

Urban League of
Philadelphia

2020 Annual Report



Philadelphia: Unmasked 2020

The year 2020 unmasked America in ways none of us could have anticipated. COVID-19 exposed deep inequities in health, education, workforce, housing and small business, and continues to devastate Black and Brown communities at unequal rates. Directly stated: racism is the long-running pandemic within the pandemic. Yet perhaps for the first time, white Americans are witnessing first-hand what Black Americans have long known—that the “system” is not built for Black people.

As a result, the cries of the unheard and unseen have spilled onto our streets, and, hopefully, millions of Americans of all races and ethnicities have responded. The public calls for justice and racial equity, deferred for centuries, elevate our movement for civil rights. Black Lives Matter.

On behalf of the Urban League of Philadelphia and the National Urban League, we are committed to fighting for you and your loved ones, and our actions since the onset of the global health crisis reflect that dedication. We are pleased to share with you our 2020 results.

Our direct services are accessible virtually, but we also remain present in the community, delivering meals and masks, sweeping streets, granting emergency funds, and raising our voices to fight for individuals and families who are sick, tired, broke, unemployed, undereducated, and incarcerated.

Alongside local and national leaders, we are developing clear solutions that prioritize public health and education, reimagine public safety, and rethink mass incarceration. We invite you to join us as we respond to this turning point in our nation’s history and realize a future for America that is invested in Black and Brown communities.

Sincerely,



Andrea L. Custis,
President and CEO



Keith Bethel,
Board Chair



OUR 2020 RESULTS

Youth Leadership and Achievement

We continue to prepare the next generation for the emerging opportunities of the future. With an emphasis on S.T.E.M., college and career preparation, and exposure and 21st century skills, our youth programs are developing leaders. Research-based GEAR UP, a partnership with the School District of Philadelphia, impacted 1,300 students from 12 under-resourced high schools. Over the summer, 112 of those students completed an internship to experience the workplace firsthand.

Through Project Ready, a signature program developed by the National Urban League, 27 students gained access to crucial college and career pathways. The innovative Ignite Program, designed with local companies to prepare graduating students for existing workforce opportunities, engaged 167 students at three high schools. And because the pursuit of higher education now requires a hefty financial investment, 79 students were awarded scholarships to pursue their dreams, totaling more than \$120,000.

Saving Small Businesses

The economic fallout from COVID-19 has seismic implications for Black-owned businesses. Leveraging strong community ties and over a decade of trust-building, the Urban League Entrepreneurship Center (ULEC) is providing critical guidance to businesses on life support, connecting them to loan and grant opportunities. ULEC also awarded cash grants to help entrepreneurs offset immediate financial challenges. In 2020, ULEC counseled or trained 353 entrepreneurs, resulting in the development of 95 jobs and access to nearly \$4.1 million in contracts and capital. In the midst of the pandemic, ULEC hosted a *Business Pitch Challenge* that awarded \$6,500 in prizes. The morale-boosting competition was a partnership with the Business Center for Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprise and The Eastern Minority Business Development Council.

Building Neighborhoods Through Homeownership

Empowering families to build generational wealth through homeownership is a crucial component of our mission. In 2020, our HUD-certified housing counseling program impacted a total of 1,815 unique individuals. Of those, 460 received first-time, one-on-one homebuyer counseling, and 65 families achieved homeownership, with a total market value of over \$11 million. Our team resolved 97 home foreclosures, sparing families the social and economic consequences of homelessness and preserving \$16 million in home values.

In response to COVID-19, we supported tenants in crisis across the city. Through our efforts, 131 renters received immediate counseling, and 50 were granted “no-strings” emergency funds, while 112 additional families retained housing stability with support from our utility assistance and property tax counseling programs. Overall, 1,015 individuals benefited from our trusted financial literacy education.

Jobs, Training, and Leadership

Workforce training is a cornerstone of our work. Last year, Career Services supported 696 men and women in pursuit of career advancement and professional skills development. A total 245 individuals participated in digital literacy education, and 160 connected with employment. In response to the pandemic, we adapted quickly to offer virtual job coaching and access to at-home Internet connectivity. We are proud to report the relaunch of workforce-specific programs to prepare more constituents for industry-recognized tech credentials and advancement, and we initiated an intensive re-entry program, Out4Good, which prepares returning citizens for workforce opportunities.

Urban Leadership Forum, a rigorous seven-month leadership development initiative for rising professionals in the region, grew the skills and business acumen of 47 participants. The Philadelphia African American Leadership Development Forum, created in response to unique leadership challenges experienced by Black nonprofit executives, supported 22 professionals through training, best practices and peer mentorship. Our partnership with Cheyney University of Pennsylvania matched 57 college students with 21st century training and workplace opportunities, preparing them for post-graduation success.

