



USI | URBAN STRATEGIES, INC.

Families at the Center of Results

Building Stronger Communities **Together**

2023 Impact Report





Table of Contents

Message from Our President	3
2023 Impact Highlights	4
Transforming Communities Together	5
Creating Thriving Neighborhoods	8
Advancing Economic Independence	10
Fostering Health and Wellness	13
Leveraging Community Resources	15
Preparing the Next Generation	19
Civic Engagement and Advocacy	21
Strengthening Our Commitment to Inclusion	24
Financial Integrity & Community Investment	27



Every victory, large and small, has been achieved by walking shoulder-to-shoulder with residents who trust us to be part of their journey.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

When I reflect on 2023, I'm filled with **profound optimism** about the future of America's communities. This year, Urban Strategies, Inc. mobilized **\$33 million in resources** and worked alongside **thousands of residents** who showed us, time and again, what's possible when we trust in the power of community-led transformation. In neighborhoods across America, we witnessed **everyday heroes** rising up to reshape their communities, proving that the most powerful solutions come from within.

Our approach has always been different - we don't simply implement programs, we **build relationships**. In every community we serve, from **St. Louis to San Juan**, we've sat at kitchen tables, attended neighborhood meetings, and walked the streets with residents who know their communities best. These conversations have shaped our understanding, challenged our assumptions, and strengthened our conviction that **lasting change begins with listening and trust**.

This year marked a **significant evolution** in our work. We've expanded our **economic mobility initiatives**, connecting hundreds of residents to living-wage careers. Our **youth leadership programs** sparked a new generation of community advocates, while our **housing partnerships** helped families move from uncertainty to stability.

Within our own organization, we've built a team that **reflects the diversity** of the communities we serve and strengthened partnerships that multiply our impact. Our staff brings not just professional expertise, but **lived experience** and deep commitment to this work. Together with our partners - from resident leaders to national institutions - we're building an **ecosystem of change** that grows stronger every day.

What makes me most proud isn't just what we've accomplished, but **how we've done it**. Every victory has been achieved by walking **shoulder-to-shoulder** with residents who trust us to be part of their journey. Their courage, creativity, and unwavering hope continue to inspire our work and shape our vision for the future.

Looking ahead, I've never been more **energized** about our work. The challenges our communities face are complex, but the **spirit of possibility** I witness every day fills me with hope. Together, we're not just building better neighborhoods - we're creating a **blueprint for a more equitable America**.

Esther Shin
President

2023 Impact Highlights:

Creating Thriving Neighborhoods



Partnered with 900+ community champions to architect transformative solutions that honor local wisdom and catalyze lasting neighborhood change.



Supported 421 community-driven initiatives, empowering residents to shape parks, cultural hubs, and shared spaces that reflect their vision.



Equipped 84 change architects with tools to build and fortify thriving, resilient communities.



Advancing Economic Independence

Equipped 105 emerging businesses with grants and training, fueling economic growth and job creation where it's needed most.



Fostering Health and Wellness

Partnered with local clinics to provide mental health services, **counseling 288 clients through therapy and support groups**.

Civic Engagement & Advocacy



Launched "Communities in Action" initiative across 4 locations, empowering residents to co-create and fund equitable solutions for community wellbeing



Helped secure \$4.5M+ in direct funding for collaborative housing, infrastructure, and economic development projects



Deployed five learning communities across 22 cities, providing technical assistance to reduce social health disparities and promote community well-being.

Leveraging Community Resources



Hosted 9,833 large-scale resource fairs, bringing essential services, job opportunities, and wellness support directly to residents.

Preparing the Next Generation



Engaged 400+ youth in civic and career readiness programs, inspiring them to become advocates and leaders in their communities.

