



Urban League of Louisiana

BOUNDLESS

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

“Our course must be, now and always, for the principles of our Democratic government. As we fight to protect America from without, we must also fight to protect it and ourselves from within – we must fight to make democracy work for all people, regardless of race, creed, or color. For the latter fight we will be hated and lied about, we will be threatened and maybe... yes that too. But we cannot become intimidated...”

**CLARENCE LAWS, FOUNDING EXECUTIVE
SECRETARY, JULY 1941**



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DEAR PARTNERS IN THE MOVEMENT:

This 85th Anniversary Year has been a period of inspiring reflection of our past, amazing growth for many parts of our organization, and profound impact for the people served by Urban League of Louisiana. Your support and partnership has been instrumental in our effectiveness and achievements.

This year we've also been reminded of the importance of our mission and the Urban League of Louisiana's critical role as a convener of equitable thought and actionable solutions. There is no doubt that the Urban League of Louisiana must continue to serve as a necessary agent of good in our state for the next 85 years and beyond!

Given the many threats faced by Black and other underserved communities in our state, our work to help our people is needed now more than ever. When the Louisiana Legislature again refused to codify an increase from a minimum wage to a living wage, we were reminded that our work to help our people achieve economic self-reliance and grow generational wealth is greatly needed. When Louisiana once again ranked near the bottom of the list for educational outcomes, we were reminded that our work to help our people achieve parity and equity is greatly needed. When there continues to be a lack of investments in civic engagement and dismal voter turnout, our work helping our people secure power was not only needed, but is critical. And when we lost yet another precious Black life at the hand of law enforcement, we were reminded that our work to help our people secure civil rights under the law has not been fully realized with past landmark legislative and legal victories.

These and so many other challenges can be incredibly discouraging. However, we come from a lineage of great fighters who persevered through tumultuous times by always remembering that we must never lose hope. That hope-inspired determination fueled our work this year. Together, we hosted a record-breaking annual Policy and Empowerment Conference and Gala. We expanded our apprenticeship programs with a new Automotive Apprenticeship in Baton Rouge and New Orleans. Serving minority small businesses, we awarded \$100,000 in

grants to Black restaurants and graduated our first cohort of the Walmart Black Women in Retail Marketplace. Our investment in students grew by supporting 250 high school students through our Project Ready Program. And we were able to secure the commitment of the East Baton Rouge School System Superintendent to partner with the Urban League of Louisiana and local stakeholders to incorporate an Education Equity Framework into their Strategic Plan, and to develop an Equity Scorecard to track progress.

We kicked off this 85th Anniversary year with a celebration at Dillard University that unveiled our Boundless campaign with community, business, and elected leaders. We used this year to update our history, profile our founders, and celebrate past Executive Leaders. We added our inaugural Youth Summit to the Policy & Empowerment Conference, and honored fifteen amazing individuals and organizations who reflect the mission of the Urban League of Louisiana.

While we have a lot to celebrate this year, this era of extremism across our state, poses one of the greatest threats to Black and other marginalized families that we have seen in decades. Therefore, this era will require the very best of the Urban League of Louisiana. It will require more from us, and of you as our supporters and partners. And we intend to fully meet this moment with even greater leadership, advocacy, and direct-service program delivery.

Inspired by our 85th Anniversary theme – BOUNDLESS – we march into the new year ever committed to our mission, values, and the people we serve.

Yours in the movement,



Judy Reese Morse
President and CEO



Jade Brown Russell
Board Chairwoman



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

Chairman of the Board

Jade Brown-Russell
Principal, *J.D. Russell Consulting, LLC*

First Vice Chairman

Ronald Carrere
Interim Executive Director,
Norman C. Francis Leadership Institute

Second Vice Chairman

Christy Wallace Slater
Vice President of Programs,
Women's Foundation of the South

Treasurer

Dennis McSeveney
Professor Emeritus of Sociology,
Dean Emeritus of the College of Liberal
Arts & Associate Provost Emeritus,
University of New Orleans

Secretary

Sharonda R. Williams
General Counsel and Director of
Government Affairs, *Loyola University*
New Orleans

President & CEO

Judy Reese Morse

DIRECTORS

Leah Brown
Manager, Policy Government
& Public Affairs, *Chevron*

Dr. Arnel Cosey
Senior Director of Strategic Initiatives
and Community Services, *Clover*

Shaneika Dabney-Henderson
Vice President of Production,
New Orleans Saints and Pelicans

Monique G. Doucette
Shareholder/Employment Attorney,
Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak
& *Stewart, P.C*

Nick Harris
Assistant Vice President / Executive
Director, *Dillard University Community*
Development Corporation

Dr. Paula Hopkins
CEO & President
Second and Sixth, LLC

Tyler Litt
President, Urban League of Louisiana
Young Professionals Auxiliary,
Senior Associate Partner,
New Schools Venture Fund

Kellen Mathews
Partner In Charge, Baton Rouge,
Adams and Reese

Minh Nguyen
Owner, *NOLA Prints*

Dorothy “Dottie” Reese
Managing Partner, *DMM & Associates*

Jamie Schlottman
CEO & Plan President,
Louisiana Healthcare Connections

Tod Smith
President & General Manager, *WWL-TV*

Toya Barnes-Teamer
Owner, *Teamer Strategy Group, LLC*

Ricardo Thomas
President, *Urban League of Louisiana Guild, Thomas-Waddell & Associates*

Beth Trotter
Executive Vice President / CRA Officer,
First Horizon Bank

C. Reynold Verret
President, *Xavier University*

Kyle Wedberg
Senior Manager, *Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)*

