held in the fall of 2013 on the campus of Stanford University. Through his leadership, Womack created the HBCU Innovation Summit where, for the first time, he and his colleagues were able to convene leaders from UNCF, Thurgood Marshall College Fund, the White House HBCU Office, and the HBCU Division of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU). Since the inaugural summit held in 2013, the UNCF-hosted event expanded to include over one hundred HBCU students and faculty each year.

In addition to the summit, Womack and his UNCF colleagues developed several groundbreaking initiatives in the life sciences, computer science and established research networks for HBCU faculty in the mathematical and computational sciences. All of Womack's efforts at the UNCF were deeply informed by his previous experiences as a student and scientist in training at Morehouse College, Morehouse School of Medicine, Harvard School of Public Health and the NIH; as a bio-entrepreneur launching a startup biotech company; or as a member of The America21 Project team engaging various communities

across the country. All of these experiences were like threads woven together to form a unique life tapestry. "At the UNCF, I was able to bring all of the various threads of my life experience together to build a platform to engage our beloved HBCU community. I am grateful for that opportunity as it gave me a renewed sense of purpose and mission to serve." Explains Womack.

Over the twelve years of Womack's tenure at the UNCF, he launched several computer science and tech-related programs and initiatives in collaboration with Silicon valley stakeholders including tech companies like Google, various foundations and private philanthropic interests. These initiatives include the HBCU Innovation Summit, the HBCU Computer Science Academy, HBCU CS Faculty-in-Residence Fellowship program and, more recently, the Applied Research Institute for Mathematics and Computational Sciences (ARI). All of these initiatives were geared towards increasing the production of HBCU CS graduates who are prepared to enter the tech workforce as leaders who will one day start the next Google, etc... As Womack explains, "It's wonderful to see how many of the students who attended HBCU Innovation Tech Summits have since succeeded in their pursuit of careers at top tech firms across the country." He adds, "This would not have been possible without the exceptional work of my UNCF colleagues and many individuals working inside of these tech companies who have been committed to supporting a more diverse and equitable tech industry."

He also notes, "We have been really excited about the ARI project [Applied Research Institute] and TechVentures as they represent a unique opportunity to support a vibrant network of HBCU research faculty working on things like Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Cybersecurity, etc... This will also support the translation of intellectual property into commercialization opportunities and produce institutional wealth."

In addition, Womack established the UNCF STEM Scholars program in collaboration with the FundIIFoundation. The STEM Scholars program represented an effective approach to identifying highly motivated, talented and gifted African American high school students who were committed to pursuing careers in STEM fields and provided scholarship and wrap-around support during throughout their undergraduate experience. "The idea of the STEM Scholars program was born out of the observation we made years ago that despite the low numbers, there were indeed highly motivated and very talented African Americans who could use support to accelerate them to and through undergraduate degree programs and into STEM careers." Womack said. "Interestingly, many of these students were coming from challenging circumstances including homelessness and rural areas where there weren't a lot of resources but they were still persisting and thriving."



For Dr. Womack, Morehouse was a place of expansion and integration of his whole self and provided a nurturing environment that fed his mind and his very soul. “If you want to understand me, there are three things to know: one, I’m from Philly; two, I’m a scientist; and three, I am an HBCU alum of both Morehouse College and Morehouse School of Medicine. I come from a family with deep HBCU roots.”



During his time at UNCF, Womack also established the Ernest E. Just Postgraduate Fellowship in the Life Sciences as a partnership with Bristol Myers Squibb. “The partnership with BMS was critical as it provided not only the much needed financial support but also the mentorship life scientists need at that critical phase of their professional development.” Womack explained.

Over the past 12 years, Womack’s groundbreaking work at UNCF has helped to transform the landscape of opportunity for HBCU students and faculty across the various STEM disciplines. He has charted new terrain and built collaborations with leading HBCU intermediary organizations and Silicon Valley tech companies. His journey reflects a relentless pursuit of excellence and progress—rooted in curiosity and the belief that science and education are not just fields of study but powerful tools for transformation and equity. On the role and significance of HBCUs for the Black community and the country, Womack shares his insights: “I firmly believe that HBCUs are unique and special institutions that serve as cultural repositories of our heritage and the history of who we are as a people. They are quintessentially African American and their legacy should be preserved, treasured and shared with every generation. He adds, “However, we should not rest on our legacy but rather embrace the challenges that each generation must face now and into the future. Our institutions must grow and, at times, pivot to sustain themselves in order to thrive.” Womack goes on to say, “We are facing some real serious challenges with a rapidly shifting socio-political landscape, the impact of new technologies like AI on the workforce, and the persistence of various ‘isms that remain in our society. No small task but I firmly believe we can meet the moment and exceed these challenges with vision, hard work and faith.”