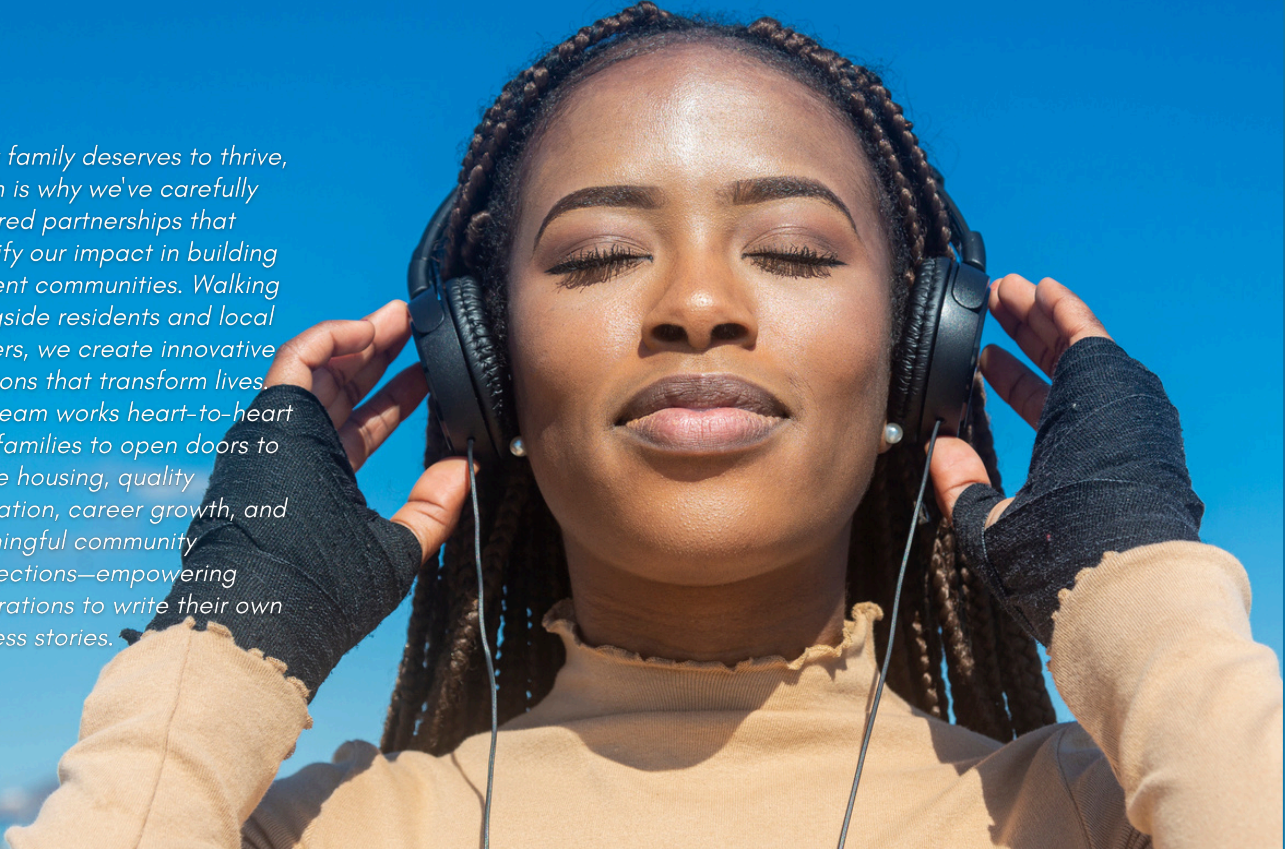
Transforming Communities Together

For over four decades, Urban Strategies, Inc. has walked alongside communities, nurturing their inherent wisdom and strength to create lasting, positive change. Our approach interweaves deep community engagement with expertise in housing, education, health, and economic mobility—creating a comprehensive support system that empowers families to thrive. Like skilled gardeners tending to unique gardens, we cultivate programs that honor local wisdom while addressing systemic barriers that have historically limited opportunity.

- Nurture the dreams and aspirations of **30,000+ families** across **40 major cities**, walking alongside **100,000+ individuals** as they chart their paths to success
- Guide a vibrant community of **190 Choice Neighborhood** partners in reimagining systems, cultivating innovation, and scaling transformative practices
- Weave together comprehensive support across six vital pillars—from family wellbeing to civic power—creating a tapestry of opportunity for every community member
- Share our deep wisdom through strategic coaching that empowers organizations to build equity-centered policies and powerful coalitions for change
- Champion our groundbreaking **Communities in Action** framework, uniting diverse voices to craft solutions that honor lived experiences
- Illuminate pathways to change as a "Think and Do" organization, bridging community wisdom with innovative solutions that reshape the field
- Cultivate economic justice through our **Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI)**, nurturing entrepreneurship in historically excluded communities
- Foster the creation of **3,820 meaningful jobs**, each representing a family's journey toward financial stability and dignity
- Channel **\$5.55 million** in vital resources to visionary entrepreneurs, believing in their power to transform local economies
- Walk alongside **105 emerging businesses**, providing nurturing guidance and expertise to help them flourish and grow
- Forge transformative partnerships with Truist and Kresge Foundation across eight markets, expanding possibilities for community wealth-building
- Craft innovative financial solutions that honor community wisdom while dismantling historical barriers to economic opportunity

Together, USI's **168 employees** serve more than **30,000 families** across 40 communities in the U.S., Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Every family deserves to thrive, which is why we've carefully nurtured partnerships that amplify our impact in building resilient communities. Walking alongside residents and local leaders, we create innovative solutions that transform lives. Our team works heart-to-heart with families to open doors to stable housing, quality education, career growth, and meaningful community connections—empowering generations to write their own success stories.



How We Bring Our Vision and Values to Life

Vision: At Urban Strategies, Inc. we envision vibrant communities where every family's dreams take root and flourish. Through our deep understanding of interconnected community needs—from stable homes to quality education, economic opportunities, health access, and civic engagement—we nurture the foundations of lasting change.

Our passion drives us to work hand-in-hand with residents, transforming challenges into stepping stones toward brighter futures. We know that when communities have the right resources and support, extraordinary transformations happen.

That's why we champion comprehensive, resident-led solutions that break down barriers and open doors to opportunity. Together, we're not just building programs—we're cultivating environments where families can write their own success stories and future generations can thrive.

Values: Our unwavering commitment to equity and empowerment shapes everything we do. These core values guide our path forward:



Integrity: We earn trust through truthful actions that honor our community commitments.



Accountability: We hold ourselves to the highest standards because our families' success defines our excellence.



Respect: We honor each person's dignity, wisdom, and potential, valuing every voice and story.



Innovation: We boldly challenge conventions to forge creative paths toward community transformation.



Diversity: We embrace diverse perspectives and cultural traditions as the cornerstone of strong communities.



Collaboration: We unite strengths through partnership, knowing collective action drives lasting change.

Engage, Empower, Transform

Our shared commitment unites us around a common mission: uplifting communities, empowering individuals, and advancing equity. This purpose forms the foundation of our culture: Engage, Empower, Transform.

Engage

- Bring my passion and purpose to each project
- Embrace challenges, innovate thoughtfully, and enjoy the journey
- Act with integrity and build lasting trust with others

Empower

- Champion diverse voices and perspectives in every conversation
- Share resources and opportunities to lift others up
- Advocate for fair and inclusive solutions that drive meaningful change

Transform

- Collaborate openly to achieve shared goals
- Inspire each other to turn vision into action
- Commit to lasting impact through collective growth and learning

How We Measure Our Impact

At Urban Strategies, Inc., we combine deep community knowledge with data-driven expertise to create lasting transformation. Our impact measurement framework is built hand-in-hand with residents, who define success metrics, guide implementation strategies, and shape every milestone in their community's revitalization. This resident-centered approach ensures that positive change is both measurable and meaningful to the people who matter most.