STAFF

Executive Leadership

President & CEO

Judy Reese Morse

Executive Vice President

Cathy Washington

Vice President, Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation

Klassi Duncan

Vice President, Center for Workforce Development

Cherie LaCour-Duckworth

Vice President, Policy, Strategic Partnerships & Development

Tyronne Walker

Vice President, Research & Evaluation

Debra Vaughan

Director of Finance

Cynthia Harris

Center for Education & Youth Development

Gilma Pavon, Director, Parent Information Center

Marlin Hollins Director, Project Ready

Ronisha Johnson, Coordinator, Project Ready

April Morrison, Coordinator, Project Ready

Amber Davis-Prince, Community
Engagement Officer

**Center for Entrepreneurship
& Innovation**

Dr. Carla Antoine, Director, Small
Business Support Services Center

Frank W. Johnson, III, Director,
Contractor's Resource Center

Elizabeth Kensel, Business Advisor

Christina Rousseau, Program Manager

Center for Policy & Social Justice

Charles E.J. Phipps, Senior Director for
Policy, Advocacy & Legal Affairs

John West II, Advocacy Director

Center for Workforce Development

Bobby Burkes, Jr., Business Services
Coordinator

Tennille Burks, Triage Coordinator

Dedra Evans, Career Development
Specialist

Chaunte Humble, Career
Development Specialist

Ronnie King, Jr., Director of
Apprenticeships

Neron North-Green, Director of
Special Populations

Clarence L. Barney Head Start Center

Belencia Breaux, Director of Clarence
L. Barney Head Start Center

Shelita Brimmer, Lead Teacher

Candice Brown, Preschool Teacher

Kimberly Green, Preschool Teacher

Kristine Hitts, Social Worker

Reyan Brimmer-Eaglin, Early Learning
Teacher

Keyoca Johnson, Early Learning
Teacher

Darrlynn Ann Knott, Early Learning
Teacher

Jaime Molina, Early Learning Teacher

Tarase White, Early Learning Teacher

Vera Chapman Seals, Assistant Teacher

Amanda Phillips, Assistant Teacher

Stacy Stewart, Food Technician

Kay Jackson, Food Technician Assistant

Evan Hartford, Janitor

Communications

Sam Nga Blum, Director
of Communications

Jonathan Barnes,
Communications Staff

Finance & Operations

Yulbritton David Shy, Director
of Budget & Operations

Edwina Blackstone, Staff Accountant

Linda Carter, Accounts Payable Staff

Victoria Wiggins, Jr. Accountant/
Operations Coordinator

CLARENCE L. BARNEY HEADSTART CENTER

The Urban League of Louisiana Clarence L. Barney Head Start (ULCLB), nestled in the Desire Housing Development, in the upper 9th ward of Orleans parish is a beacon of light for families. Since beginning operation in 1998, ULCLB, formally known as Urban League Early Head Start, has provided formal early learning to over 1,250 children, birth to 5 years. The center, funded as a delegate agency of Total Community Action, Inc., maintains a rating of High Proficient as identified by the Louisiana Department of Education.

School readiness, child safety, maintaining good health and family support are key areas of focus. With a strong history of success, our children consistently achieve developmental milestones. The staff works closely with parents to achieve outcomes which lead to independence and self-sufficiency.





OUR CHILDREN



of children met or exceeded social-emotional development



of children completed speech, vision, and hearing screenings



OUR STAFF

100%

of families participated in social services family outcomes process

of education, social services and administrative staff achieved Ancillary Certificates (Louisiana Early Childhood Certification)

of education staff have Bachelor Degree, Associate Degree or Child Development Certificate (CDA) in Early Childhood Education

of staff participated in professional development in area of education, health & safety, nutrition, and family engagement



SPOTLIGHT: BLACK VOTERS MATTER

Sr. State Organizing Manager, Omari Ho-Sang and Louisiana Regional Organizer, Keturah Butler-Reed, hailing from Shreveport, Louisiana and Atlanta, Georgia, respectively, are integral organizers that Urban League of Louisiana partner with to increase Black voter power in Louisiana. This duo's motivation and statewide strategies are rooted in their HBCU college experiences at Tuskegee University and Albany State University.

Whether it was protesting the killing of Black people at the hands of law enforcement, the removal of Confederate statues, or fighting for fair representation of Black people, Omari and Keturah's advocacy backgrounds are deep. These leaders continue to be relentless in their mission to alter decades of oppression that Black communities have faced regarding their civic engagement. The Urban League of Louisiana is proud to have a cohesive partnership with Black Voters Matter focused on the empowerment of Black Louisianians.



CENTER FOR EDUCATION & YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The Urban League of Louisiana's Center for Education & Youth Development serves as the organization's hub to promote education empowerment. Through a variety of programs, initiatives, and activities, the Center for Education & Youth Development is able to utilize many avenues to promote equity, access, and excellence in education.

Parent Information Center

The Urban League of Louisiana's Parent Information Center in New Orleans (ULPIC) and Baton Rouge (ULPIC-BR) maintains its mission to empower parents to become successful agents and advocates for excellent schools, educates parents about school choice and equips parents to become leaders. ULPIC continues to endorse its Parents Ready to be Involved to Deliver Excellence Leadership Academy for parents, Parent Charter Board member training, New Orleans Guide to High Schools and Beyond and New Orleans Guide to Early Childhood Education Resource website and app, and its Stay Connected newsletter.

The Urban League of Louisiana's Parent Information Center in Baton Rouge (ULPIC-BR) responds to the distinct needs of parents and community members as they navigate and improve the Baton Rouge education landscape. ULPIC-BR provides support, technical assistance and guidance to families navigating school choice options, and hosts community events such as STEM Saturdays to increase STEM-based learning opportunities for students, and a Schools Expo to increase awareness of the EnrollBR common application process for families.

ULEAD

The ULEAD Leadership Academy is a leading training academy for advocates interested in learning how to effectively navigate and positively impact the educational landscape for communities of color in New Orleans. ULEAD provides a unique opportunity for participants to learn how to engage in developing and sustaining a quality educational ecosystem in New Orleans through Advocacy, Human Capital, Governance, Policy, and Entrepreneurship.

Project Ready

Urban League of Louisiana's Project Ready program prepares underserved youth for success in college and career. The program offers academic enrichment workshops and tutoring; cultural and social development activities and a mentoring component; college and career exposure and exploration activities; opportunities for young people to take part in dual enrollment courses including career and technical education training towards an industry-recognized credential and provides STEM exposure and exploration activities.

7,317 community members served/engaged by ULPIC


700 families served this year by ULPIC-BR

1,250 uniform vouchers were distributed to families to assist with school uniform expenses

1,522 students and parents accessed The New Orleans Guide to High Schools and Beyond and the New Orleans Guide to Early Childhood Education Resource website exploring pertinent information about high schools and early learner programs

300 students received school supply kits and backpacks

25 participants in the 2032 ULEAD Cohort

 **98%** attendance for Summer Cohort

250 high school students served by Project Ready

10 college tours attended by Project Ready students

300 hours of College and Career Readiness achieved by Project Ready students, paired with academic/enrichment support through after-school tutoring, STEM activities, career networking opportunities, and Behind the Business Tours

2,635 hours of ACT Prep received by Project Ready students

46 participants in the PRIDE Leadership Academy

“The college tours were calming and cool. I would love to go on more to explore more options. I love how Project Ready let us do these tours and help us with our decisions and future.”

JONQUIL CLAYBORNE, L.B. LANDRY HIGH SCHOOL, 12TH GRADE



SPOTLIGHT: LAJUNE MONTGOMERY-TABRON

As a part of the 85th Anniversary celebrations, LaJune Montgomery-Tabron was presented the inaugural Medal for Louisiana Civil and Economic Rights at the Urban League of Louisiana Gala held at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans. LaJune Montgomery-Tabron is the President and CEO of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF) in Battle Creek, Michigan, one of the largest private foundations in the United States. As a champion for vulnerable children and for creating the conditions necessary for them to thrive, Montgomery-Tabron leads the Kellogg Foundation and its work to ensure the optimal development of young children from birth to age 8, heal the profound racial inequities in communities and cultivate community leaders and community-led solutions that support educated kids, healthy kids and economically secure families.

