

# COLLAB

## Impact Report 2022



# To our Collab Community,



The past year at Collab has been a transformative one and I couldn't be more proud of our staff, community, funders, and other partners that made it happen. Collab continues to grow and develop new ways to support the entrepreneurs we serve as well as the larger New Haven entrepreneurial ecosystem.

We took the first steps in implementing our strategy to develop strong infrastructure to support organizational growth and to add programming to address the barriers faced by the entrepreneurs we serve. Those steps included bringing on the organization's first Executive Director, hiring a new Accelerator Programs Manager, and hiring a new Administrative Services Specialist.

In response to funder and entrepreneur feedback as well as historical data, we launched two new programs — the Collab Women's Initiative and the Collab Funding Intensive pilot to provide additional support to women entrepreneurs and to ensure Collab entrepreneurs are prepared to access investment funding.

We were thrilled to be recognized for our work in the community this year as recipients of the Elm City Freddy Fixer "Uplifting Our Community" Award. In addition, I was awarded the "Advocacy Award" from the Quinnipiac Chamber of Commerce. These recognitions not only affirm the work we're doing in the community, they demonstrate impact and tell us to stay in the fight.

As you read through the rest of the report, you will learn about some of the wins and successes of our amazing graduates as they continue to build thriving businesses in New Haven and beyond. It's because of you, your support and your partnership, that we are able to contribute to the success of our entrepreneurs as they build new businesses, create new jobs, and drive economic growth in our communities.

Thank you. I look forward to partnering with you on our shared mission for years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dawn Leaks Ragsdale".

**Dawn Leaks Ragsdale**  
Executive Director, Collab

# Our work is built on a fundamental belief — brilliant ideas exist in every neighborhood.

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Our mission is **to empower local entrepreneurs** with a compassionate, heart-centered approach to build good businesses, create economic power, and shape communities for themselves and their families. We prioritize serving people of color and women — particularly Black and Latinx entrepreneurs — who face persistent and significant barriers because of structural racism and sexism.

**Our core belief is that entrepreneurship should be accessible to every single person, no matter where they come from.**



## High-Touch Programs

Our programs combine high-quality business education with a heart-based leadership development curriculum.



## Trust & Access

Our programs provide wraparound services like childcare, transportation, and interpretation to make sure individuals can be supported and successful.



## Network of Support

We aim to ensure entrepreneurs have a system of enduring support after they graduate from our programs — including a broad network of mentors, pro bono partners, funders, and other programs.

## OUR ENTREPRENEURS

In 2022, many Collab entrepreneur graduates reached major milestones in their growth.

**Oh Shito!**, founded by Kwame Asare and his family, is a Ghanaian hot sauce company. Not only is Oh Shito! sauce placed in multiple Stop & Shop and other grocery store locations, but they received the CTNext Food Innovation LaunchPad's top prize of \$10,000.

**Threads By Tea**, founded by Tea Montgomery, is a bespoke wearable art company. We are thrilled that Tea received the prestigious Arts Council for Greater New Haven Arts Award this year.

**Venezia Pizza**, founded by the Torres family, is a pizza restaurant and venture. After running a Mexican cuisine food truck in 2022, they launched their restaurant location in North Haven!

**Tortillería Semilla New Haven**, co-founded by Ariana Shapiro, Elizabeth Gonzalez, Anabel Hernandez, Martina Perez, and Javier Gonzalez-Villatoro, launched a cooperative tortillería selling handmade tortillas.

And this is just a snapshot of the many stories of entrepreneurs across the city. We are thrilled for each and every one of our graduates on their hard work and progress!



## BY THE NUMBERS

# 112

Venture Graduates

# \$5,737,663

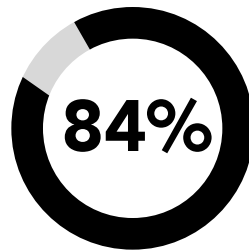
Revenue Generated

# \$2,656,978

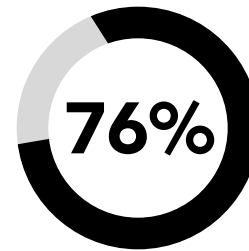
Follow-On Funding

# 241

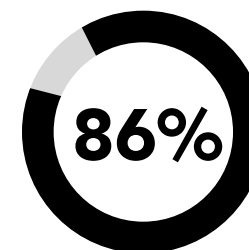
Jobs (FTE, PTE, PTConsultants)



Founders of Color



Women Founders



Still Operational



## RECOGNITIONS

Collab was honored to receive the **Elm City Freddy Fixer Uplifting Our Community Award** for our years of work dedicated to supporting New Haven entrepreneurs.