We've learned that lasting transformation requires both tender care and bold vision. Our approach spans six key areas of change, each designed to nurture the seeds of possibility while dismantling barriers to opportunity. Through careful measurement and heartfelt storytelling, we capture not just the quantitative growth of our work, but the profound human stories of resilience, leadership, and collective power that emerge when communities are truly supported to thrive.

✓ **Creating Thriving Communities**

✓ **Leveraging Community Resources**

✓ **Advancing Economic Influence**

✓ **Civic Engagement & Advocacy**

✓ **Fostering Health & Wellness**

✓ **Preparing the Next Generation**





CREATING THRIVING NEIGHBORHOODS

Every family deserves a foundation from which hopes can soar and futures can flourish. At Urban Strategies, Inc., we recognize that housing inequality stems from deep-rooted generational challenges. That's why we stand with residents, combining their wisdom with proven solutions to strengthen neighborhoods. Our culturally-affirming approach opens doors to resources, support networks, and opportunities that empower families to write their own success stories.

Families: The Heart of Lasting Change

At Urban Strategies, Inc., we recognize that families are not merely recipients of services, but active architects of their communities' futures. As a passionate advocate, we take a collaborative approach, working side-by-side with families and residents to establish shared goals and create tailored solutions that reflect each neighborhood's unique challenges and aspirations. Through our commitment to the Results Count® framework, we empower families to participate in decision-making, leading to lasting, transformative change.

- Recognizing families as the cornerstone of thriving, equitable neighborhoods, USI's family-centered approach places their aspirations at the forefront of our revitalization efforts.
- As implementation partners for 20 Choice Neighborhoods grants, we foster a collaborative, participatory process that empowers residents to co-create solutions addressing their community's specific needs.
- By cultivating cross-sector partnerships and actively engaging local leaders, we ensure that our initiatives are deeply rooted in the community's vision and supported by a diverse network of stakeholders.
- Investing in families' inherent strengths and prioritizing their self-identified goals, we help catalyze the development of vibrant communities where housing stability, educational access, and economic mobility are achievable for all.
- This collaborative, family-centric model enables us to nurture thriving neighborhoods where residents have the resources, opportunities, and agency to shape their own futures.



We honor families as the true experts of their neighborhoods, walking alongside them to transform bold visions into reality. Through genuine partnership and shared wisdom, we nurture the seeds of change that each community plants—creating powerful, lasting solutions that are as unique as the neighborhoods themselves.

—Donovan Duncan,
Executive Vice President



Building Vibrant Communities

USI takes a holistic approach, viewing housing, health, education, and economic mobility as essential, interconnected pillars that collectively define Place—an environment where families and communities can thrive. By strategically aligning our resources, we work alongside government agencies, businesses, and philanthropic partners to implement comprehensive, community-led solutions that generate measurable, lasting outcomes. Our model prioritizes continuous learning, shared decision-making, and inclusivity, reimagining traditional investment processes to empower local voices and foster sustainable neighborhood transformation.

Through this collaborative framework, we are not only revitalizing neighborhoods but also creating resilient, opportunity-rich communities that can support generations to come. Our data-driven approach enables us to continuously assess the impact of our initiatives, making adjustments as needed to ensure the solutions we implement truly reflect the community's evolving priorities. and empower residents to shape their own futures.



ADVANCING ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

Every person deserves the opportunity to build a fulfilling career and create lasting financial security. At Urban Strategies, we walk alongside residents on their unique journeys toward economic independence, understanding that each path is deeply personal. Through targeted workforce development programs, we empower our neighbors to overcome barriers and unlock their full potential in the careers they choose. We're not just investing in programs - we're investing in people's dreams across communities nationwide, creating positive change that will benefit generations to come.

Investing in Thriving Communities

At Urban Strategies, Inc., we prioritize partnerships with Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)-owned businesses, viewing them as essential drivers of economic growth and resilience. These businesses bring jobs, innovation, and vital services to often underserved neighborhoods. By investing in BIPOC-owned organizations, we help dismantle barriers to access and opportunity, empowering entrepreneurs to scale their impact and deepen their roots. Our intentional approach fosters sustainable growth, job creation, and wealth generation, contributing to intergenerational prosperity. These partnerships are vital for both local revitalization and a thriving, inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem. USI believes true economic impact emerges from championing business diversity, supporting voices that reflect community strengths. Through these relationships, we advance equitable urban development, opportunity, and economic stability for all.

Championing BIPOC-Owned Enterprises

- We offer flexible financing options, such as emergent enterprise loans and revenue-based funding, to support BIPOC business owners in overcoming barriers to traditional lending. Our tailored business development programs provide strategic planning, marketing assistance, operational optimization, and peer-to-peer mentorship to strengthen the long-term viability of BIPOC-owned enterprises.
- In partnership with local organizations, we create customized initiatives that address the unique challenges faced by BIPOC business owners, promoting equity in procurement and amplifying success stories to highlight these essential contributors and inspire the next generation of diverse entrepreneurs.

By providing access to capital, business coaching, and marketing support, we have empowered local entrepreneurs like the **Maryland Skin Institute** to open and expand their businesses.



At USI, we make change real. Our support for BIPOC-owned businesses and inclusive practices drives a more equitable future. I'm proud to be part of an organization that champions economic empowerment.

—Julian Wyatt, CDFI
Director



Closing the Racial Wealth Gap

Our commitment to closing the racial wealth gap drives every strategy we design. As trusted partners to communities and cities nationwide, we leverage decades of expertise to architect holistic solutions that empower BIPOC individuals and families to build generational wealth. Through targeted initiatives in entrepreneurship, workforce development, and asset-building, we're creating sustainable pathways to prosperity that transform communities for generations.

