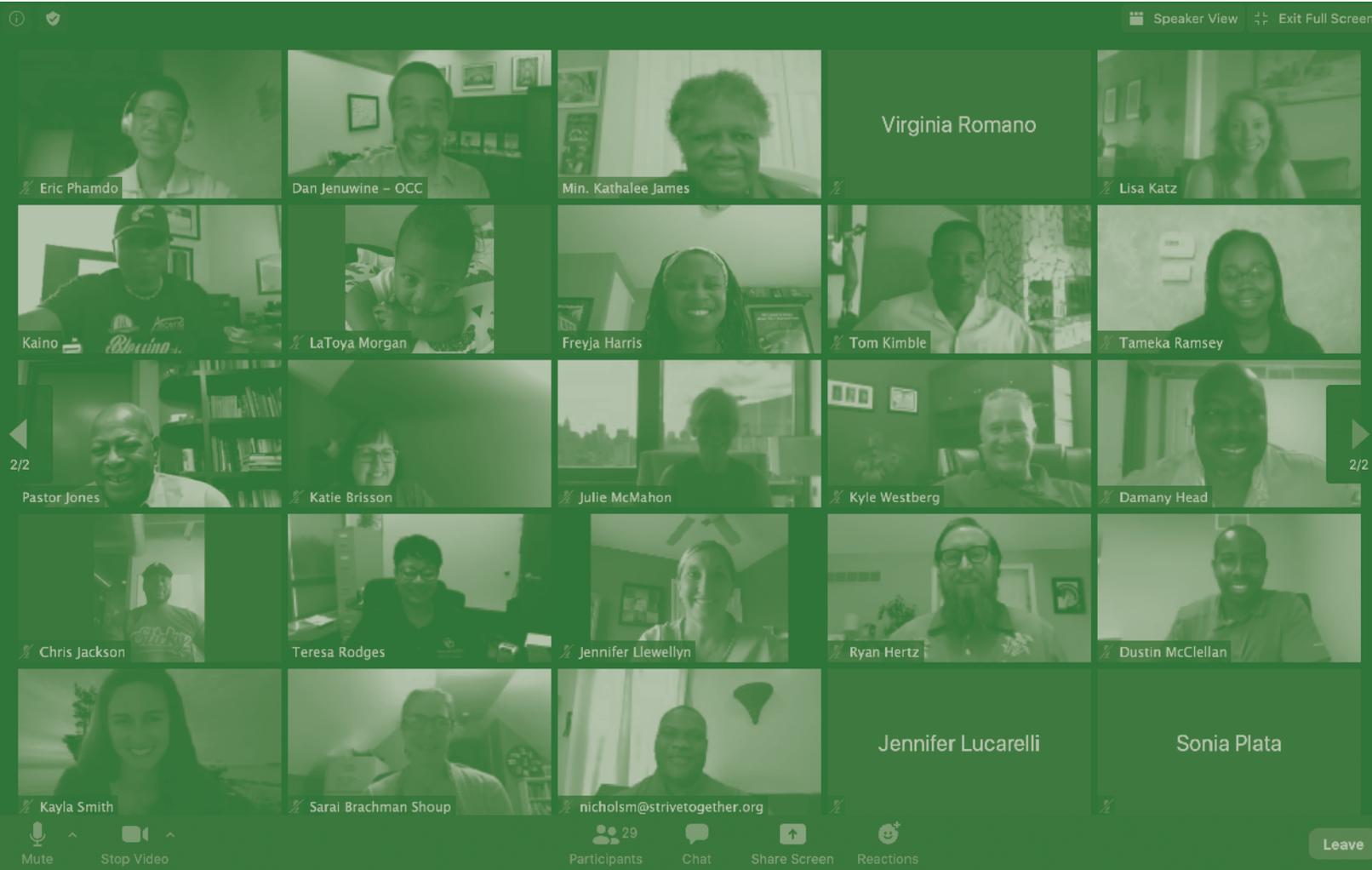


# Pontiac Funders Collaborative

of the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan



# 2020 Annual Report

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# Executive Summary

**The Pontiac Funders Collaborative formed in 2019 when nine regional funders came together to support a community-driven process to identify city-wide goals in Pontiac, and provide funding to build capacity for local leaders and organizations to achieve those goals. In 2020, the Collaborative formed subcommittees that worked with community stakeholders to fulfill this purpose through investments in four key areas:**

## **COLLECTIVE IMPACT PROCESS**

In early 2020, the Collaborative began working in close partnership with nearly 40 cross-sector community leaders to launch a collective impact initiative. Together they are developing a shared, community-driven vision for the city that ensures all residents and community members have the access, opportunities, and resources needed to thrive. As this initiative develops, the Collaborative is learning more about community assets and needs, and is building mutual trust with community leaders. These learnings are informing the Collaborative's actions in its other funding areas.

## **CIVIC AND COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING**

The Collaborative launched a capacity building grant program to strengthen skills amongst leaders and organizations in the city. In 2020, 16 nonprofits received grants totaling \$100,000 in the first round of this program.

## **COVID-19 RELIEF**

In response to the coronavirus pandemic, the Collaborative made a series of emergency grants to Pontiac organizations. In April, \$150,000 was provided to critical human service agencies to support their emergency aid efforts. In June, the Collaborative established a Small Business Relief Fund, which provided \$200,000 in grants to 56 Pontiac businesses with 10 employees or fewer.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE AND EVALUATION**

In its first year, the Collaborative made important investments in its own infrastructure. In May, Project Director Freyja Harris was hired to provide full time strategic and administrative support to the effort. In addition, The Work Department consulting firm continued to provide additional strategic support.

While the investments above were made, the Collaborative's subcommittees continued to develop community-informed strategies to support future investment areas: Key Community Institutions, Entrepreneurial Ecosystem, Workforce Development, Public Spaces and Storytelling. These will be important investments in 2021 and beyond.

In its first year, the Pontiac Funders Collaborative has fulfilled its purpose by thoughtfully building its internal infrastructure while listening, learning, and planning with a powerful collaborative partnership of community leaders. In so doing, it has supported the groundwork for a transformational community-led initiative that has the potential to change lives in Pontiac for many years to come.

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# Introduction

Pontiac is at the heart of a prosperous county and region. Twenty-six miles directly north of Detroit, 36 miles south of Flint and the seat of Oakland County, the city is home to 59,000 residents within its 20 square miles. A resilient and impassioned community, it has a network of grassroots organizations, advocacy groups, business owners, and nonprofits who are all together working to improve the quality of life for residents and change regional perceptions about the city.

Much of this change is driven or supported by an influx of renewed energy and momentum. Residents, civic leaders, and community advocates bring new hope, new skills, and partnerships that are sparking positive change in the city. Those having the most impact include long-standing organizations that have worked for decades to support the needs of residents, as well as new and old nonprofits, grassroots advocates, faith-based organizations, established and emerging businesses, and governmental agencies who are collaborating to improve quality of life in Pontiac.

In recognition of this momentum and of the need for more and continued change, nine philanthropic partners have come together to learn, share, and fund solutions that support the community of Pontiac. In 2020, the first step taken by the funders was to launch a collective impact initiative that will ensure a collaborative and community-driven approach to the future. This effort has included the regular convening of a cross-section of 40 leaders from Pontiac over the last year, and will grow community-wide in the years ahead.

This report documents the first year of our collective work.