Health Equity and Wellness

Building neighborhoods to be thriving and sustainable is a top priority, and the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated this commitment. Last year, we participated in a dozen community health and resource fairs, leveraging our trusted brand to bring research-based public health information to more than 14,000 people. Partnerships with leading health organizations helped us deliver crucial resources to underserved communities, particularly children and families. Our 2020 Public Service Announcement about the importance of childhood vaccinations generated over 3 million media impressions, and our social media platforms continue to dialogue with diverse audiences about public health.

Advocacy

From the Harrisburg Rotunda to Washington DC and City Hall, our advocacy work intensified last year. Through the mobilization of new voters, extensive Census education and outreach, and the continued fight for criminal justice reform and equitable public education, our team's engagement efforts touched thousands of new constituents.

In response to COVID-19, we launched a vote-by-mail mobilization campaign, *PA #CouchParty*, which drew more than 400 participants, including Philadelphia Eagle Malcolm Jenkins and Questlove. Developed to excite and inspire voters, our virtual partygoers sent more than 250,000 text messages to friends and family, encouraging them to request mail-in ballots.

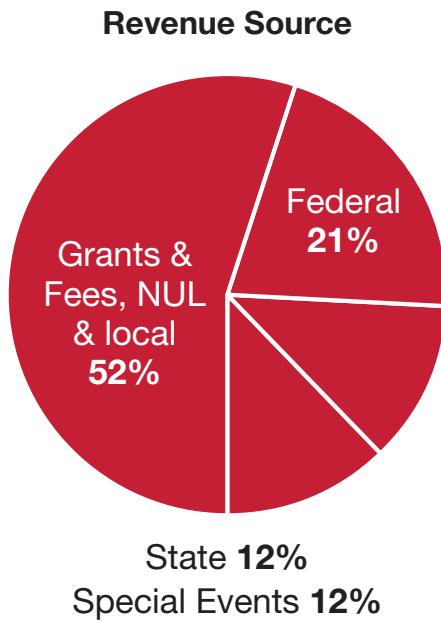
A unique partnership with the Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium empowered the Black community to get tested and supported the distribution of personal protective equipment and critical health information to 1,000 people.

In June, to uplift Black businesses in West Philadelphia, more than 100 volunteers pitched in for *Black Minds on Market*, an extensive clean-up project and partnership between the Urban League, Lowe's Home Improvement, West Philadelphia City Councilors, and State Senator Vincent Hughes. Another highlight was our protest march, *Fathers Fighting for Families*, which drew hundreds of socially distanced supporters and generated 10 million media impressions. Marc Morial, our national president, delivered the keynote address.

FINANCIALS

Unaudited

Assets		
Cash		\$2,355,435
Receivables		\$470,282
Other Assets		\$67,399
Total Assets		\$2,893,116
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses		\$107,990
Other Liabilities		\$143,491
Total Liabilities		\$251,481
Net Assets		
Beginning New Assets		\$1,641,338
Current Year Surplus		\$1,000,297
Total New Assets		\$2,641,635
Total Liabilities and Net Assets		\$2,893,116



Dedicated Affinity Groups

We are proud to acknowledge the members and partners who support the advancement of our mission. Affinity groups, including NExT Philadelphia and the Urban League Guild, amplify our message and impact across the region. NExT, a 100-member network of young professionals focused on volunteerism and leadership development, supported voter education, voter registration, and Census participation. The network's substantial expertise and social media savvy engaged hundreds of new followers, especially Millennials and Generation Z. The Guild, a membership organization dedicated to fundraising and community service, contributed 5,300 volunteer hours.

Looking Ahead

Philadelphia is at a crossroads. The coronavirus has pulled our city into health and economic crises. For Black Americans, the impact is sharpened by a third pandemic—systemic racism—particularly as it manifests in our policing and criminal justice systems. While we cannot change the legacy of racism overnight, we are responding to the civil rights challenges of our time with urgent action. As we have done for more than a century, the Urban League Movement is fighting for you and your family. We are ready to leverage our resources to break the cycle of empty rhetoric and reforms. We are protecting your access to the vote, lifting up Black-owned businesses, preventing homelessness, building generational wealth, and advocating for the health and safety of Black and Brown communities. In alignment with grassroots and national partners who share these commitments, we are demanding change. Because without true justice, there can be no peace.

Our Funders

For an extended version of our Annual Report and a complete list of our generous donors and funders, please visit urbanleaguephila.org.