After twelve years at the UNCF, Womack has joined BlueSKY as President of Innovation and Social Ventures. He is ready to work with Julie Sills Molock (Co-Founder and CEO of BlueSKY) and the BlueSKY team on the development of the Campaign for Sustainable Communities. “I’ve known Julie for 40 years since we were freshmen at the AUC when she was at Spelman and I was at Morehouse. Julie and Karl have assembled a world-class team at BlueSKY, and it’s an honor to work with them on the campaign.” Womack continues, “I’m looking forward to helping to develop the operational model and supporting fund development for the campaign.”

Dr. Chad Womack’s story is one of vision, resilience, and an unshakable commitment to service. His journey—from Philadelphia to Morehouse, from the lab to the halls of policy, from research to entrepreneurship—reflects a life shaped by curiosity, purpose, and a commitment to service. He works to expand opportunities for others moving through the world not as an individual working in isolation, but the shared values of his parents that raised him and reinforced by his experiences at Morehouse and the HBCU community.

In closing our conversation, Dr. Womack shared, “The work I’m trying to do really is about building, not for my legacy but to empower the next seven generations out. Like the Iroquois nations have that famous quote, ‘If you are going to build, build for seven generations out’; that is my mindset. What are we doing today that is going to lay the foundation for the next seven generations.”



After leaving the army, Forest T Harper Jr. sought job opportunities that would enable him to support himself and his family. Harper didn't take his career trajectory for granted and ultimately took it as a charge to pay it forward. "There's nothing I could do about being the first, but there is always something I can do about being the only."

OPENING DOORS

Forest T. Harper Jr. Advances the Legacy of INROADS



In the sixties, Frank C Carr, an advertising executive born to an upper-middle-class family in Connecticut, Princeton graduate, and former naval pilot, found himself in Chicago looking at an uneven landscape of class and racial disparities that unsettled him. Nearly a decade later and a thousand miles away, Forest T. Harper Jr. was growing up in public housing with migrant worker parents, who worked multiple jobs to provide what they could for their family.

At the time, Harper was a three-sport athlete whose ticket to college was athletic scholarships. The upbringings of Forest T Harper Jr. and Rev. Frank Carr couldn't be more divergent, yet their stories are united by a shared commitment to expanding access to opportunity for all.

Carr, feeling called to address the opportunity disparities certain communities faced, founded INROADS in 1970. Just a few years after witnessing Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream Speech," when Carr chartered a bus for himself and Black and Latino students from the South Side of Chicago to take part in the March on Washington, Carr laid the foundation for INROADS which has worked for over half a century to create pathways to careers for talented high school and college students across the country.

In 2011, Harper would join INROADS as the president and CEO continuing to scale Carr's mission. Yet, Harper's story doesn't start there. After suffering career-ruining injuries that would trouble his chances of getting a college education, Harper, through the recommendation of his high school Vice Principal, found his way to the HBCU Morgan State University in Maryland, where he eventually joined ROTC and later rose to the ranks of Captain in the United States Army. In these early formative moments in Forest's life, he began to see the ways networks of people and mentors can create pathways to success if one is willing to take them.



LEFT TO RIGHT

Michael DeVaul, YMCA USA

Ulice Payne, Addison-Clifton, LLC

Dr. Thelbert Snowden, Morehouse College

Forest Harper, INROADS



After leaving the army, Forest T Harper Jr. sought job opportunities that would enable him to support himself and his family. He ultimately joined the pharmaceutical industry, where his acumen and leadership abilities allowed him to excel, often breaking barriers, becoming the first African American executive in corporate America within the field. Harper's ascension in corporate America was not without its uphill battles, but it was achieved with a strong support system around him. Harper didn't take his career trajectory for granted and ultimately took it as a charge to pay it forward. Harper reflected, "There's nothing I could do about being the first, but there is always something I can do about being the only."

Harper began to cultivate his philanthropic impulse to give back and forge more pathways for stories like his own. Working as an executive on loan for non profit organizations that include National Urban League, Arthritis Foundation, and the Executive Leadership Council, Forest T Harper Jr. brought his experience as a strong leader to support nonprofits' capacity to solve problems and break down barriers.