Prior to becoming the first African American President and CEO to lead the foundation in its 84 year history, she served in a variety of positions at the Kellogg Foundation after joining the organization as the Controller in 1987. Most recently, she was the Executive Vice President of Operations and Treasurer, which included oversight of all financial plans, policies and relationships within the financial community and WKKF's Technology, Human Resources and Administration, Finance, Program Services and Quality & Organizational Effectiveness functions. In this role, she was pivotal in connecting and integrating WKKF's leadership committees: the Executive Council, Program Leadership Council, Talent Board and Organizational Advisory Team, ensuring unified execution of the organization's mission and strategic framework across all programmatic and priority place areas. She also provided leadership for WKKF's place-based grant-making in Mississippi and New Orleans since 2011, launching a significant effort to help set young males of color on the path to success in 2013.

Throughout her more than 26 years in philanthropy, Montgomery-Tabron has participated in numerous sector efforts to enhance philanthropy, including: the policy and annual conference committees for the Council on Foundations and the board development and transparency committees for Independent Sector.

CENTER FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The Center for Workforce Development (CWD) serves as one of the organization's economic engines, providing individuals with the tools they need to thrive in today's workforce, and to help grow Louisiana's pool of qualified workers. CWD serves unemployed and underemployed career seekers ages 16 and above whom are residents of Metro New Orleans, East Baton Rouge, and Shreveport.

In 2023, CWD expanded its service delivery model to include pre-apprenticeships in alignment with apprenticeships that guarantee employment opportunities leading to self-sustainment. CWD's apprenticeships includes paid career readiness training for professional development, integrated with job shadowing at participating employer partners and connections to employment opportunities via apprenticeships. Also provided are continuous case management, career coaching, tuition assistance, behind the business tours, financial literacy, occupational skills training for those not enrolled in apprenticeships, and direct employment placement to help move participants towards high wage occupations leading to self-sufficiency.

This year, the Center for Workforce Development implemented an Automobile Service Technician Pilot Apprenticeship Program and a Line Worker Apprenticeship for occupations in clean energy. The unique aspect of the 2,400-hour apprenticeships is that it builds opportunities for career advancement, improves skills and competencies of career seekers, and provides access to jobs leading to high wages. For in-school youth, pre-cybersecurity was implemented at Scotlandville Magnet High School that will lead to the Urban League of Louisiana's registered cybersecurity apprenticeship program.

279

adult and youth career seekers served

57

in-school youth participated in career exploration and earned vulnerability certification for tech occupations

87

individuals completed various digital skills trainings and earned certifications

135

adults enrolled in the Career Pathways Program for employment opportunities



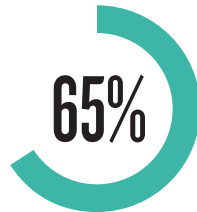
of adults were connected to employment with average earnings of \$23.00 per hour and

\$12.00

per hour for justice-involved young adults

23

career seekers in New Orleans and Baton entered pilot 18-month automobile service technician apprenticeship with



obtaining employment with car dealerships in New Orleans and Baton Rouge



**“I am now able to support myself
and my family.”**

**KERRY D. RUFFIN, GRADUATE OF URBAN LEAGUE OF LOUISIANA
AUTOMOBILE SERVICE TECHNICIAN APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM**





SPOTLIGHT: KERRY D. RUFFIN

Kerry D. Ruffin is a native of Louisiana and a graduate of the Urban League of Louisiana's pilot Automotive Service Technician Apprenticeship Program. He loved fixing problems as long as he could remember. From the start of middle school, Kerry had a vision of being a civil engineer. While in high school, he was in the magnet program. After he graduated high school, Kerry received an acceptance letter to attend Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where he attended for two years in pursuit of a civil engineering degree. Due to life challenges and poor decision-making, Kerry became a youth with justice involvement, causing him to withdraw from college. While on probation, Kerry has made great strides to turn his life around. He has always been passionate about the automotive and construction industries. Prior to joining the program, Kerry worked in the construction, retail, manufacturing, and oil and gas industries.

In pursuit of his interest, Kerry enrolled in the Urban League of Louisiana's Pilot Automotive Service Technician Apprenticeship Program. In February 2023, Kerry was placed into the 4-week work-simulated Career & Workforce Fundamentals Training for professional development, the first of three phases of Urban League of Louisiana's Pilot Automobile Service Technician Apprenticeship. While in the 8-weeks of instructional training at the Baton Rouge Community College, Kerry completed occupational skills training and earned 11 industry-related certifications.

In the second phase, Kerry had the opportunity to participate in job shadowing activities at three partnering dealerships in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. These activities provided him with valuable practical experience and allowed him to observe professionals in the automotive industry. Through job shadowing, Kerry gained insights into each dealership's daily operations, work environment, and team dynamics, helping him better understand the industry and its unique cultures. Job shadowing also allowed him to access and rank his top three dealership preferences for employment.



CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP & INNOVATION

The Urban League of Louisiana's Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation (CEI) is committed to ensuring the success of small businesses across the state of Louisiana with dedicated efforts in supporting minority- and women-owned firms. The work of the Center is built upon the documented need for increased access to contracting opportunities, business development services, and capacity-building resources for these diverse groups.

The CEI provides business education workshops, one-on-one and small group counseling, hands-on technical assistance, and access to resources relevant to aspiring and existing entrepreneurs across various industries. The CEI work is delivered via three sub-centers: the Women's Business Resource Center, the Contractor's Resource Center, and the Small Business Support Services Center.

511

clients counseled

3,209

counseling hours

1,526

training attendees

108

trainings provided

246

training hours

45

new businesses created

\$56 MILLION

contracts and capital obtained by clients

Start Up! Louisiana: Hammond

In January, the Center launched its Start Up! Louisiana program for small businesses in Hammond, Louisiana. Start Up! Louisiana is a 9-week online entrepreneurial training program that teaches new entrepreneurs how to launch their business ventures the right way. This series provides best practices for how to build a solid business foundation that ensures success. Topics covered include: developing your entrepreneurial mindset, the Lean Start-up Model, understanding business financials, how to effectively market to your target customer, etc. Participants also received individual business counseling and access to other support services and resources needed to successfully launch their business ventures. This series was sponsored by Louisiana Economic Development's (LED) Small and Emerging Business Development Program and the SBA Community Navigator Pilot Program.

Walmart Black Women in Retail Accelerator Program

In March, Urban League of Louisiana launched its inaugural cohort of the "Black Women in Retail Accelerator Program", in collaboration with the National Urban League, and sponsored by Walmart. This year, we supported 10 Black, women-owned retail businesses across Louisiana with general and industry-specific coaching, mentoring, and training. The program also provided direct assistance for obtaining small business certifications, assistance with bidding on public and private contracting opportunities, as well as, and leadership skills development training.

2023 PepsiCo Black Restaurant Accelerator Program

Urban League of Louisiana launched its third cohort of the Black Restaurant Accelerator Program in collaboration with the National Urban League and sponsored by the PepsiCo Foundation. The program is a part of a \$10M investment by the PepsiCo Foundation to provide current and aspiring Black restaurateurs with access to capital, training, mentorship and other support services through the National Urban League's twelve entrepreneurship centers.