Leading Change from Within

At USI, meaningful impact starts with our internal commitment to equity. We nurture a workplace that reflects our vibrant communities, providing living wages and advancement opportunities. This inside-out approach powers our partnerships with local leaders to design innovative financial empowerment and neighborhood revitalization initiatives. By combining community wisdom with creative solutions, we're building resilient communities where inclusive growth thrives.

Breaking Down Barriers to Financial Access

In communities across America, talented entrepreneurs with powerful visions often face closed doors when seeking financial support to build their dreams. Our Community Development Financial Institution is changing this narrative by confronting systemic inequities head-on and creating pathways to success for BIPOC entrepreneurs.

We believe that access to capital is more than just a financial transaction—it's a catalyst for generational change. Our comprehensive approach combines accessible funding with robust support systems, fostering an ecosystem where minority-owned businesses can thrive and communities can prosper. By addressing historical barriers to financial access, we're not just funding businesses; we're fueling dreams, strengthening families, and building resilient communities.

Through targeted programs and strategic partnerships, we're building pathways to empower minority entrepreneurs:

- We provide comprehensive support through tailored business services, back-office assistance, and compliance guidance. This foundational support ensures entrepreneurs have the tools and knowledge they need to build successful enterprises and navigate business challenges effectively.
- We foster connection and collaboration by building strong networks among Black, Brown, and Indigenous entrepreneurs. Through meaningful mentorship opportunities and collaborative spaces, we create an ecosystem where knowledge is shared and relationships flourish.
- We capitalize on potential by attracting diverse funding sources and efficiently directing capital to promising ventures. Our strategic investment approach accelerates economic growth by supporting transformative community projects and innovative business solutions.
- We maximize our impact through targeted resident services and technical support in key areas. By leveraging strategic partnerships and ensuring services reach those most in need, we create lasting positive change in our communities.

USI deployed **\$5.5 million** to support business growth and community revitalization – an investment fueling transformative change for years to come.



10

markets experienced measurable growth in local businesses



At USI, we make change real. Our support for BIPOC-owned businesses and inclusive practices drives a more equitable future. I'm proud to be part of an organization that champions economic empowerment.

–Rachel Walker,
Regional Vice President





FOSTERING HEALTH & WELLNESS

Health and wellness are vital to building resilient communities. At Urban Strategies, Inc. we ensure individuals and families can access quality healthcare, mental health resources, and comprehensive wellness programs tailored to their needs. Through strategic partnerships with healthcare providers and evidence-based community initiatives, we work to reduce health disparities and create sustainable pathways to well-being. Our focus on preventive health and wellness education extends nationwide, empowering residents to lead healthier, more fulfilling lives.

Creating Healthier Futures Together

At Urban Strategies, Inc., we are driven by a deep commitment to fostering health and wellness across the communities we serve. We believe that every resident deserves access to the resources, guidance, and support needed to lead fulfilling, stable lives. Through strategic partnerships, dedicated advocacy, and our talented team of Family Support Specialists, we provide a comprehensive, holistic approach to wellness that addresses each individual's unique circumstances and needs.

Our work is centered on connecting people with vital services and empowering them to achieve lasting health and well-being. Guided by our mission to build resilient, thriving communities, we've established a robust framework focused on four essential pillars of wellness:

- **Access to Essential Resources:** Ensuring residents have direct support for food, healthcare, and basic services for healthy living.
- **Financial Empowerment:** Connecting residents to resources that promote economic stability and reduce health-related financial barriers.
- **Advocacy and Rights:** Supporting residents in securing fair access to housing, healthcare, and necessary resources.
- **Community and Connection:** Building a strong care network with trusted partnerships and ongoing support to foster belonging.

By holistically addressing these critical dimensions of wellness, Urban Strategies, Inc. empowers individuals and families to overcome barriers, access essential resources, and build healthier, more secure lives.



Through People First, Empowered by USI, I've found not just safety, but a true partner who understands my journey. Their support has transformed how I see my family's future.

—Janice Oliver, Resident



At the heart of our health and wellness initiatives lies a deep understanding that true well-being encompasses far more than just physical health. It is a multifaceted experience that requires addressing emotional, social, financial, and environmental factors. That's why our approach is designed to provide a continuum of care, ensuring that every individual we serve has access to the personalized resources, support, and opportunities they need to thrive.

In 2023, USI made impactful strides across three areas of our comprehensive wellness strategy:

- **Holistic Assessments:** Our Family Support Specialists conducted comprehensive assessments to understand each resident's unique challenges, goals, and circumstances, allowing us to create tailored action plans.
- **Integrated Services:** By partnering with a diverse network, we connected residents with a wide range of integrated services, from primary care to financial coaching.
- **Wraparound Support:** Our dedicated team provided ongoing assessment, follow-up, and support to ensure residents access resources and develop skills, confidence, and community connections.



LEVERAGING COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Ensuring housing stability is key to empowering residents and driving sustainable change. At Urban Strategies, Inc., we prioritize keeping families securely housed through tailored support and landlord partnerships. By maintaining stable homes, residents can access resources, build resilience, and invest in their community's long-term wellbeing. Through rent assistance and eviction prevention, we help residents stay housed and avoid displacement. By providing a foundation of stable homes, we empower residents to fully participate in their community's success.

Building Bridges for Community Success

With over 45 years of experience, Urban Strategies, Inc. empowers community transformation in 40 locations across the U.S., Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands by hiring local staff, providing innovative tools, and fostering collaboration to address unique challenges and drive lasting change.