Dawn Leaks, Collab's Executive Director, received the **Advocacy Award from the Quinnipiac Chamber of Commerce** for her work directly advocating for entrepreneurs – especially women entrepreneurs.

# FINANCIAL REPORT

## FY 2022 Expenses



- Entrepreneurship Programming (\$198,604 - 50%)
- Management and General (\$129,595 - 33%)
- Marketing and Operational Expenses (\$67,063 - 17%)

**TOTAL: \$395,263**

## FY 2022 Income



- Government (State and Local - \$158,000 - 39%)
- Foundations (\$121,000 - 31%)
- Individual Donors (\$116,262 - 30%)

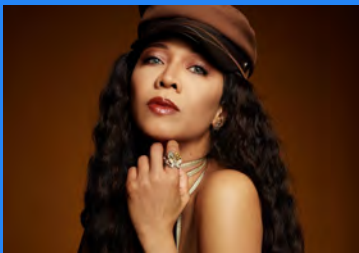
**TOTAL: \$395,263**



"I support Collab because **we need more entrepreneurs who take the risks and make the personal sacrifices to start new businesses that create jobs and opportunity in our community.** Starting and growing a business is very challenging and Collab helps people through the journey, providing the guidance and confidence needed to forge ahead and be successful."

**Josh Geballe**

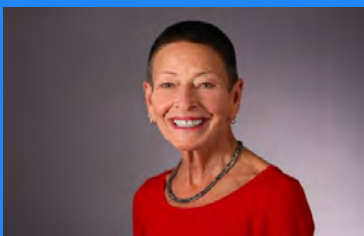
Senior Associate Provost for Entrepreneurship & Innovation, Yale University  
Managing Director, Yale Ventures



"**Collab is great at what they do:** fostering access to business lifelines in the Elm City! As a small business entrepreneur myself, who understands the plight, this is why I support, and will always support them."

**Alisha Crutchfield-McLean**

Founder and Owner, BLOOM



"I think Collab is part of the answer to **"How are you going to make your dreams come true?"** You provide a safe space in which to exchange ideas, develop skills and strategies, while receiving coaching and mentorship. Entrepreneurship is a journey to a successful destination."

**Lindy Lee Gold**

President, Amour Propre Fund

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Leela Bhashyam**

Associate Director of Partnerships, Purpose

**Sade Jean-Jacques**

Founder, Pascale's Body Care

**Ginny Kozlowski**

CEO, Economic Development Corporation of New Haven

**Karla Lindquist**

Executive Director, HOPE Partnerships

**Anika Singh Lemar**

Clinical Professor, Yale Law School

## **BOARD OF REVIEWERS**

**Genevive Walker**

CEO & President, ConnCAT

**Ellen Su**

Co-Founder and Chief Product Officer, Wellinks

**Juan Salas-Romer**

Owner, KNOWN

## **OUR COMMUNITY OF SUPPORTERS**

Alex Sulpasso

Alisha Crutchfield

Alison Murdock

Amy Walsh

Andrew Giering

Andrew Kurzrok

Anika Singh Lemar

Barb Nangle

Barbara Chesler

Ben Berkowitz

Blake Walker

Carlos Eyzaguirre

Charlie Lord

Constance Sulpasso

Crystal Mauch

David Berkowitz

David Goldblum

Della Leapman

Dorothy Adams

Elinor Slomba

Ellen Su

Emily Byrne

Eric Sanford

Erica Bradley

Greta Lindquist-

Merlino

Helen Kauder

James Kenny

Josh Geballe

Karen Bentlage

Karla Lindquist

Kyle Jensen

Lindy Lee Gold

Logan Milliken

Makaela Kingsley

Makaela Kingsley

Marcia Lafemina

Mark Donovan

Mark Abraham

Matthew Storeygaard

Melissa Stoll

Nancy Alexander

Nicolas Caplan

Premi Bhashyam

Lee Stump

Ronald Coleman

Ruby Melton

Sarah Taylor

Scot Melland

Sharon Capetta

Shelly Saczynski

Stephen Hamm

Tagan Engel

Tiffany Robinson

Tom Goldenberg

Tony Rossley

Virginia Kozlowski



**NEW HAVEN  
INNOVATION  
COLLABORATIVE**



The **COMMUNITY** Foundation  
for Greater New Haven



Building Community Wealth



**BANK OF AMERICA**



**Amour Propre Fund**



**COLLAB**

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