This year, the program included 15 Black-owned restaurateurs, caterers and food truck operators from across Louisiana. Participants obtained entrepreneurial coaching and training on a variety of topics including accounting and financial systems, inventory management, operational efficiency, marketing for growth and ROI, and staff development. The Black Restaurant Accelerator Program is

facilitated by PROOF, a Chattanooga-based restaurant incubator and restaurant consulting firm. PROOF provides industry-based entrepreneurial training, online learning tools and resources, as well as, consulting services for participating businesses. ULLA also awarded \$100k in grants to select Black restauranteurs, food truck operators, and caterers for the 2023 program year.

2023 Women's Entrepreneurship Week

This year, Urban League of Louisiana hosted its inaugural Women's Entrepreneurship Week (WEW2023) in celebration of Women's Entrepreneurship Day on November 19. The inaugural celebration was specially curated to provide women entrepreneurs with opportunities for small business development and education, networking, and resources-sharing. WEW2023 was sponsored by First Horizon (Title Sponsor), AARP, New Orleans & Company, Chevron, UPS, and Mastercard.

The week included a graduation ceremony for the Walmart Black Women in Retail Accelerator Program cohort 1. Urban League of Louisiana hosted a celebratory welcome reception to kick-off WEW2023. The event also included the annual "Women in Business Challenge: Scale Up!". The competition featured four finalists who pitched their plans to grow and scale for a chance to win \$10,000. During the event, an esteemed panel of judges were tasked with determining the winner based on effectiveness of the pitch presentation, scalability of the business model, and proposed use of award funds. LaDarby Williams, owner of Germ Slayers Maintenance & Solutions, LLC emerged as the winner of the 2023 competition securing \$10,000 in growth funding.

Urban League of Louisiana's inaugural WEW2023: Hope2Women Summit, hosted in collaboration with the Association of Women's Business Centers, featured a full-day of content curated just for women entrepreneurs. The day was filled with a host of dynamic speakers, workshops, networking opportunities, and resources-sharing. Over 100 women entrepreneurs and resource partners joined the conference and participated in sessions such as: "Export Dat!", "Pitch to Win", "Market to Win", "Bid to Win", and "Connect to Capital". The event also included a fireside chat featuring negotiation expert, author, entrepreneur, and educator, Mori Taheripour, who shared insights from her book "Bring Yourself: Harnessing the Power of Connection to Negotiate Fearlessly".



SPOTLIGHT: LADARBY WILLIAMS

LaDarby Williams is the President and CEO of Germ Slayers Cleaning & Maintenance Solutions. The company specializes in creating safe commercial workspaces through the application of cutting-edge green technology and eco-friendly cleaning solutions. The company provides surgery level sanitation for workplaces including: residue free disinfecting, janitorial services, and facility support maintenance to public and private-sector organizations across diverse industries along the Gulf Coast.

LaDarby became a client of Urban League of Louisiana in early 2023 when she participated in the Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation's Financial Empowerment series as a part of the SBA Community Navigator Pilot Program. Since then, Williams has participated in several trainings and special events including: Opportunities Outlook for DBE Contractors, Export Dat!, Green Professional Building Skills: Construction Management, etc. She has also obtained more than 25 hours of business advising, coaching and mentoring support. Through this support, LaDarby has been able to shift her business model to focus on larger commercial projects, has increased her bid development skills, and has been awarded several public and private contracts this year.



CENTER FOR POLICY & SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Center for Policy & Social Justice is essential to the mission of securing parity and civil rights, and closely aligns with the work of the Center for Workforce Development, Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation, and the Center for Education and Youth Development.

This Center implements strategies and initiatives that increase equity and improve quality of life for African American communities and other communities of color across Louisiana. The work of this Center includes the Urban League of Louisiana's annual policy cycle featuring a statewide listening tour, policy conference, and policy work groups; Wake Up Geaux Vote - the statewide initiative advancing voter registration, education and mobilization; the production of education equity reports; health equity initiatives; criminal justice reform efforts; and a legislative agenda during the Louisiana legislative session.

Listen & Learn Tour

Between March 9 – April 5, Urban League of Louisiana, in conjunction with the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus, engaged in a statewide tour to hear directly from residents in the cities of Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Lake Charles, New Orleans, Monroe, and Shreveport. While open to all community members, the vast majority of participants were African Americans. This effort across the state was sponsored by the Southern Poverty Law Center.

The thoughts, comments, experiences, and information shared by residents helped inform our 2023 Legislative Agenda and will be used to determine how best to serve the residents of our seven target cities from a policy perspective. In addition to the subject areas explicitly covered during this year's Listen & Learn Tour, a range of additional topics surfaced as being important and impactful to African Americans and other underserved communities in each city.

Legislative Agenda

On April 10, the Louisiana State Legislature convened its regular session, which concluded June 6. This legislative session was a fiscal session impacting how the state's resources would be allocated. Legislators filed approximately 621 pre-filed bills, which our Policy & Social Justice Team reviewed in their entirety. However, the Urban League of Louisiana's 2023 Legislative Agenda was centered around the fifty bills that we supported and the fourteen bills that we opposed. Our team testified four times on legislation; and completed 49 letters and cards supporting or opposing legislation.

2023 Televised Statewide Gubernatorial Debate

The Urban League of Louisiana and WWL-TV in partnership with the Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana (PAR), WBRZ-TV (Baton Rouge), KATC (Lafayette), and KTBS (Shreveport) co-hosted the first statewide televised Gubernatorial Debate of the election cycle on September 7 to educate the electorate concerning the October 14th election for Louisiana Governor.

The debate was attended by five of the top six candidates and broadcast in all major media markets in the state. In conjunction with the debate and the Empowerment & Policy Conference, we hosted a Debate Watch Party with more than 250 residents and a moderated panel discussion with Bogalusa Mayor Tyrin Truong and Times-Picayune|Nola.com columnist Will Sutton.

Wake Up Geaux Vote

Black & Brown Voter Registration Day

The Urban League of Louisiana and Southern Poverty Law Center, in conjunction with League of Women Voters, Voice of the Experienced (VOTE), Power Coalition, Black Voters Matter, ACLU-Louisiana, NAACP-Louisiana, the Hispanic Chamber and Young Professionals, and Brava led a nonpartisan 2023 Louisiana Black & Brown Voter Registration Day on Saturday, September 16.

This statewide effort was concentrated in seven targeted cities: Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Lake Charles, New Orleans, Monroe, and Shreveport.

This voter registration initiative builds upon the strong advocacy by nonprofit and legislative leaders in the State Capitol and courts to ensure fair redistricting, fair voting maps, and equitable access to voting throughout the state. The goal of this nonpartisan effort across the state is to register Black and Brown prospective voters as well as, educate voters on their registration status, and highlight the collective voting power of marginalized communities in our state ahead of the 2023 Gubernatorial Election and the 2024 Congressional Elections.