Granted \$1.75M
to diverse
builders
nationwide.



Dedicated 10+
hours to support
emerging
businesses

In 2023, we launched **Communities in Action**, partnering with **Cleveland, Durham, Saint Paul, and Selma** to address systemic barriers to investment by prioritizing the voices and expertise of local residents. By designing programs that honor local culture and values, we aim to equip communities with the tools for resilience and sustainable progress.

Our policy team leverages granular, real-time data to strategically advocate for transformative systems that authentically reflect local community needs. In 2023, we dismantled systemic barriers by creating targeted leadership opportunities across housing, infrastructure, and economic development sectors.

Our strategic engagement approach resulted in:

- 20 collaborative policy sessions
- Engagement with 165 partners across four cities
- Comprehensive action plans addressing housing affordability, infrastructure improvements, and economic development strategies

Key outcomes included:

- Conducted 70 combined hours of community collaborative sessions with an average of 22 participants across all cities, reflecting a shared commitment.
- Successful advocacy for \$4.75 million in public infrastructure investments
- Conducted 70 combined hours of community collaborative sessions with an average of 22 participants across all cities, reflecting a shared commitment.

This approach demonstrates our commitment to equity-driven, community-centered policy development that transforms systemic challenges into opportunities for sustainable local progress.



Transforming Communities, Empowering People

Systems transformation is our catalyst for equity, challenging the status quo to create meaningful change in communities nationwide. At Urban Strategies, Inc., we begin by building trust through genuine, transparent community dialogue. Our approach centers on amplifying voices traditionally silenced by systemic inequities.

We recognize that true progress demands courageous conversations and radical collaboration. While power structures may resist dismantling long-standing barriers, we stand resolute in our commitment to Black communities and communities of color. Our work is about more than engagement—it's about intentional power redistribution, creating pathways for authentic community leadership and sustainable transformation.



Cleveland: Pioneering Local Transformation

In Cleveland, we've shattered traditional development paradigms by centering community voices in housing and economic strategies. Our collaborative approach transforms stakeholders from passive recipients to active architects of change, creating initiatives that breathe life into local aspirations.



Durham: Building Sustainable Futures

Durham represents our commitment to radical economic transformation. By partnering with local entrepreneurs and community leaders, we've designed programs that dismantle barriers and create pathways for sustainable business growth, challenging the systemic constraints that have historically limited opportunity.



Saint Paul: Nurturing Urban Innovation

Saint Paul exemplifies our belief in the power of community-led innovation. We don't just listen—we amplify, support, and elevate local voices, ensuring that every initiative reflects the rich cultural tapestry and dynamic needs of the community.



Selma: Connecting History to Possibility

In Selma, our work is a testament to resilience and empowerment. By deeply engaging with the community's historical context, we co-create strategies that honor past struggles while building sustainable pathways for future prosperity, centering the voices of those who have been systematically marginalized.

Community-Centered Transformation

Urban Strategies Inc. advances a sophisticated, multi-dimensional model of community development that transcends traditional urban planning:

- **Participatory Design:** We implement collaborative research methodologies that treat local expertise as an essential form of intellectual capital, systematically integrating lived experiences into comprehensive development frameworks.
- **Systemic Intervention:** We diagnose and address complex urban challenges to target root causes rather than symptoms, creating holistic strategies that simultaneously address multiple dimensions of community constraints and potential.
- **Adaptive Methodology:** Our strategic framework operates as a dynamic, responsive intelligence system. We continuously calibrate our approaches through rigorous feedback loops, advanced community analytics, and emerging urban research.

Strategic Partnership Ecosystem

We forge powerful alliances to comprehensively address community challenges:

- **Holistic Solutions:** Precision-engineered programs targeting housing stability, workforce development, and comprehensive health access
- **Adaptive Strategies:** Responsive, data-driven interventions tailored to each community's unique socioeconomic landscape
- **Collaborative Ecosystem:** Integrating nonprofits, government agencies, and local enterprises into a unified development network

Driving Economic Mobility

We view economic opportunity as a foundational community development strategy:

- **Empowerment Infrastructure:** Strategic job training, financial literacy, and entrepreneurship development
- **Measurable Impact:** 200+ residents transitioned to sustainable economic pathways in 2023
- **Generational Strategy:** Building economic resilience through systemic opportunity creation