# Pontiac Funders Collaborative

9 Regional Funders

2020

Launch of Collective Impact Process

\$100,000 in Capacity Building Grants to 18 Pontiac-based Organizations

\$150,000 in COVID-19 Emergency Relief Grants for basic needs

\$200,000 in Small Business Relief Fund Grants to 56 Pontiac-based Businesses

Infrastructure for Collaborative Philanthropy

LOOKING AHEAD

Collective Impact Partnership

Capacity Building for Nonprofits

Key Institutions

Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

Infrastructure + Evaluation

Public Spaces

Communications & Storytelling

Workforce Development

REACHING 59,000 PONTIAC RESIDENTS

# About the Pontiac Funders Collaborative

In 2018, a group of philanthropic partners informally came together to explore ways to work together and invest collectively in Pontiac. Individually, members of the group had been in conversation with stakeholders in Pontiac and had begun to see opportunities to leverage each other's areas of interest to have more impact. In 2018 and 2019, the group conducted preliminary research to better understand assets and needs in the community and identify overlapping areas of interest. By the end of 2019, the group had used those learnings to develop an initial three-year funding strategy, formalize a collaborative structure and raise funds to begin investments in 2020.

The Collaborative's work is made possible by the financial support and active participation of Ballmer Group, Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, Flagstar Bank Foundation, General Motors, New Economy Initiative, the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, Tauber Family Foundation, the William Davidson Foundation, and the Vera and Joseph Dresner Foundation.

## Key Activities 2020

The following is a summary of key activities that have taken place in 2020. They are elaborated upon later in this report.

**NOVEMBER 2019 -  
FEBRUARY 2020**

### **Stakeholder Meetings:**

Members of the Collaborative met individually with approximately 15 community leaders. The purpose of the meetings was to gauge interest in launching a collective impact process in the community. The conversations included an overview of the process and potential impacts, and discussion around who else in the community to invite to involve.

**FEBRUARY 2020**

### **Collective Impact Retreat:**

The Collaborative convened a group of 31 community leaders for a day-long planning session to begin the process of forming a collective impact partnership.

**APRIL 2020**

### **Emergency Relief Grants:**

In response to the coronavirus pandemic and the resulting health and economic crisis, the Collaborative made \$150,000 in emergency grants to three key human services organizations in Pontiac. The grants supported their continued relief efforts.

**MAY 2020**

### **Project Director Hired:**

The Collaborative hired Project Director Freyja Harris to provide full time strategic and administrative support to the effort.

**JUNE 2020**

### **Capacity Building Grants:**

Eighteen organizations in Pontiac were awarded grants amounting to nearly \$100,000 as part of the Pontiac Capacity Building grant program. The grants supported professional development opportunities for individual leaders and technical assistance needs for organizations.

**MAY 2020 -  
JUNE 2020**

### **Small Business Relief Fund Grants:**

The Collaborative developed a COVID-19 relief fund for small businesses with fewer than 10 employees. Fifty-six grants totaling \$200,000 were awarded to help businesses with urgent needs during the pandemic.

# Purpose & Values

Members of the Pontiac Funders Collaborative jointly designed and agreed to the following purpose and core values as the work began:

## Purpose

To support a community-driven process to identify city-wide goals in Pontiac, and provide funding to build capacity for local leaders and organizations to achieve those goals.

The Collaborative will support fair, equitable, just, and inclusive efforts that are driven by the community and supported by lessons learned from other efforts.

We commit to support organizations of any size that are led by or serve those who experience or have experienced historical and institutional barriers. This includes people from underrepresented groups, people from low-income backgrounds, and people who have lacked access to basic resources.

## Values

### COMMUNITY

Members of the Collaborative value the full participation of communities and individuals and embrace the many forms of diversity as we draw from the perspectives and experiences of a broad cross-section of Pontiac community members.

### RESPECT

Members of the Collaborative seek to respect and uplift individuals, communities, and organizations in Pontiac who are working, or have worked in the past to improve the quality of life for the community and change regional perceptions about the city. The Collaborative will seek to invest in existing assets in order to amplify their efforts.

### EVIDENCE-BASED

Members of the Collaborative believe that philanthropic efforts should support and enhance work that serves Pontiac in ways that are measurable and sustainable. The Collaborative will rely on data to ensure our decision making is evidence-based and results-driven.

### COLLABORATION

Members of the Collaborative value working together to leverage shared resources, achieve common objectives and amplify impact. The Collaborative will seek to exchange knowledge, take collective action, and learn from each other. Efforts increase collaboration amongst ourselves, within the city, and across the region.

Self Sufficient  
↓  
Security  
↓  
Stability

Household Family Unit

## Investment Areas

Well-Being

The Collaborative identified eight focus areas for an initial three-year investment period. These were informed by the initial research and engagement phase along with funders' overlapping interest areas. Each of the funding areas outlined in the graphic on page 4 is informed by the Collective Impact Process, through which community stakeholders are identifying common goals and outcomes.

In year one, the Collaborative launched engagement and grantmaking activities for the Collective Impact process and Civic and Community Capacity Building. Additional emergency grantmaking to Key Institutions and the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem occurred in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Year one investment in the Collaborative's infrastructure has included staffing, consultants, and administration. These activities are described in the following sections.

The Collaborative is currently planning for investments to begin late in year one or in year two for additional Key Community Institutions, Workforce Development, Public Spaces, Community Storytelling, and Evaluation activities. Planning activities related to these focus areas are outlined in the "Looking Ahead" section of this report.

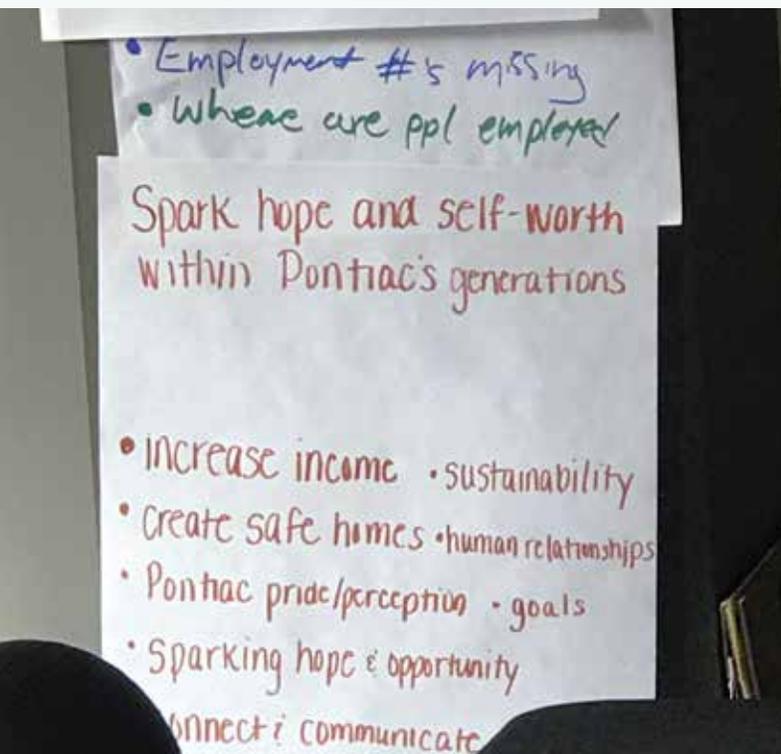
# Collective Impact

The Collaborative became interested in supporting a collective impact process in Pontiac after learning about the strategy as implemented in Cincinnati, and which has since been utilized in 70+ cities across the country. The Collaborative hired StriveTogether, a consulting firm that grew out of the Cincinnati initiative and helps other communities implement collective impact frameworks, to guide the Pontiac community through the development of a collective impact partnership.