Rounding out almost 15 years of service at INROADS and 55 years of the organization's existence, Forest T Harper feels the work is not finished. Harper seeks ways to further grow the work of leveling playing fields for deserving students in communities across the country through innovative collaborations with external organizations, recognizing that the work of enriching and transforming communities is best done in partnership rather than silos. The proven success and impact of INROADS fuel Harper's determination to push forward,

knowing that its legacy has already shaped leaders across industries. With alumni like Thasunda Brown Duckett the president and CEO at TIAA and arts and culture figures such as Sterling K. Brown and Aloe Blacc act as testimony to the program's ability to cultivate talent and create life changing opportunities. Though Harper is not a product of INROADS programs, as a proud free lunch student and recipient of many forms of support and mentorship early on in his career, he knows personally the importance of programs that seek to support the advancement and development of young people whose circumstances have created higher barriers to entry.

Forest T. Harper Jr.'s journey and INROADS' legacy are a testament to the transformative power of providing opportunities. From Frank C. Carr's vision in 1970 to Harper's unwavering commitment today, their work affirms that pathways to success are not just built by individual will but by communal investment. Harper's story embodies that opportunities, mentorship, and support systems can turn obstacles and barriers into stepping stones. Harper and Carr's work reinforces a simple yet profound truth: when doors open, they must remain open for others to walk through, and there is a responsibility to come together and hold that door open. Their mission is not just about progress—it is about ensuring that the next generation has the tools, support, and encouragement to redefine what is possible in a way that they were able to.

BlueSKY is proud to continue work alongside and uplift the work of Frank C Carr, Forest T Harper Jr., and INROADS.

Benefit Gala

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INROADS Gala 2025

Celebrating 55 Years of INROADS





LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP

Insights on Effective Leadership Development and Coaching

Salt has always been considered a hot commodity. In fact, historically, this mineral, sold around the world, was often used as a typical form of payment or allowance to Roman soldiers. Thus, the expression “worth his salt” came to mean someone who earns his or her reward or pay. These rations of salt, a term derived from the Latin word “sal” and commonly referred to as a salarium, eventually evolved into the modern word salary that we use today.

At BlueSKY Collaborative Partners, we understand the need for all of your team members to be worth their “salt”. Consequently, we created the **S.A.L.T (Self-Assessment Leadership Training) model** to ensure that associates not only carry their own weight, but that they guarantee your company remains a strong contender and leader in your respective industry.

Through this tried, tested and proven evaluation method, BlueSKY Collaborative Partners can help your company develop mid- and senior-level managers who are capable, competent, and deserving of the position they hold. Above all, this coaching model encourages the mindset, and helps impart the skills and potential for promotion so that beyond their paycheck, associates who are earning their salt, are also earning the respect and admiration that comes with it. Easily translated, the S.A.L.T paradigm provides positive, coaching for leaders on all levels. In addition to offering personal behavioral training, this new method will assist your company’s leaders in being more effective when managing their direct reports.

BlueSKY Collaborative’s adoption of the S.A.L.T technique is even more fitting when one considers another popular expression “salt of the earth,” which the American Heritage Dictionary defines as 1. A person or group embodying simplicity and moral integrity and 2. A person or group considered the best or most worthy part of society. Naturally, we believe that our clients seek to attract, develop and retain the type of managers who fit this description.


A major part of this success stems from the coaching seeds that are planted through the S.A.L.T. method. By sowing and nurturing these seeds your company can help its managers unearth both their fortes and flaws. Doing so will allow them to achieve the personal and professional growth needed to exceed their departmental goals, as well as advance your organization’s bottom line.

This leadership training focuses on five distinct phases, which in keeping with the “Salt” and “Salt of the Earth” idioms, can best be summed up using the acronym EARTH:

- **Examination Phase:** helps the manager prepare for the coaching session
- **Appointment Phase:** period when manager engages team members one-on-one
- **Reinforcement Phase:** emphasizes the team member strengths and areas for improvement
- **Timeline Phase:** maps out a plan for improvement in areas where development is needed
- **Help/Support Phase:** continued follow up for continued assessment of employee growth

Principally, through personal coaching sessions, video training and e-books, BlueSKY Collaborative’s S.A.L.T. model is changing the way managers view themselves, those they work for and those they supervise in ways that are putting companies on the fast-track to recovery and revitalization when it comes to developing managers. We invite you to evaluate leadership development models to increase team member retention and success.

Karl

A full-length portrait of Karl L. Molock, a Black man with short hair and a mustache, wearing a dark blue suit jacket over a light-colored button-down shirt. He is standing in front of a large window with a view of a city skyline. The lighting is soft, coming from the side.

Behavioral Coaching,
through associate
self assessment, is an
effective technique,
as it guides associates
through a process
to unlock their own
potential and creates a
supportive environment
for growth.

— **KARL L. MOLOCK**
*Founder and President,
BlueSKY Collaborative Partners*



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