Cultivating Lasting Change

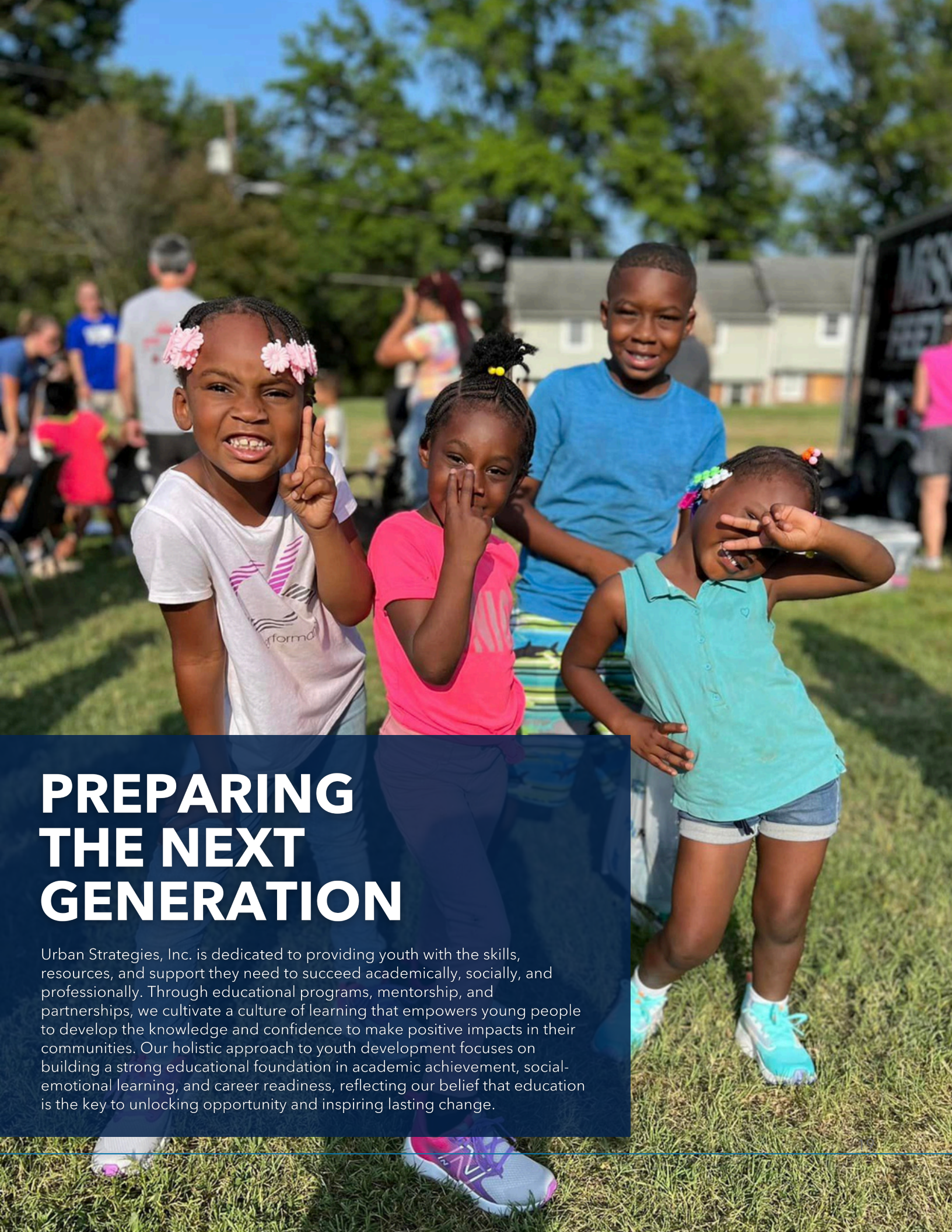
Our commitment transcends immediate interventions:

- **Systemic Transformation:** Methodically dismantling structural barriers to equity through targeted, root-cause interventions
- **Capacity Building:** Creating adaptive learning ecosystems that transform individual potential into collective community capability
- **Innovation Cultivation:** Empowering indigenous leadership through strategic knowledge transfer and context-driven problem-solving

Community engagement is the cornerstone of our success. When residents take the lead, we unlock solutions that create lasting change and empower neighborhoods to thrive.

—TaLonda Holland,
Senior Director of Operations





PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION

Urban Strategies, Inc. is dedicated to providing youth with the skills, resources, and support they need to succeed academically, socially, and professionally. Through educational programs, mentorship, and partnerships, we cultivate a culture of learning that empowers young people to develop the knowledge and confidence to make positive impacts in their communities. Our holistic approach to youth development focuses on building a strong educational foundation in academic achievement, social-emotional learning, and career readiness, reflecting our belief that education is the key to unlocking opportunity and inspiring lasting change.

Building Future Leaders

At Urban Strategies, Inc., we transform educational outcomes through targeted intervention and sustained community engagement. Our "Cradle to Career" framework has demonstrated measurable impact across **55+ communities**, where we've helped increase graduation rates and doubled college matriculation numbers.

Nurturing Early Promise

Our early learning initiatives focus on preparing children for academic success from the very beginning. We partner with community organizations to provide high-quality kindergarten readiness programs, family literacy workshops, and early childhood development support. By addressing educational needs holistically, we help ensure that all children enter school ready to learn and thrive.

Empowering Academic Excellence

During the K-12 years, we work closely with local schools and education providers to implement targeted programs that boost student proficiency in core subjects like reading and math. From implementing technology access initiatives to offering after-school enrichment activities, our multifaceted approach helps students develop the knowledge and skills they need to graduate prepared for college and careers. We also celebrate student success annually through our graduation ceremonies.

Developing Community Champions

Looking beyond the classroom, USI's youth development programs focus on building the next generation of community leaders. Our college preparation workshops, career mentorship opportunities, and professional skills training empower young people to pursue their dreams. We also provide advocacy training to help students become effective champions for educational equity and social change.

Signature Initiatives:

- **Bellarmino Rise** - Comprehensive college readiness and scholarship program
- **NISE Initiative** - STEM education advancement in under-resourced schools
- **Cocoa Cafe** - Youth entrepreneurship training and business incubation

By investing in education today, we're building the community leaders of tomorrow—equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and resilience to drive positive change.



In communities where we've implemented our comprehensive education strategy, 47% of scholars accessed early learning programs and services, and 51% engaged in youth development activities, laying a strong foundation for lifelong success.

—Tyronda Minter,
Vice President of Educational Initiatives



We believe that education is the key to unlocking a brighter future. Through our innovative programs, we're driving transformative change by empowering children and families to reach their full potential.

Fueling Academic Momentum

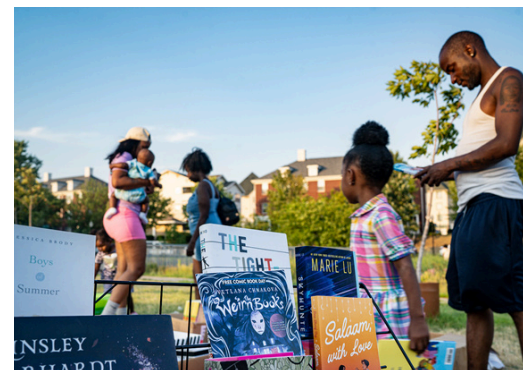
Our participation in initiatives like "Read for the Record" instills a love of learning and set a solid foundation for lifelong success.