The framework is grounded in StriveTogether's Theory of Action which provides a flexible model for collaboration of cross-sector leaders to solve complex community challenges. The framework guides leaders in identifying shared outcomes, measuring change and using data to inform decisions, and developing a structure through which to work differently together. The premise is that these leaders will work with residents to identify a shared vision for Pontiac. They will establish shared goals and outcomes and align their organizations' work and resources to these goals and outcomes. An organization or set of partners will be identified to support the work in a backbone capacity. They will use a data-based, human-centered approach to work differently, and together, to achieve systemic change for every resident.

## Leadership Retreat

Members of the funders' Collective Impact Subcommittee, together with StriveTogether and The Work Department began to meet with community leaders in the fall of 2019 to gauge interest in launching a collective impact initiative. Between November and January, the team met with 14 individuals. The feedback was positive and there was strong interest in the process.



On February 28, 2020 the Collaborative hosted a day-long retreat at the Flagstar Strand Theater. Invitees included an intentional cross-section of 31 community leaders, including residents, civic leaders, K-12 leaders, business executives, college presidents, and non-profit executives. These leaders were identified through preliminary research and during the one-on-one meetings with stakeholders as a group who represent the interests of the community. Members of the funders' Collective Impact Subcommittee also attended. The agenda included a review of data about the city, an overview of collective impact, breakout groups focused on developing a shared vision and identifying outcomes, and a discussion around creating a structure for the work.

Seventeen participants responded to a follow up survey after the retreat. Overall, participants felt positively about the experience and expressed interest in continuing to work together. When asked what about the collective impact process they were most excited about, participants mentioned

collaboration, the opportunity to work together instead of in silos, becoming more efficient and eliminating redundant services and programming, the possibility of changing outcomes for the residents, and the importance of coming together around a strategic vision.

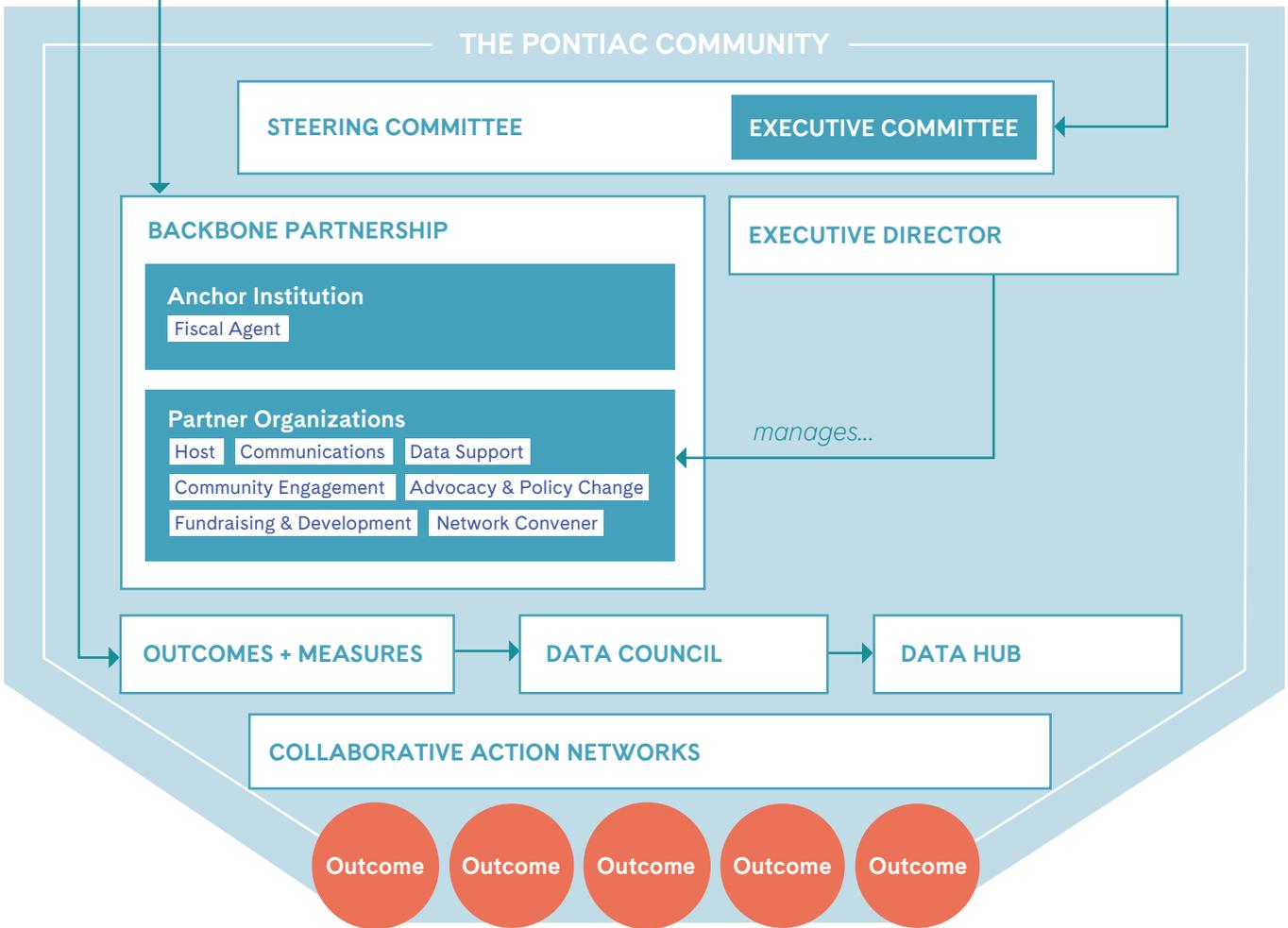
When asked what challenges they saw in implementing a collective impact process, respondents expressed concerns about ownership amongst the organizations at the table, a lack of resources and historic deficiencies, the risk that this effort will lose momentum, and that in order for this to be a success it must be community led, not funder or outsider led.

**Pontiac Collective Impact Partnership,  
Process Structure**

**PLANNING PHASE**



**IMPLEMENTATION PHASE**



Together, with residents at the center, we are the individuals, families, businesses and organizations of Pontiac working to lift-up the voices of our diverse community to ensure all have the access, opportunities, and resources needed to thrive.

## Planning Phase

By mid-March it became clear that the group would not be able to meet again in person due to the coronavirus pandemic. However, the group wanted to continue convening virtually. As one participant said in the follow up survey, the crisis brought organizations together in new ways and created a greater sense of urgency that they work together to respond to both urgent and long term needs.

“Many of our community organizations are dramatically under resourced, and it can be difficult to collaborate in such an environment where our independent organizational survival can cloud our ability to see what is possible together. The current COVID-19 crisis has offered us the opportunity to share our organization’s capacities to strengthen emergency response, lifting one another up and building trust...” – Collective Impact Retreat attendee

Between March and August, the community leaders, designated as the Pontiac Collective Impact Leadership Group (PCILG) continued meeting virtually on a bi-weekly basis. The funders’ Collective Impact Subcommittee also participated in the meetings, which were facilitated jointly by StriveTogether and project staff, with support from The Work Department.

As the group began to define a process and timeline for working together, they agreed to establish a set of subcommittees to help them work efficiently, while also moving forward “at the speed of trust,” as one member put it. This was a pivotal moment at which a preliminary working structure that diverged from the original plan and was truly defined by the community members began to emerge.

## Subcommittees:

### Mission + Vision Subcommittee

Community leaders began to identify a vision for their work together at the Leadership Retreat in February. This subcommittee built on the discussions that day to develop a vision, mission, and set of values that will guide the partnership forward in years to come.