“Each of the plenary sessions were packed with information and quality speakers and moderators. I loved the breadth and diversity of the topics covered in the plenary sessions.”

2023 EMPOWERMENT & POLICY CONFERENCE ATTENDEE

1,193

**people attended Empowerment &
Policy Conference, including Inaugural
Youth Summit**

67

**regional leaders actively working
to implement SEE Change Collective
Action Plan**

2,987

**doors knocked or phones called
during inaugural Louisiana Black and
Brown Voter Registration Day**

1,783

**miles traveled to host seven Listen &
Learn Tour meetings with Louisiana
Legislative Black Caucus**

URBAN LEAGUE OF LOUISIANA YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

The Urban League of Louisiana Young Professionals (ULLAYP) Volunteer Auxiliary is passionately dedicated to advancing the mission and objectives of the Urban League of Louisiana and the National Urban League. Our commitment is manifested through impactful service, active civic engagement, and the holistic development of our members both personally and professionally. Geared towards emerging and young professionals ages 21 to 40, ULLAYP is designed to offer socially conscious individuals opportunities for learning, serving, and growing within the broader National Urban League movement. Our chapter is one of 65 chapters with over 10,000 members nationwide.



Throughout 2023, the chapter hosted a myriad of programs, seamlessly blending virtual, hybrid, and in-person experiences across the affiliate's priority cities in Louisiana. As a vital auxiliary, our members and chapter leadership enthusiastically volunteered for numerous Urban League of Louisiana events, including but not limited to the Empowerment & Policy Conference, Head Start Easter Drive, Head Start Dr. Seuss Reading Day, Big Health Event in Baton Rouge, Wake Up Geaux Vote initiatives including the Black & Brown Voter Registration Day, Listen & Learn Statewide Tour, and more.

ULLAYP also curated several programs, such as Women's Entrepreneurship Panel, Reimagining Black Empowerment through STEM, Financial Literacy Program with the Pelicans and Stackwell, and Decoding the Black Tax through the National Day of Empowerment. The chapter collaborated with diverse organizations committed to supporting the Urban League of Louisiana's tireless efforts in assisting African Americans and other communities in securing economic self-reliance, parity, and civil rights. Moreover, our chapter actively participates in the National Urban League Young Professionals, with many members contributing to multiple national committees. This year, ten members from our chapter attended the National Urban League Conference in Houston, Texas.

750

people engaged

100

members

15

**partner organizations
supporting the YP initiative**

“Young Professionals (YP) opens doors for emerging leaders, offering a unique chance to contribute to a historic mission that has fostered economic opportunities and advanced equity for communities of color. As a YP, you become part of a nationwide movement dedicated to mobilizing communities, influencing policy, and making a difference through service. It’s an honor to embody the leadership qualities Whitney M. Young envisioned in support of the Urban League of Louisiana. Locally, we can actively participate in community change, champion world-class programs and workshops, and cultivate a community of like-minded professionals for networking and mutual growth.”

**TYLER LITT, PRESIDENT, URBAN LEAGUE OF LOUISIANA
YOUNG PROFESSIONALS**



URBAN LEAGUE OF LOUISIANA GUILD

The Urban League of Louisiana Guild, a volunteer auxiliary of Urban League of Louisiana, serves individuals with a mind to “give back” ages 40 and over. Guild members work to promote the Movement of the Urban League by incorporating progressive fundraising initiatives, creating and leveraging community service programs and developing a cadre of dedicated and informed foot soldiers in the Movement who also serve as volunteers to support various events of the affiliate. The Urban League of Louisiana Guild is a part of a network of 42 guild chapters across the country.

The Urban League of Louisiana Guild theme for 2023 was “Creating the Pipeline.” Building on the success of our Faith in Action program which provided us opportunities to do community service, we decided to take those relationships to the next level by focusing on ways to increase membership in the Movement, improve community awareness of programs and educate on effective advocacy strategies. These efforts led to monthly meetings with area pastors and ministerial associations to discuss the many offerings of our Urban League affiliate. Our work was not in vain. Not only have a number of churches across our area committed to partner with us ongoing to disseminate programming information from our Urban League but many of those pastors have joined the Movement by becoming members of our Guild chapter. These partnerships will provide us access to hundreds of people across our community. This has led to the pastors’ support and attendance of our Empowerment and Policy conference as well as the Annual Gala. Further, they have committed to identifying members in their congregations and surrounding communities to support the Movement and join our Guild chapter.

As we head into the new year, the groundwork has been laid to relaunch our long-running *On the Money* financial literacy program virtually throughout all of the member churches, host advocacy training sessions in partnership with the National Urban League Washington Bureau as well as other activities.



2023 EMPOWERMENT AND POLICY CONFERENCE

The annual Empowerment & Policy Conference is a statewide convening designed to examine systems and influence policy decisions. It is an opportunity to hear from national and local experts, policy makers, and community leaders on timely and important topics. The convening is designed to inform, excite, and ignite collective action that advances efforts leading to a sustaining environment for African Americans and other underserved communities to thrive.

The fourth annual Empowerment & Policy Conference was held at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center on September 7-8. The theme was *Advancing Equitable Solutions to Build a Prosperous Louisiana*, and aimed to:

1. Engage African Americans and people from other underserved communities across Louisiana on key issues.
2. Build local, regional, and national stakeholders interested in and working on the issues that affect these communities in Louisiana.
3. Highlight and disseminate research and data on African American issues.
4. Inform the development of future policies put forward by the state legislature.

This two-day conference included plenary sessions as well as breakout sessions covering seven topics:

- Economic Opportunity & Wealth Creation
- Safety & Criminal Justice Reform
- Voting Rights & Civic Engagement
- Race, Culture & Creatives
- Health Equity
- Education Equity & Protecting History
- Environmental Justice & Green Economy

This year also launched the inaugural Youth Summit.





2023 ANNUAL GALA

The Urban League of Louisiana held its 85th Anniversary Gala at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center on Saturday, September 9, 2023.

The 2023 Annual Gala recognized notable individuals in our community while also shining a spotlight on our mission-driven efforts.

Honorees included LaJune Montgomery-Tabron, Congressman Troy A. Carter, Thelma H. French, Flozell Daniels, Jr., Joe Exnicios, Hon. Cheryl Johnson, Clarence L. Barney, Raymond Jetson, Bayou Classic, Pearlie H. Elloie, Beverly S. McKenna, Dwight McKenna, M.D., Brandan “BMike” Odums, Sevetri Wilson Taylor, Lambert Boissiere, Jr., William “Bill” Rouselle.



85TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE AND GALA CHAIRPERSON

Michael Sawaya, General Manager
Ernest N. Morial Convention Center

CO-CHAIRS

Karl E. Hoefer, Regional President of
Louisiana, First Horizon
William "Bill" Goldring, Chairman, Goldring
Family Foundation & Woldenberg
Foundation

GALA SUPPORTERS

85th Anniversary Sustaining the Movement Sponsor:

Ernest N. Morial Convention Center

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River Region
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LCMC Health
Baptist Community Ministries
James Williams
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Perkins • Jarred Jupiter • Rachael Johnson
• Kyle Wedberg • John Dillon • Lisa Weber-
Curry • Kristyna Jone •

Programmatic Highlights

EDUCATION EQUITY FOR LOUISIANA

The goal of Education Equity For Louisiana is to ensure that all children, regardless of race or economic status, are given an excellent education that prepares them for success beyond school. We are committed to achieving equity by removing barriers to high academic achievement and by ensuring the creation of systems of opportunity by which ALL students have the necessary resources to reach their fullest potential. Our approach to achieving equity is data-driven, community-driven, and results-focused.

The Urban League of Louisiana's Center for Education and Youth Development met with community partners in Lafayette during 2023 to solicit input on major education equity concerns and issues facing Lafayette.

The Urban League of Louisiana was able to secure the commitment of the East Baton Rouge Parish School System Superintendent to partner with the Urban League and local stakeholders to incorporate developing an Education Equity Framework into their Strategic Plan, and to develop an Equity Scorecard to track progress.



BLACK RESTAURANT ACCELERATOR PROGRAM

The Urban League of Louisiana, in collaboration with the National Urban League, continued its Black Restaurant Accelerator program sponsored by the PepsiCo Foundation. The program is a part of a \$10M investment by the PepsiCo Foundation to provide current and aspiring Black restaurateurs with access to capital, training, mentorship and other support services through the National Urban League's 12 entrepreneurship centers. The national program seeks to boost approximately 500 Black owned businesses over the next five years.

The program provides opportunities for direct grant assistance as well as entrepreneurial coaching and training on a variety of topics including accounting and financial systems, inventory management, operational efficiency, marketing for growth and ROI, and staff development. The program provides participants with access to entrepreneurship advisors and PepsiCo employee volunteers to build an actionable plan for growth.

In 2023, to support the Black Restaurant Accelerator Program, Urban League of Louisiana continued its partnership with Chattanooga-based restaurant incubator, PROOF, to provide industry-based entrepreneurial training and consulting services for participating businesses. This program year, ULLA hosted 3 accelerator programs of Black-owned food service operators from across Louisiana to participate. During these 8-week, virtual programs, each participant obtained consulting services during and after each cohort.

Also in 2023, the program awarded ten food service operators from Louisiana with a total of \$100,000 in grants to support growth projects related to operational efficiency, production, business management, etc.

In March, Urban League of Louisiana participated in New Orleans Entrepreneurship Week by hosting a NOEW In Your Neighborhood event, “A Recipe for Success: Leveraging Best-in-Class Accelerator Programs to Grow Your Food Service Business”.

Accelerator programs can be a game-changer for start-ups and growth stage businesses in the food service industry. During this event, the Center shared insights on how food service accelerators are helping diverse entrepreneurs to grow and scale their operations through guidance on food costing, operational efficiency, branding and marketing, site selection, expanding to consumer packaged goods, and more. The event took place at the Southern Food and Beverage Museum, and highlighted the PepsiCo Foundation’s Black Restaurant Accelerator Program. The event also featured a panel of Louisiana-based, Black-owned food service entrepreneurs who have leveraged the program’s benefits to recover, grow, and sustain their operations.



THE BIG HEALTH EVENT

The BIG Health Event is the Urban League of Louisiana's signature event to advance health equity for African Americans in partnership with Ochsner Health. The events promote health and wellness for adults and children to positively impact families in Louisiana.

Several hundred people attended The Big Health Event on October 7th at the Raising Cane's River Center in Baton Rouge. Ochsner Health provided a total of 269 health screenings, 372 educational interactions in the health screenings zone, and 33 health educational training.

With special thanks to presenting sponsor Ochsner Health, sponsors Aetna Better Health, Pfizer, and Louisiana Healthcare Connections, partners Louisiana Department of Health, New Orleans Saints, New Orleans Pelicans, and Walgreens, for their support and commitment to advancing health and wellness opportunities for the community.

The Urban League of Louisiana continues to work to create accessible health and wellness opportunities and demonstrate how they connect to other social determinants of health including education, job opportunities, income, transportation, safe and affordable housing, and access to nutritious foods, all while centering community input and feedback.



AT&T CONNECTED LEARNING CENTER OPENS

The Urban League of Louisiana partnered with AT&T to open its new Connected Learning Center inside of the Urban League of Louisiana's Technology Hub. The Connected Learning Center provides internet access and education tools to those who face connectivity barriers holding them back from participating in the digital world. In addition, AT&T has made a \$50,000 contribution to the Urban League of Louisiana for additional support of the center.

The centers are designed to help tackle the digital divide by providing free access to a range of digital resources for students and families all under one roof, including: high-speed AT&T Fiber internet, Wi-Fi, computers, education resources, and tutoring and mentoring from AT&T employees and other community leaders.



SEE CHANGE COLLECTIVE

The SEE CHANGE Collective and accompanying action plan, a data-driven, community-oriented and outcomes-focused initiative is committed to identifying policy and practice solutions to close the racial wealth gap for Blacks, Hispanics, and Latinos in Greater New Orleans through homeownership, growing businesses, and increasing income and wages. By 2050, the greater New Orleans region stands to realize a \$43 billion gain in economic output by closing the racial wealth gap.

The SEE CHANGE Collective Action Plan, among other items, calls for efforts to:

- Coalesce regional banks to add alternative credit data to their portfolio products to increase the number of mortgage-ready Black, Hispanic, and Latino aspiring homeowners;
- Create housing equity road maps in parishes where they don't exist and to reform the appraisal certification system through removing or modifying the current apprenticeship requirement to increase the number of affordable homes available to purchase by Blacks, Hispanics and Latinos;
- Advocate for translations in app systems and websites for licenser and permit agencies to increase the profitability of Black, Hispanic and Latino-owned businesses in stable industries; and,
- Advocate for a ballot referendum to put a minimum wage vote to citizens as one way to help increase access to family sustaining wages for Black, Hispanic, and Latino people in the region.

The Urban League of Louisiana announced the SEE CHANGE Collective initiative in early 2021 and has since served as the backbone organization for a collective that has included a Steering Committee, a National Advisory Committee, Homeownership, Business Ownership and Entrepreneurship and Income and Wages working groups, community engagement participants, early champions, and project management consultants who all worked to implement a collective impact model that is poised to enact the changes needed to close the racial wealth gap.

SEE CHANGE Collective is generously funded through the support of the Chicago Community Trust, Greater New Orleans Foundation, PepsiCo Foundation, the Kresge Foundation, and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

2023 WORKING GROUP PRIORITY ACTIONS

- The Homeownership Working Group proposes to increase diversity in the appraisal profession by reforming the appraisal certification system through legislative means including removing/modifying the apprenticeship requirement.
- The Business Ownership & Entrepreneurship Working Group aims to increase the capture and collection of data regarding minority business ownership in the region by creating a database of minority-owned businesses in partnership with the various chambers of commerce and economic development organizations.
- The Wages & Income Working Group's goal is to increase the number of employers committed to racial economic equity by creating a public registry of high-quality employers that have "good jobs" with criteria that leads to greater racial economic equity.