Igniting Pathways to Success

By offering career-focused workshops and entrepreneurship training, we're equipping the next generation of leaders.

Strengthening Communities

We partner with schools and organizations to address unique needs and create pathways to economic mobility.





CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & ADVOCACY

At Urban Strategies, Inc., we empower residents to drive systemic change by shaping policy decisions that impact their communities. Through voter education, advocacy training, and collaborative platforms, we cultivate informed, strategic civic engagement. By equipping marginalized groups to elevate their priorities and collectively influence decision-makers, we work to make the policy landscape more responsive to local needs and foster lasting, equitable change.

Building Pathways to Self-Sufficiency

At Urban Strategies Inc., we are dedicated to creating secure pathways to self-sufficiency for historically divested communities by addressing systemic barriers that hinder progress. Through our **Policy & Influence Division**, we advance policies and programs that create lasting change on both local and national levels, transforming these systems at micro and macro levels. Our efforts not only uplift the families we serve but also contribute to building a more equitable society for all children and families.

We believe that lasting change begins with empowering communities to overcome obstacles through advocacy, strategic partnerships, and innovative programs, ultimately dismantling barriers to self-sufficiency that have persisted for too long. Together, we are forging a future where every child and family has access to the resources they need to thrive.

Driving Thought Leadership

USI led **29+** thought leadership events focused on actionable change. Through conferences, webinars, and partnerships with **Housing Partnership Network** and **Native Women Lead**, we advanced systemic urban transformation by prioritizing community-driven solutions.

Comprehensive Services for Families

Stabilizing communities means ensuring access to reliable housing and financial tools. Through partnerships and innovative programs, we've extended credit counseling and eviction prevention to families across **35+** cities. Projects like the **Housing Readiness Score** empower residents on the path to homeownership, while the **On-Time Payment Rental History Algorithm** strengthens their credit scores.

Key Data Points:

- Housing Readiness Score with JP Morgan Chase Credit Counseling & Eviction Prevention in Six Cities
- Rental History Algorithm with Semantics



Be a part of the movement to empower communities. Learn how you can contribute to our mission of building equitable pathways for all families.



Nearly 10,000 families benefited from our comprehensive support services this year

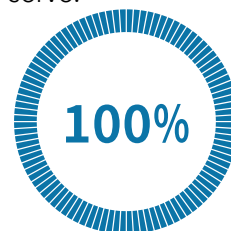
Our efforts to stabilize communities and provide pathways to self-sufficiency include credit counseling, eviction prevention, and innovative programs that empower residents and strengthen credit scores.

—Eva Mosby,
Regional Vice President



Pioneering Policy Change

We championed transformative change through **three resident-powered Policy Change Initiatives**, our groundbreaking **Communities in Action Model**, and **five dynamic learning communities**—all working to dismantle health disparities across **22** cities and unleash the full potential of every neighborhood we serve.



of USI's programs, including the Racial Economic Equity Incubator and our comprehensive support services, are strategically designed to collaborate and tackle the interconnected challenges faced by more than **30,000 families**.



Reimagining Community Potential

In 2016, Urban Strategies, Inc. leveraged its partnership with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to catalyze meaningful change across mixed-income communities. Driven by our core mission to create pathways of opportunity, we convened the inaugural Choice Means Choice Conference in St. Louis, Missouri—a landmark gathering that united passionate professionals dedicated to reimagining urban community development.

Expanding the Community of Practice

At the 2019 Philanthropy Roundtable, USI was invited to lead a community of practice inspired by the Department of Education’s Promise Neighborhoods initiative.

Key Developments:

- USI agreed to explore this opportunity, recognizing HUD’s limitations in hosting such a community.
- Conducted a survey in December 2019 among grantee sites to assess the demand for a community of practice.
- Received overwhelming support from grantee sites, indicating strong interest in collaboration and shared learning.

Continuing the Legacy

Today, USI is building a community of equity-driven leaders dedicated to dismantling systemic racism and outdated policies obstructing children’s and families’ success. Join us in fostering dialogue and action to create healthy, thriving neighborhoods through the Choice Neighborhood Initiative.



Choice Means Choice 2025

Date: May 20-22, 2025

Location: Baltimore, MD

Participants: Over 300 national leaders engaged in equitable development, including:

- Resident leaders
- Educators
- Philanthropic community members
- Housing authorities
- Developers
- Nonprofits
- City and federal officials

Join us at the **2025 Choice Means Choice Conference** to connect with **Choice Neighborhoods grantees** nationwide and collaborate on advancing affordable housing with leaders from education, economics, politics, youth, philanthropy, and HUD.





STRENGTHENING OUR COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION

At Urban Strategies, Inc., we cultivate a culture of belonging by amplifying diverse voices and perspectives across the communities we serve. Our commitment to inclusion goes beyond traditional metrics, ensuring authentic representation and deep cultural understanding. By fostering partnerships with local organizations, faith-based institutions, and grassroots initiatives, we're building an ecosystem of support that reflects and responds to the unique cultural fabric of each neighborhood we serve.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: Our Commitment

In an era where Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) can often feel like hollow corporate rhetoric, Urban Strategies Inc stands as a vivid counterpoint. DEI isn't a checkbox for us—it's the fundamental architecture of our organizational DNA. Our team of 200+ passionate professionals doesn't just talk about equity; we architect it, breathe it, and manifest it through intentional, purposeful action. DEI isn't an initiative at USI—it's our operational heartbeat, driving every strategy, decision, and community intervention we design.