#### Vision

Pontiac is a place where everyone has equitable opportunities to thrive.

#### Mission

Together, with residents at the center, we are the individuals, families, businesses and organizations of Pontiac working to lift-up the voices of our diverse community to ensure all have the access, opportunities, and resources needed to thrive.

#### Values:

##### COLLABORATION

We work with the community and partner organizations, leveraging their wisdom and resources to achieve shared objectives and to amplify our collective impact. Our collaborations will elevate voices from the Pontiac community and provide space for their participation and leadership. We value building trust and working together.

##### INCLUSION

We respect differences in individuals and believe that we can harness the diversity of collective experiences, perspectives, and opinions for greater impact. We want everyone to have a seat at the table.

##### IMPACTS

We aspire to do good collaboratively. We seek effective solutions that address the root causes of existing systemic bias and have measurable, sustainable outcomes.

##### INNOVATION

We look for bold ideas and novel approaches to enhance Pontiac and make long-term social investments for a better tomorrow.

##### INTEGRITY

We hold ourselves and our partners accountable to high standards of organizational integrity and responsible stewardship of resources entrusted to us.

## Data and Outcomes Subcommittee

This began as two separate subcommittees. One was focused on identifying a set of outcomes that would define what areas of life the PCILG is working to impact. They identified the cross-sector outcome themes of quality of life, prosperity, and education but soon realized they needed a better understanding of the data around each of these topics to identify specific outcomes they could impact.

“I hope that corporations, organizations, and individuals in the City of Pontiac can take advantage of this great opportunity, work more collaboratively together, learn from one another, and make positive change for our children and families that are struggling during this challenging time.”

- PCILG Member

The other was focused on identifying data sources and developing a Data Council that will inform the data collection needed to measure progress on the outcomes. They soon realized they needed to know the outcomes before they could identify the data needed to measure against them.

In order to move forward the two subcommittees decided to merge and they changed their name to “Outcomes and Measures” to eliminate barriers people might feel around the word “data.” Their current task is to develop a data accountability structure that will guide how this committee, the future Data Council and the Data Hub, which will collect, house, and interpret data, will work together.

## Backbone Selection Subcommittee

This subcommittee has developed the functions, criteria, and a process for identifying a backbone partnership. The backbone will provide the administrative support needed for the initiative to function. The graphic on page 11 outlines the roles this partnership will hold. Rather than creating a new organization or choosing one existing organization to lead the effort, this approach includes an anchor institution to serve as a fiscal agent and partner institutions that will collaborate to serve the various functions of a backbone structure. An executive director will be hired separately through a search

process led by the PCILG. The executive director and staff will be hosted by the anchor institution but will be accountable to an executive steering committee of community leaders from the PCILG. The subcommittee is now in the process of finalizing the selection process for the backbone partnership and a search is underway for the executive director.

“I would love to see a high degree of collaboration, communication, efficiency, and innovation between organizations in Pontiac.”

- PCILG Member

## Community Engagement Subcommittee

The PCILG seeks to engage the broader community early in the process to ensure residents have opportunities for input and decision making throughout the process. This subcommittee has identified a need for clear and accessible communication methods to be able to better engage residents. Currently, the Collaborative and this subcommittee are exploring the development of a communications strategy to guide the work.

## Getting to Know Each Other Subcommittee

The PCILG has emphasized the importance of building trust amongst the group, learning more about each leader and their organizations' strengths and

capacity, and getting to know more about each other's personal and professional interests. It became especially important to be intentional about this because virtual meetings do not allow for the same connections and socializing to happen as in-person gatherings. It is harder to build trust when you aren't in the room together. This subcommittee was tasked with developing a survey to address those needs. Results of the survey became an important tool as the subcommittees continued their planning.

When asked what they hope the result of the collective impact effort will be, respondents' views were overall aligned. The themes that emerged from the responses include:

"I hope that this community will finally have a coordinated effort towards taking care of immediate needs, but providing a platform for growth and preservation of our future."

- PCILG Member

- + More collaboration
- + Shared agenda
- + More efficiency
- + More trust
- + Alignment
- + Leveraging partners' strengths and resources
- + Sustainable systems and impact
- + Greater equity
- + Balance immediate needs and long-term goals
- + More communication
- + More innovation
- + Less bureaucracy
- + Raising the profile of Pontiac across the region
- + Growth of social networks
- + Raising the prospect of Pontiac on philanthropic radar
- + Centering people and community

## Pontiac Collective Impact Next Steps

In the coming months, the structure of the backbone partnership will be formalized, an executive director will be hired, and some of the subcommittees will sunset or transition as implementation begins. With input and commitment from the funders and the leadership and vision of the community leaders, the PCILG is developing every step from scratch through a process that is inclusive, despite the added element of all meetings being held virtually. The fact that this level of collaboration has happened in just six months, and during a global health crisis, is not only unprecedented, but the model that is emerging is proving to be a unique example of what is possible.

The PCILG has become a highly effective working group and the experience has allowed the participants to appreciate and own the level of time and work involved to get things done. In turn, it has helped the group to put forth some urgency in recommending a backbone structure and selecting an executive director to lead the backbone partnership.



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**PONTIAC COLLECTIVE IMPACT LEADERSHIP GROUP MEMBERS:**


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<b>Sonia Acosta</b> , Centro Multicultural La Familia	<b>Jennifer Lucarelli</b> , Oakland University / Healthy Pontiac We Can!
<b>Loriann Bell</b> , Pontiac Public Schools	<b>Dustin McClellan</b> , Pontiac Community Foundation
<b>Lavea Brachman</b> , Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation	<b>Michael McGuinness</b> , Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society
<b>Katie Brisson</b> , Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan	<b>Glenn McIntosh</b> , Oakland University
<b>John Bry</b> , Oakland County	<b>Julie McMahon</b> , Tauber Family Foundation
<b>Kevin Corcoran</b> , Oakland University	<b>Katherine Morgan</b> , Flagstar Bank
<b>Devan Green</b> , Pontiac Public Library	<b>Eric Phamdo</b> , Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation
<b>Susan Harding</b> , Oakland Livingston Human Services Agency	<b>Kaino Phillips</b> , Ascend Foundation
<b>Freyja Harris</b> , Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan	<b>Sonia Plata</b> , Flagstar Bank
<b>Damany Head</b> , Pontiac Regional Chamber	<b>Tameka Ramsey</b> , T. Ramsey & Associates
<b>Heidi Hedquist</b> , Pontiac Public Schools	<b>David Reed</b> , T. Ramsey & Associates
<b>Ryan Hertz</b> , Lighthouse of Michigan	<b>Teresa Rodges</b> , Oakland University
<b>Rosana Hull</b> , General Motors	<b>Virginia Romano</b> , Vera and Joseph Dresner Foundation
<b>Chris Jackson</b> , Main Street Pontiac	<b>Kayla Roney Smith</b> , Ballmer Group
<b>Stacey Jackson</b> , Pontiac Public Schools	<b>Ryan Russell</b> , Woodside Bible Church
<b>Katha Lee James</b> , Friends of Pontiac Parks	<b>Sarai Shoup</b> , Tauber Family Foundation
<b>Dan Jenuwine</b> , Oakland Community College	<b>Doug Smith</b> , Oakland Community College
<b>Doug Jones</b> , Greater Pontiac Community Coalition/Committee of 50	<b>Daniella Walters</b> , Main Street Pontiac
<b>Lisa Katz</b> , William Davidson Foundation	<b>Deirdre Waterman</b> , Mayor, City of Pontiac
<b>Tom Kimble</b> , Oakland University Pontiac Initiative	<b>Kyle Westberg</b> , West Construction
<b>Jennifer Llewellyn</b> , Oakland County Michigan Works	<b>Kelley Williams</b> , Pontiac Public Schools
<b>Elizabeth Longley</b> , Baldwin Center	<b>Kermit Williams</b> , Pontiac City Council / Oakland Forward
	<b>Judy Wilson</b> , Arts Consultant

- Employment #'s missing
- Where are ppl employed

Spark hope and self-wor  
within Pontiac's generatio

## Capacity Building for Nonprofits

Through interviews and research conducted in 2018 and 2019, the Pontiac Funders Collaborative learned that in recent years, and as a result of emergency management, the city's network of nonprofit and community organizations has grown and expanded their missions to meet community needs. 80 to 90 are active 501c3 organizations while at the grassroots level, small, volunteer-led organizations are playing a key role in providing services to the community. Many are startups founded within the last few years to serve an immediate need that the local government and larger agencies have been unable to address due to limited capacity. The dedicated leaders of these organizations are ready for growth.