PROGRAM SPONSORS

Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation

AARP

APTIM

Association of Women's Business Centers –
Verizon Small Business Digital Readiness

Capital One

Chevron

First Horizon

Louisiana Department of Transportation and
Development – DBE Supportive Services

Louisiana Economic Development – Economic
Development Administration

Louisiana Economic Development – Small and
Emerging Business Development

National Urban League – Mastercard

National Urban League – PepsiCo Foundation

National Urban League – Regions Bank

National Urban League – SBA Community
Navigator Pilot Program

National Urban League – UPS

National Urban League – Walmart

New Orleans & Company

New Orleans Business Alliance – Advancing Cities
Shell

U.S. Small Business Administration

Wells Fargo

Center for Workforce Development

Aptim

AT&T

Baton Rouge Community College

Capital One

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Delgado Community College

Energy Smart

Greater New Orleans, Inc

JP Morgan Chase

Kresge

Louisiana Automobile Dealers Association

Louisiana Community & Technical College System

Louisiana Workforce Commission

Markle Foundation

National Auto Dealers Association

National Urban League

National Urban League/Google

National Urban League/National Automobile
Dealers Association

National Urban League/Center for Energy
Workforce Development (CEWD)

National Urban League/Mastercard

National Urban League/Paychex

National Urban League/US Department of Labor

New Orleans Business Alliance/JP Morgan Chase

Shell

South Louisiana Community College

We Greaux People

Center for Education & Youth Development

AV Mitchell

Baton Rouge Community College

Big Buddy Program

Bloomberg Family Foundation Inc./Baton Rouge
Area Foundation

BR STEM

Junior Achievement
LOSFA
Louisiana Financial Literacy
Academy
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UNO Admissions
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Walton Family Foundation

Clarence L. Barney

HeadStart Center

Louisiana Department
of Education
Louisiana Endowment
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Total Community Action, Inc.
United Way of Southeast
Louisiana

Project Ready

Louisiana Dept. of Education -
21st Century Learning Center
National Urban League - Cox
National Urban League - U.S.
Department of Labor
United Way of Southeast
Louisiana

**Center for Policy
& Social Justice**

Greater New Orleans
Foundation
Kresge Foundation
Southern Poverty Law Center
Vote Your Voice
W.K. Kellogg Foundation

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Special thanks to the
following 2023 Members

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Khiry Jones
Burton Transit LLC
Kernesha Weatherly

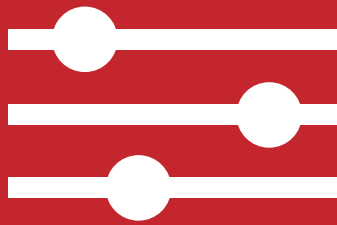
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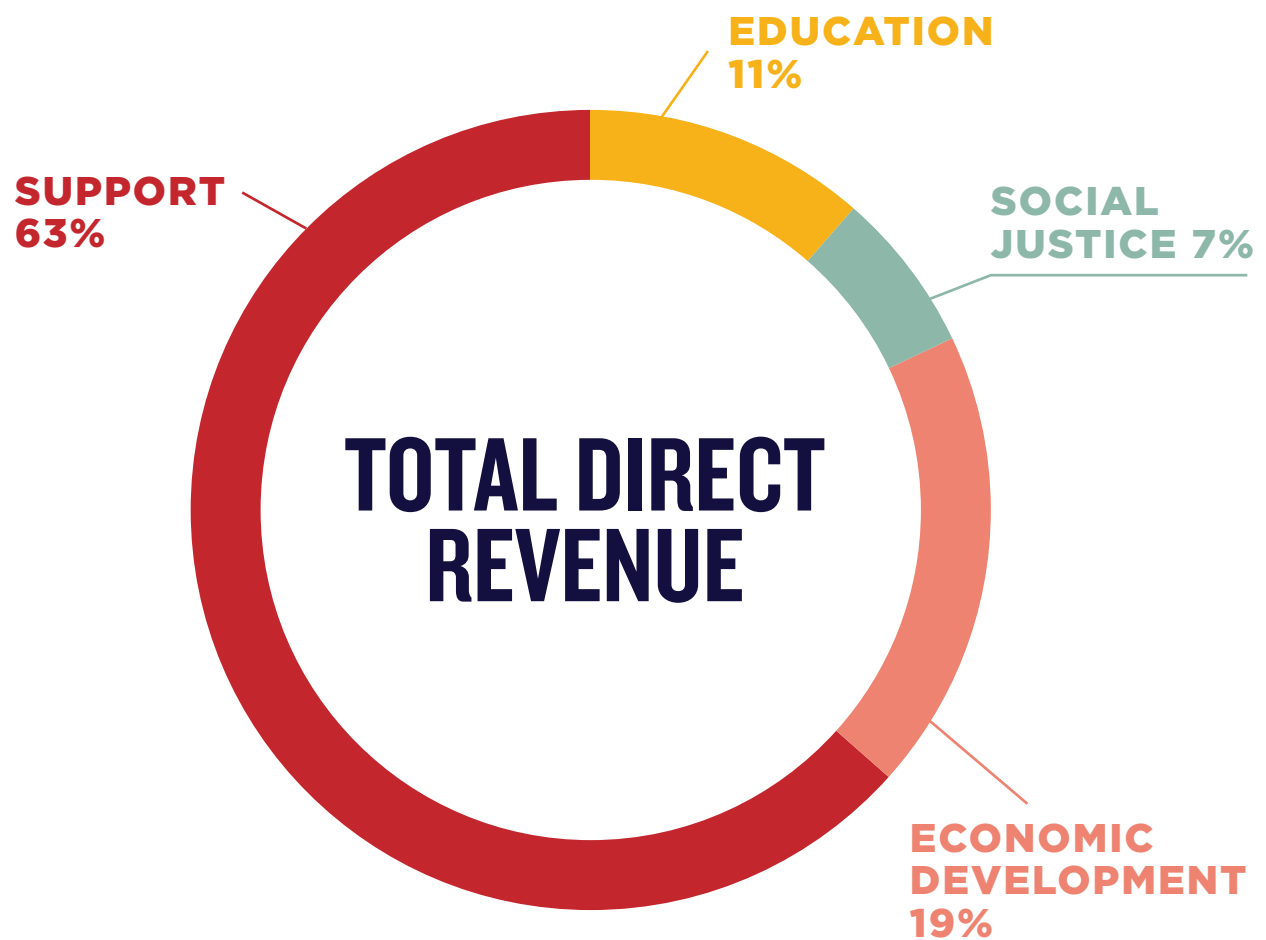
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Financials