Our \$34.5M+ investment in Black-owned businesses represents a strategic commitment to economic justice and community-driven prosperity. We don't just support businesses—we build pathways for sustainable economic empowerment.

Cultivating Equitable Leadership

We don't just promote DEI leadership—we cultivate it as a living, dynamic practice. Our approach integrates inclusivity and equity into every organizational touchpoint, from nuanced hiring practices to comprehensive career development and equitable compensation structures. Strategic partnerships, like our collaboration with ADP for payroll and onboarding, aren't mere transactions—they're deliberate investments in creating ecosystems of empowerment and professional agency.

Our Values at Work

Our core values are a meticulously crafted blueprint for organizational and community evolution. Developed collaboratively by our team, these principles are a living, breathing commitment that infuses every project, every interaction, and every strategic decision. They represent our collective promise to drive equitable change, not through words, but through systematic, intentional action.

At Urban Strategies Inc., we don't just imagine equity. We engineer it.



Generating Community Wealth

Supporting Black-owned and minority-owned businesses transcends corporate social responsibility—it's our fundamental economic development strategy. By channeling \$34.5 million into vendors like Simon Says Promotional Products, we're not just spending money; we're strategically redistributing economic power, building generational wealth, and creating sustainable pathways for community economic transformation.

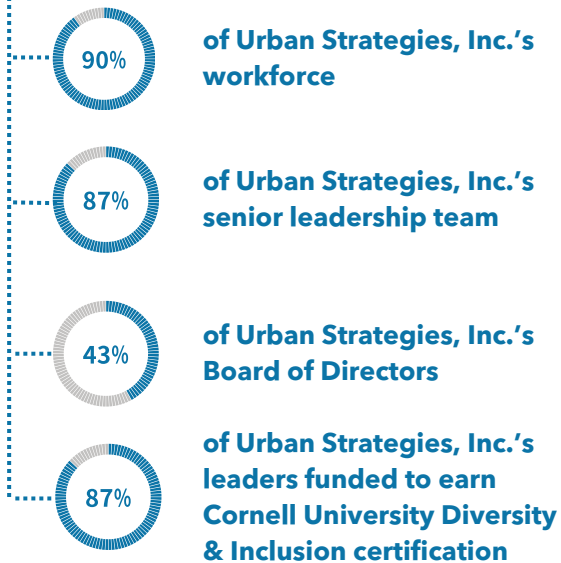
Working with Urban Strategies, Inc. has truly helped my business grow. Not only have they provided us with the resources and financial tools to boost our brand but they have also helped us to make a real difference in the community we serve. I'm proud to be part of this partnership and to see the positive impact we're making together.

- Simon D. Thompson,
Owner of Simon Says Promotional
Products
Plus, LLC

Promoting Inclusion, from the Workplace to the Board Room

We strategically cultivate a workforce that directly reflects the communities we serve, transforming diversity from a metric into our most powerful change catalyst. Our Board, management, and team composition are an intentional blueprint for systemic inclusion and equitable professional empowerment.

Women and diverse* talent make up:



* Black or African American; Hispanic or Latino; American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian; and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.





FINANCIAL INTEGRITY & COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

At Urban Strategies, Inc., we are deeply committed to financial integrity and impactful community investment. Through strategic resource stewardship, we empower local voices, promote economic resilience, and build infrastructures that support lasting change. We believe every community can thrive when strengthened by sustainable resources, innovative solutions, and a shared commitment to progress.

Powering Community Solutions

Our investment architecture—powered by **federal grants, service contracts, and foundation partnerships**—reflects our commitment to building sustainable funding ecosystems that drive long-term community transformation. By channeling **88 cents of every dollar** directly into community-driven solutions while maintaining just 12% for administrative oversight, we're redefining what responsible stewardship looks like in the social impact sector.

Our financial framework goes beyond traditional metrics—it's a **strategic blueprint for systemic change**. Each invested dollar activates multiple layers of impact: strengthening local economic ecosystems, building community capacity, and creating generational pathways to prosperity. In **Memphis**, this translated to a **\$5.2 million investment** that catalyzed new workforce development programs, reaching over **300 families**. In **St. Louis**, our **\$7.8 million deployment** powered innovative housing stability initiatives that helped **450 families** secure stable housing while building assets for their future.

Through this intentional approach to resource deployment, we're not just managing funds—we're building sustainable change. Our model demonstrates how **strategic financial stewardship** can simultaneously maintain **fiscal responsibility** while **accelerating community transformation**, creating ripple effects that extend far beyond initial investments. By transforming data into actionable insights, we create innovative, compassionate solutions that empower communities and put people first. Our transparent, well-crafted impact reports not only document progress, they inspire meaningful, lasting change.



Change Architects at Work

Our strategic deployment of resources empowers our **Family Support Specialists** to drive transformative community change. These skilled professionals translate every invested dollar into direct, measurable impact—connecting families to workforce development programs, stable housing opportunities, and wealth-building pathways. Through intensive coaching and resource coordination, our Specialists activate sustainable solutions that help families architect their own economic futures. The metrics below demonstrate how this targeted approach produces lasting outcomes across communities nationwide.



Empowered 613 families through workforce development programs.



Equipped 419 children with transformative early learning opportunities,



Assisted 374 families with financial literacy programs.



Hosted 421 events, fostering community collaboration and growth.



Connected 799 individuals with education and job training.



Inspired 2,005 students through impactful youth development activities.



USI | URBAN STRATEGIES, INC.

Families at the Center of Results

For information about Urban Strategies, Inc.'s impact activities, visit usi-inc.org/impact/#impact-reports.