In response to this, the Collaborative's Capacity Building subcommittee developed the Pontiac Capacity Building program which aims to increase access to tools and resources that build capacity to meet community needs.

The program included two separate grant opportunities:

- 1 Professional Development for Pontiac Leaders**  
\$2,500 – \$5,000 grants that support individuals working in civic, nonprofit, or community organizations to participate in professional development activities.
- 2 Technical Assistance for Pontiac Organizations**  
Up to \$10,000 grants for small and mid-size nonprofit organizations seeking to improve their capacity in order to better serve the community. Grantees had the option to use their funding for technical assistance of their choosing, or to participate in an online assessment provided by the Michigan Nonprofit Association. The assessment provides guidance on technical assistance needs. Grantees also had the option to receive professional coaching from Michigan Community Resources.

The grants were open to nonprofits with budgets under \$1 million. Organizations that did not have a 501c3 could use a fiscal sponsor. Lighthouse of Michigan and Oakland Livingston Human Services Agency were offered as possible options to serve as fiscal sponsors.

The program initially launched with information sessions held at the Pontiac Public Library and led by The Work Department on March 5, 2020. Sessions were offered in the morning and evening, and were also recorded so that they could be shared with anyone unable to attend. Forty-one participants signed up to attend the sessions or receive the recording. In addition, the recording was posted on the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan's website and shared via email to approximately 100 Pontiac stakeholders.

One week after applications opened and the information sessions were held, the realities of the coronavirus pandemic became evident. Due to the

## 18 GRANTS WERE AWARDED AMOUNTING TO \$100,000 AS FOLLOWS:

### Professional Development Grantees

**Bound Together** for professional development

**Center for Success Network** for strengthening financial strategies

**Centro Multicultural La Familia, Inc** for nonprofit management certificate

**City of Hope CDC** for data analysis and EXCEL training

**Dr. Gary Burnstein Community Health Clinic** for increasing fundraising capacity

**Growing Pontiac** for professional training & consultation

**Oakland Forward Education Fund** for leadership development

**Venture, Inc** for leadership development & training

**WeCare Neighborhood Association** for community engagement training

### Technical Assistance for Organizations Grantees

**2 As 1 Forever, Inc.** for building internal capacity

**Centro Multicultural La Familia, Inc** for technical assistance

**Dr. Gary Burnstein Community Health Clinic** for launching telemedicine

**Greater Pontiac Community Coalition, Inc.** for work during COVID-19

**Micah 6 Community** for building organizational capacity

**Michigan Animal Rescue League** for technical assistance

**Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society** for opening up online

**Pontiac Community Foundation** for expanding capacity

**Pontiac's Little Art Theatre** for PLAT Teach to Connect

disruption of daily life and the need for many nonprofits to focus all attention on aid efforts, the Capacity Building subcommittee decided to extend the application deadline by one month and make the grants more flexible, allowing grantees to use the funds to address urgent needs in response to the pandemic. Communications about the extension and change went out via email to the list of approximately 100 stakeholders and to those who had signed up for or attended an information session. The Work Department also recorded a second webinar explaining the changes.

During the application period, LaToya Morgan of The Work Department provided office hours to support applicants with narrative writing, brainstorming ideas, and to answer program or technical questions. Office hours were available in 45 minute sessions two days per week with late morning, evening, and some Saturday options to accommodate applicants' schedules. Initially, the office hours were offered at the Pontiac Public Library but transitioned to virtual due to the pandemic. Support was provided by email, telephone, or video conferencing. In total, Morgan held 38 appointments with applicants.

The program received 34 grant applications. 53% of the applicants (18) met at least once with Morgan during office hours. 29% of applicants (10) attended two or more sessions.

Eighteen grants were awarded across the two grant opportunities. During the grant period, recipients of the Technical Assistance grants are receiving ongoing coaching from Michigan Community Resources as they identify technical assistance providers and manage their grant funds.

## Grantee Highlights

**2 as 1 Forever** is a marital coaching and counseling organization founded by Beverly Thomas, a Pontiac resident. She received a professional development grant and used it to create marketing collateral for the 2-year-old organization.

“This has been a huge learning experience for me and the organization. For you guys to be there to help is huge. Usually we have to pay for this help and I can’t afford that. You have opened the door to have a go-to person when I don’t know what questions to ask...I had a website built, brochures developed, and created a retractable banner. I was also able to improve efficiency for the website with CRM automation. The brochures have been more effective for marketing instead of business cards. I also got Quickbooks accounting software put into place. [I have] a small amount left for materials for workshops.”

- Beverly Thomas, 2 as 1 Forever

The **Gary Burnstein Community Health Clinic** is a nonprofit clinic in Pontiac that provides free medical and dental care to those in need. They received a professional development grant and a technical assistance grant. They used the technical assistance funding to develop a telehealth program in order to continue serving patients during the pandemic.

“GBCHC began immediately implementing the program upon receipt of the grant and has now fully launched its telehealth program and is regularly seeing patients. Our providers have adapted to the platform which has kept specialty care available to our patients. The telehealth program supported by the grant funding is the only way GBCHC has been able to provide services to patients. Without telehealth, GBCHC would not have any capacity to provide medical care.”

– Ashley Samson, Gary Burnstein Community Health Clinic



**Centro Multicultural La Familia** provides culturally-competent support services to families in Pontiac. They are the primary support provider for Spanish-speaking residents, and their services include translation and interpretation services and, mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence programs, as well as support programs for parents. They received a grant for professional development for Regina Cardenas, who is a Client Relations Manager. With the grant funds, she plans to take a class on nonprofit governance to help the organization develop new systems as it expands its operations and staff.

“I am most looking forward to the governance class to know how a board of directors works and to know the best practices in an organization. I look forward to hearing from the experience of the instructor and people who have been in the nonprofit sector.”

- Regina Cardenas, Centro Multicultural La Familia



**Michigan Animal Rescue League (MARL)** is an animal rescue and adoption organization serving all of Oakland County. It was founded in Pontiac in the 1960's. In the last 5-7 years, the organization's outreach and adoptions have tripled. They sought a technical assistance grant to improve their capacity for volunteer management and adoptions.

"The volunteer management software and technology upgrade has really been helpful for the organization because we have been looking for ways to maximize our efficiency. It is effective in helping with recruitment, tracking hours, and check-in, which has streamlined the entire process. We also reached out to Nonprofit Enterprise at Work (NEW) and talked through our other technology needs and how they can help us...They are willing to train staff and they are putting together a package for the organization."