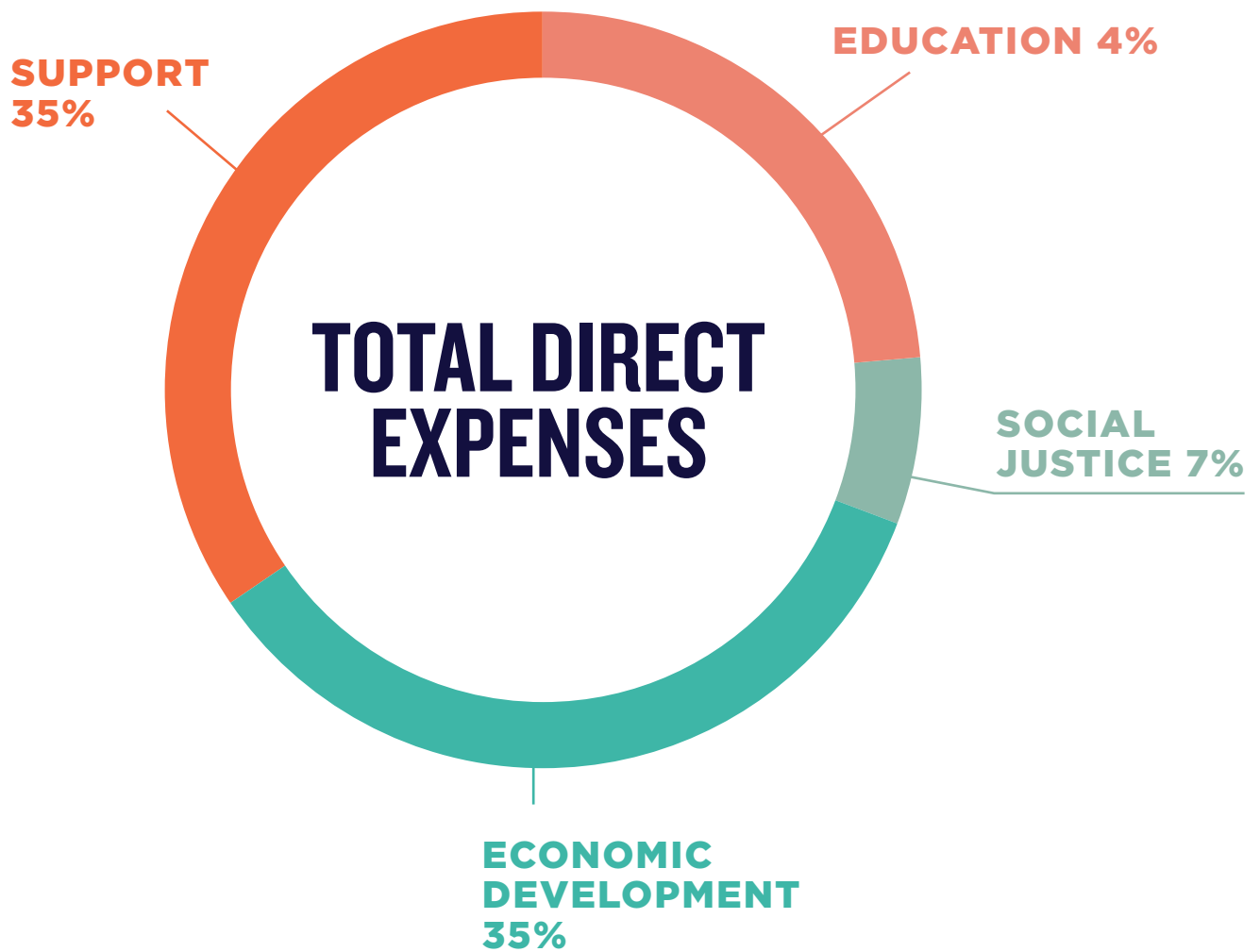
FINANCIAL STATEMENT - UNAUDITED
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION FOR THE YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2023

| ASSETS | Consolidated | Consolidated |
|---|-------------------|------------------|
| | 6/30/2023 | 6/30/2022 |
| Cash & Cash Equivalents | \$6,009,231 | 1,749,717 |
| Short-Term Investment | 3,536 | 3,530 |
| Due from Funding Agencies | 1,003,514 | 1,031,878 |
| Promise to Give | - | 9,000 |
| Prepaid Expense & Other Assets | 64,055 | 57,297 |
| Right of Use Asset | 88,826 | 113,644 |
| Land, Building, & Equipment, Net | 6,213,801 | 6,476,038 |
| Endowment | 49,475 | 45,964 |
| | 13,432,438 | 9,487,068 |
| LIABILITIES | | |
| Accounts Payable | 447,896 | 270,131 |
| Current Portion of Mortgage | 82,621 | 86,936 |
| Accrued Liabilities | 112,468 | 125,050 |
| Short-Term Notes | 16,317 | 16,317 |
| Long-Term Liabilities | 1,025,719 | 1,108,295 |
| Lease Obligation | 88,826 | 113,644 |
| Total Liabilities | 1,783,847 | 1,720,373 |
| NET ASSETS | | |
| Without Donor Restrictions | 9,191,032 | 4,770,797 |
| With Donor Restrictions | 2,457,559 | 2,995,898 |
| Total Net Assets | 11,648,591 | 7,766,695 |
| Total Liabilities and Net Assets | 13,432,438 | 9,691,022 |



SCHEDULE OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Federal Grants | 1,625,033 |
| State, Local, & Other Grants | 6,984,741 |
| Board Generated Self-Support | 770,145 |
| Client Generated Self-support | 1,078,049 |
| Program Revenue | 331,175 |
| Interest Income | 47,431 |
| Realized Gain (Loss on Investment) | 6,372 |
| Rental Income | 135,765 |
| Other Revenue | 84,320 |
| Total | 11,063,031 |
| Compensation Expenses | 3,527,844 |
| Program Expense | 470,345 |
| Occupancy | 384,992 |
| Professional Fees & Contracts | 1,158,757 |
| Maintenance & Repairs | 54,029 |
| Program Supplies | 161,815 |
| Telephone, Internet & Telecommunication | 144,982 |
| Postage & Shipping | 2,204 |
| Conferences, Conventions, & Meetings | 154,024 |
| Special Events | 182,660 |
| Equipment Rental | 47,117 |
| Printing & Publications | 60,508 |
| Advertising, Marketing & Promotion | 139,381 |
| Dues & Subscriptions | 11,650 |
| Bad Debt Expense | 217,317 |
| Other Expense (Indirect) | 99,091 |
| Interest on Loan & Line of Credit | 77,135 |
| Total Before Depreciation | 6,893,851 |
| Net Difference | 4,169,179 |
| Depreciation | 287,285 |



Celebrating 85 Years





Urban League of
Louisiana

4640 S. Carrollton Ave.
New Orleans, LA 70119

445 N. 12th Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

www.urbanleaguela.org



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