- Maggie Humes, Michigan Animal Rescue League



# "Middle class" Norms

Affordable, quality

- Housing
- Child care *childhood trauma*
- Healthcare (mental + physical)

Global ENVIRONMENT THAT IS WELCOMING & SETTLE THE ST...

## COVID-19 Relief Grants

In the spring of 2020, as Southeast Michigan became a hotspot of the COVID-19 pandemic a stay at home order was issued and non-essential businesses closed statewide. Communities faced unimaginable grief and loss, while unemployment soared, small businesses were unable to operate or had to pivot to online or outdoor service, and families struggled to get the essential goods and services they needed. In response to this, the philanthropic community came together to create emergency relief funds, Congress passed the CARES Act to provide financial relief on an unprecedented scale, and in Pontiac local leaders and organizations focused all available resources on providing support to Pontiac families through mutual aid networks.

One of the Pontiac Funders Collaborative areas of interest is to provide capacity support for Key Institutions in the community. Recognizing that some of those institutions were stretching their capacity to meet emergency needs, the Collaborative worked swiftly to provide \$150,000 in grants to three key Pontiac organizations: Centro Multicultural La Familia, Lighthouse of Michigan, Oakland Livingston Human Services Agency. These organizations are the largest human services organizations in Pontiac and are active participants in the Pontiac Collective Impact Leadership Group. The grant funds supported their capacity to continue providing essential services to Pontiac residents.

Access to a  
Creating  
Healthy Community

# Pontiac Small Business Relief Fund

In addition to the three emergency grants, the Pontiac Funders Collaborative Entrepreneurship subcommittee began talking with members of the PCILG who focus on small business support. The subcommittee had previously been exploring investments to strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem, but through these conversations it became evident that many of the smallest businesses in Pontiac were struggling to access relief funding. In Pontiac, an estimated 77% of small businesses have 10 or less employees and many of these smaller businesses did not qualify for other relief funding or were not able to access it.

## Pontiac Small Business Relief Fund Advisory Council

**Dr. Desmon Daniel**, CEO, Pontiac School of Excellence, Resident

**Margaret Dimond**, CEO, McLaren Health

**Vernita Duvall**, "Pontiac's Big Idea" grant program, Resident

**Ryan Hertz**, CEO, Lighthouse Michigan

**Pastor Douglas Jones**, Director, Committee of 50, Pastor

**Al Patrick**, Director of Community Relations, OLHSA, Resident

**Kaino Phillips**, President, Ascend Foundation, Resident

**Sonia Plata**, Co-Chair, Pontiac Funders Collaborative

**Tamara Orza-Ramos**, Resident

The subcommittee looked to other local models, including the TechTown Stabilization Fund and the City of Dearborn's Small Business Relief Grant, for a roadmap to quickly pool funds and create an equitable application process. The William Davidson Foundation, Flagstar Bank, and New Economy Initiative provided additional funds to support this work. The resulting Pontiac Small Business Relief Fund included \$200,000 to help small businesses that were affected by COVID-19. The fund moved from idea to launch in just four weeks.

The subcommittee sought a Pontiac-based home for the fund to ensure local oversight and input. Oakland Livingston Human Services Agency was selected and received funds to administer the program. They managed consultants to lead the application process and administered the grants once approved. Bill Sullivan Enterprises and the Pontiac Community and Economic Development Coalition partnered to develop and manage the application process through a secure, online platform, and T. Ramsey & Associates provided technical assistance to applicants and grantees. Finally, a volunteer advisory council of community leaders was convened to review the grant applications.

Together, along with Pontiac Funders Collaborative staff this team developed grant guidelines and the application process. Eligible businesses were those with 10 or fewer employees, and included service businesses, freelancers, makers and home-based businesses. Recognizing that many small businesses had never applied for financial assistance, T. Ramsey & Associates provided technical assistance to applicants to ensure that the application was complete and the required documentation was provided.



“The Pontiac Small Business Relief Fund helped tremendously. I was able to complete an industry certificate, was able to keep my brick and mortar business open, and more importantly it gave me the time to pivot the business model.”

- Irma Hayes, The Highbrow Boutique

“The grant was a lifeline for me to transition my retail boutique to a short term home-based business and to restock needed supplies. It also gave me the time to work on my business plan and financials to reopen my brick and mortar store.

- Katherine Daniels, E & K Arts and More LLC





“Receiving the grant gave me hope. It allowed me to pay for more work-related education in mental health and Leaders in Equity. I do my work in Pontiac because it’s necessary for the community, and I do it free at times because we need to shed light on the mental health issues in our community because it’s often seen as taboo.”

- Brent Sykes, BJS Consulting and Mental Health Solutions

"Ginasis Construction is a small minority women owned business and we often lack equitable access to capital and business credit. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated this lack of access to capital and caused disruptions in our cash flows. This grant was incremental to addressing Workers Compensation and General Liability Insurance premiums required to satisfy one of our contracts."



- Regina Campbell, Ginasis Construction and Design Inc.

Grants ranged from \$2,500 for businesses that operate out of the home, to \$5,000 for brick and mortar businesses. In addition, both applicants and grantees received one-on-one technical assistance for a six-month period to support their personal and business needs in response to the crisis. The fund was promoted in the Oakland Press and Crain's Detroit, as well as via social media and an email list of approximately 400 Pontiac stakeholders. Mayor Waterman of the City of Pontiac also promoted it in a public service announcement to her Facebook followers. Grants were awarded in May and June through two short application cycles.

Out of 105 applicants, 56 grants were awarded. A follow up survey is being conducted in August 2020 to identify impacts.

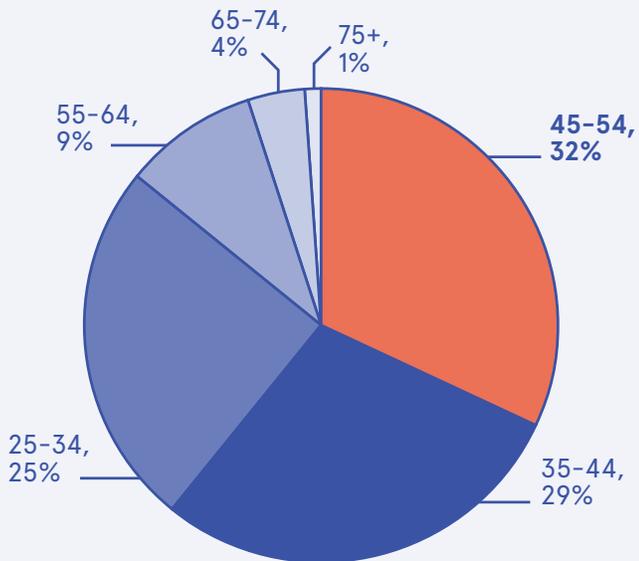
While the relief fund provided much needed financial assistance to small businesses during a crushing crisis, the speed at which it was developed and the initial review process created some challenges and barriers in the first round of grants. The Collaborative will lean on the lessons learned from the process to inform future grantmaking.

## Lessons Learned

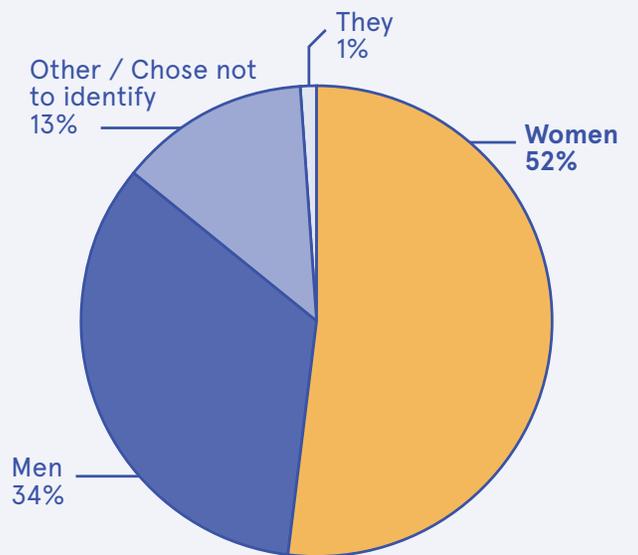
- + Additional technical assistance capacity is needed to reach more applicants, particularly with the preparation of business documentation
- + The reliance on an online application portal was a barrier for some applicants. Alternate application methods will be important in the future.
- + Broader outreach across the community is needed, particularly to reach more members of Pontiac's Latino and Hmong communities. The translation of the documents to Spanish was helpful, but should be accompanied with additional outreach.

# Pontiac Small Business Relief Fund Grantees

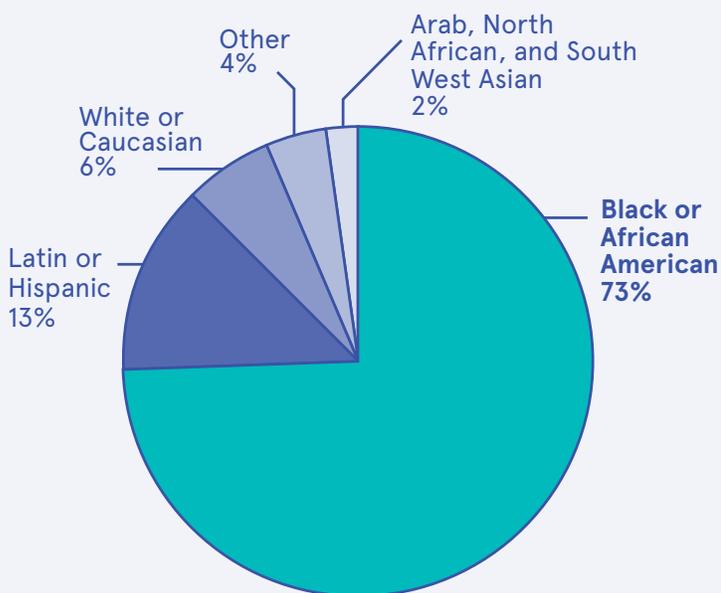
## AGE



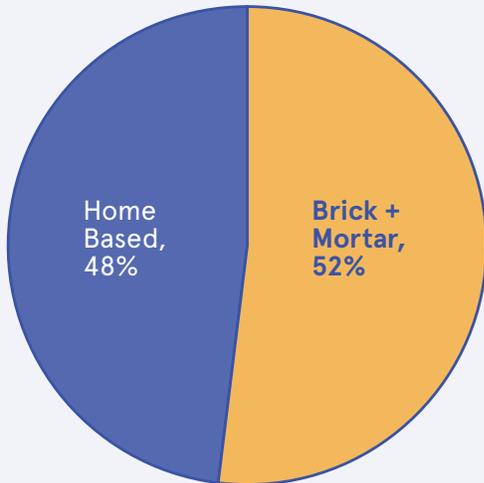
## GENDER



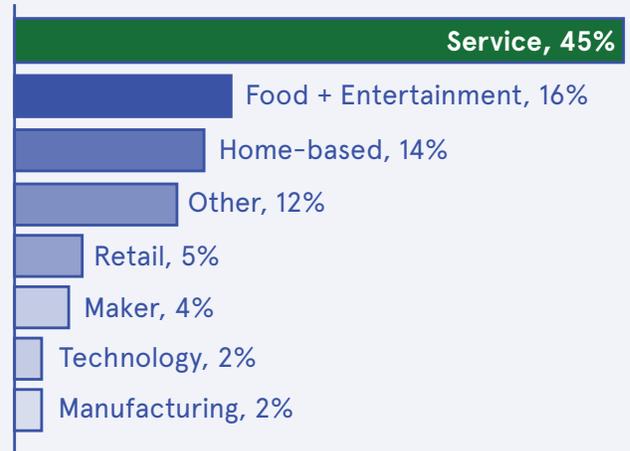
## RACE/ETHNICITY



## BRICK & MORTAR VS. HOME-BASED

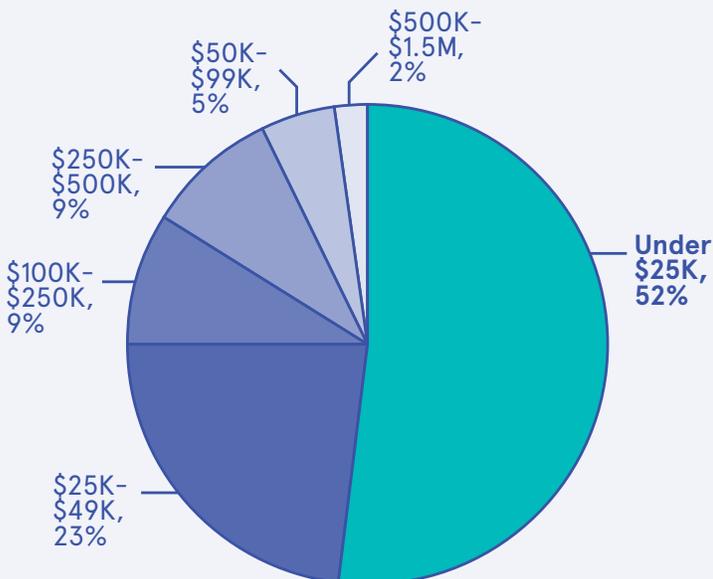


## BUSINESS TYPE



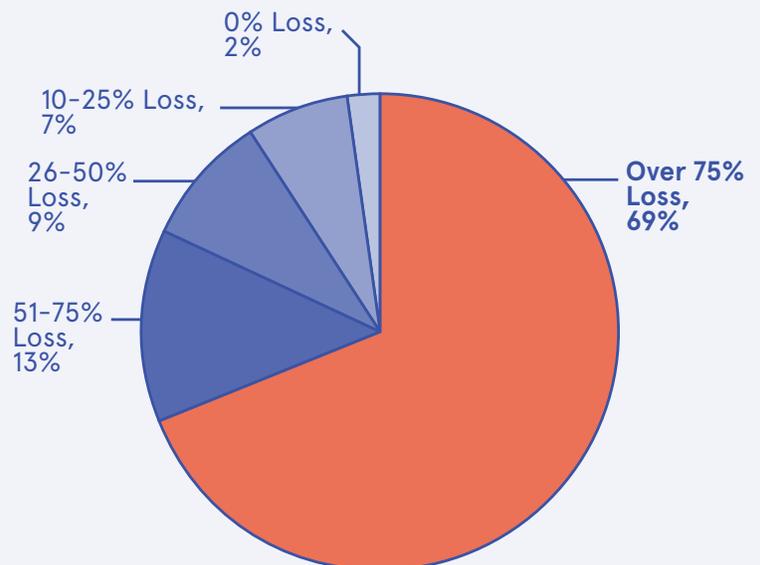
## ANNUAL SALES

TOTAL: \$3,952,946



## AVERAGE REVENUE LOSS DUE TO COVID-19

TOTAL: 80%



## PONTIAC SMALL BUSINESS RELIEF FUND GRANTEES

Alley Cat Café	J & P Painting and Drywall
All Eyez On You	Lillie's Beauty Salon, LLC
Business Solutions, LLC	Loving My Life Fitness & Nutrition
Baobab Press, LLC	Markia Mabin Travel
BJ's Consulting and Mental Health Solutions	Max Out Fitness
Blue Star Family Coney Island	Missy's Plave Child Care
Boxx Boys Moving	My Dream Tire and Auto Repair
Cartier Rose Designs	Nick's Corner
City Clips Barbershop	New Clean Detail, LLC
Classic Cuts	OC Tees, Inc
Crown and Glory Hair, LLC	Over the Top Towel and Linen
Da'jion's Eatery & Catery	P's & Q's Bakery & Cafe, LLC
Divine Twenty-Six	Plain and Fancy Food
Dream Physical Therapy	Premier Spa & Salon, LLC
E & K Arts and More, LLC	Prestige Property Investment and Management
Effigy Media Arts	Pretty Ink Nail Polish
Elam Barber Shop	Quest Allstar Athletics-qcad
Elite Cleaning Team, LLC	Ronnie Jones Home Improvement
Evan Fay Design	Seoul Rolls on the Go
Evolve Mobile Grooming Services	Smash Hit Kickboxing, Inc
Face Construction, LLC	The Henk Studio, Inc
Fight Club Fitness	The Highbrow Boutique
Gentle Giant Hospitality, LLC	Too Talented Ladies
Ginasis Construction and Design Inc	Urban Metro Enterprises Services
Harold's Italian Ice, LLC	VR Life
Higher Learning Institutions	We're All About U Salon & Spa, LLC
Hispanic Autism Services Of Michigan	Work Productions
Innovative Case Management & Support Systems	Your World Electric

Culture of learning  
EDUCATED  
~~Traditional~~ Leadership  
Community<sup>FAMILY</sup> engagement  
Insure each child has path

## Looking Ahead

"Row the boat"

Survive & Thrive

that's a good thing

## In year two of the initiative, the Collaborative anticipates the following activities:

### 1 Collective Impact

The PCILG is currently working to identify a backbone partnership to support the collective impact initiative and the hiring of an executive director to oversee it. This initial launch of the backbone partnership will be supported by a grant from the Pontiac Funders Collaborative.

As planning continues, the group will formulate a plan and expand their engagement to the broader community, ensuring that the outcomes to be identified and the work around them are guided by community input and decision making.

In addition, they plan to continue learning from collective impact initiatives in other communities. This will happen via a series of guest speakers and panel discussions focused on key areas of interest or decision points throughout the process.

### 2 Entrepreneurship

The Entrepreneurship subcommittee is exploring the hiring of a consultant to develop an investment strategy to support and grow Pontiac's small business ecosystem. Initial investments would take place in year two. The subcommittee seeks investments that help to catalyze and formalize a local entrepreneurial ecosystem by creating a vibrant business community in Pontiac that includes diverse, long-standing residents as business owners. The strategy will:

- + Target Pontiac-based entrepreneurs starting and growing small businesses. This includes those that have a business idea and are looking for a means to expand it into a marketable business in the city, as well as those who have been operating their own businesses and are looking to grow.
- + Emphasize those that have been traditionally marginalized – women, people of color, immigrants, those with disabilities, and veterans. Because the majority of existing small businesses are owned by women and/or minorities, support that meets the unique needs of these groups is important.
- + Prioritize industries that can create suitable jobs for residents.
- + Address short-term needs in light of COVID-19, as well as long term sustainability.

### **3 Communications and Storytelling**

The Communications and Storytelling subcommittee along with the Collective Impact Community Engagement subcommittee are exploring the hiring of a consultant to develop a communications strategy. The goal of the strategy is to aid in engaging and communicating with every resident and stakeholder throughout the collective impact process to ensure inclusivity and accessibility. There is also a goal of developing a sustainable marketing and communication plan that gives the narrative of the city back to the residents of Pontiac, so they can showcase and uplift what Pontiac means to them and the assets it has to offer the region and Michigan.

### **4 Public Spaces**

The Public Spaces subcommittee is identifying possible investments for years two and three. The goal is to invest in collaborative, shovel-ready projects that demonstrate a long-term benefit and include effective community engagement. These investments should provide tactical support in service to a bigger strategy or leverage funding through local, state, regional, national, and private investors.

### **5 Key Institutions**

The Key Institutions subcommittee anticipates grantmaking that increases the capacity of some of Pontiac's large nonprofits and public agencies. These grants will address one of the following goals:

- + Build capacity so organizations can do more of what they already do well
- + Help make organizations sustainable for the long term
- + In some cases, support shovel-ready projects that link to capacity building for the organization
- + Leverage other funding areas to increase the impact
- + Enable the building of trusted partnerships so key institutions can help guide future investments

- 6 Capacity Building**

The Capacity Building subcommittee plans to continue the grant program for nonprofits. The subcommittee will review this year's process and outcomes and recommend changes to the program for year two.
- 7 Evaluation**

In fall 2020, the Pontiac Funders Collaborative will develop an evaluation plan and framework and will release an RFP for an outside evaluator to ensure a process of continuous learning and improvement.
- 8 Workforce Development**

In 2021, the Workforce Development subcommittee will begin to research and further explore opportunities for investment.

# Pontiac Funders Collaborative Structure

The Pontiac Funders Collaborative is led by the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan, with guidance from a Funders Advisory Council made up of representatives from each contributing organization. The Collaborative has also established subcommittees to develop recommendations for each funding area, including Collective Impact, Key Institutions, Entrepreneurship, Communications and Storytelling, Workforce Development, and Public Spaces.

## Funders Advisory Council

The Funders Advisory Council is made up of one voting member from each organization.

### CO-CHAIRS:

**Sonia Plata**, Flagstar Bank

**Lavea Brachman**, Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation

### MEMBERS:

**Kylee Mitchell**, Ballmer Group

**Katie Brisson**, Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan

**Lori Wingerter**, General Motors

**Julie Tauber McMahon**, Tauber Family Foundation

**Virginia Romano**, Vera and Joseph Dresner Foundation

**Lisa Katz**, William Davidson Foundation

### NON-VOTING MEMBER:

**New Economy Initiative**

## Staffing

The current staffing of the Pontiac Funders Collaborative includes the following:

**Freyja Harris, Project Director at the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan** provides strategic leadership and management of the initiative. She helps develop partnerships and projects that support the Pontiac community in co-creating sustainable community strategies, implements the vision of the Collaborative, and oversees day to day activities including consultants. Freyja joined the initiative in May 2020.

**Katie Brisson, Vice President, Program at the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan**, provided strategic support of the Collaborative and oversight of the planning process prior to the hiring of a Project Director. She now supports the Project Director with strategic oversight and monitoring of expenses.

**Denise McGeen and LaToya Morgan from The Work Department**, a design and strategy firm, provide project management and implementation support to the initiative. In addition, they conducted key research to identify priority funding areas, facilitated the Collaborative during its planning process, and advised on the development of a community leadership group as part of the collective impact process.

**Monroe Nichols from StriveTogether and Greg Landsman** provide strategic consulting to the collective impact initiative. They help to facilitate bi-weekly Leadership Group meetings and advise on the overall direction of the planning process.

As the administrative home for the Pontiac Funders Collaborative, additional Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan staff assist as needed for grant processing, communications needs, etc.

# Pontiac Funders Collaborative

of the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan

Zoom Meeting



## PONTIAC FUNDERS COLLABORATIVE FUNDERS

Ballmer Group

Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan

Flagstar Bank

General Motors

New Economy Initiative

The Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation

Tauber Family Foundation

The William Davidson Foundation

Vera and Joseph Dresner Foundation

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

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