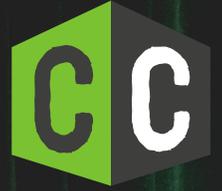


IN THIS ISSUE:

11 Stories
of Triumph
in Nashville

Undeniable
Experiences



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

And We Are *Just Getting Started!*

In 2023,

311 entrepreneurs

graduated from The Academy

\$27.9 million¹

was put back into the neighborhood economy

We hit over 1,000 Academy Alumni!

4,160 hours

of students in Script to Screen falling in love with literacy

3,000+ neighbors

coming together to celebrate in person with us at our Party Month events!



At Corner to Corner, we transform the joy of creation into economic flourishing with our Nashville neighbors.



THE ACADEMY

“...expand our entrepreneurs’ professional network and provide insights that will help them avoid common pitfalls in early-start businesses.”

The Academy is a 10-week program that equips underestimated entrepreneurs with the knowledge, tools, and networks they need to plan, start, and grow their own small businesses.

Entrepreneurs learn business foundations like customer acquisition, accounting principles, legal structures and so much more.

These weekly classes are led by former graduates and local business

leaders because keeping the program community-led is vital to our mission.

We go even deeper in community building by bringing in guest speakers, who are local business owners and subject matter experts (like accountants and lawyers), to expand our entrepreneurs’ professional network and provide insights that will help them avoid common pitfalls in early-start businesses.

Since its inception in 2016, The Academy has graduated over 1,000 Black entrepreneurs, each in various stages of small business ownership.



We graduated **311** new entrepreneurs in 2023

We provided **11,818** educational hours to our entrepreneurs!

93 local leaders offered their time and expertise as guest speakers for our entrepreneurs.

To date, we have graduated **1,072** entrepreneurs from our Academy program.

In 2023 alone, our entrepreneurs were responsible for generating **\$27.9 million** to put back into the neighborhood economy here in Nashville, according to most recently available SBA data.²

2023 PROGRAM GROWTH



The Academy Alumni Program goes further than helping entrepreneurs launch their businesses; it helps them flourish as business owners.

This second phase of continued investment in our entrepreneurs is multifaceted, offering Academy Alumni access to additional educational resources, mentorship opportunities, and our pilot loan program, The Academy Invested.

Whether our entrepreneurs want to dive deeper into e-commerce, digital marketing, or business finances, this program offers classes they can take advantage of.

In 2023, we served hundreds of our Academy Alumni with creative and proven programming.



“...it helps them flourish as business owners.”

Here is a list of just a few of the classes we provide to our entrepreneurs:

Nonprofit Symposium -

Helps neighbors and other nonprofits learn specific and useful tips for growing their nonprofit, such as grant writing and community partnerships

Business to Business (B2B) -

A 90-day mentorship program that pairs an entrepreneur with a subject matter expert who helps them problem solve and achieve a specific SMART goal

Legal Library -

Working with our long-term partners Bass, Berry, & Sims and Michael Brennan to have simple and accessible information about legal topics such as “what is an LLC” and “understanding trademarks”

The Academy Invested -

Our Academy Alumni-exclusive small business loan program grants **0% interest rate loans**, which can be used to fund business-related expenses that range from \$250-\$1,000.



BANK ON IT!

We partnered with five esteemed banks - Regions Bank, First Citizens Bank, Studio Bank, Pinnacle Financial Partners, and Citizens Savings Bank & Trust - which aim to provide firsthand insights into the intricacies of business banking.

The Business Bank Field Trip was an afternoon of learning, encouragement, and accomplishment! Each of our bank partners offered **unique advice** and it was incredible to see our Academy Alumni **connect with bank members** throughout the day **until they found their perfect fit**. Many of them opened up their first business bank account and met their banker- beginning what we know will be a fruitful relationship.

We are so grateful to community partners like Regions Bank, First Citizens Bank, Studio Bank, Pinnacle Financial Partners, and Citizens Savings Bank & Trust who make innovative programs like this possible - and who are equally as excited about it as we are!

Our partners possess a shared passion with Corner to Corner for nurturing entrepreneurship and providing essential tools for financial success.

Check out this video recap:



THE ACADEMY ALUMNI PROGRAM

UNDENIABLE EXPERIENCES

Kayla Hall-Ransom

from The City Juicery

"My business wouldn't be where it is today without Corner to Corner, The Nashville Black Market, Pinnacle Bank, and the support of my family and friends and all the local communities."

Building our community and connecting with neighbors on a deeper level has been at the heart of what we do since our very first cohort of The Academy way back in 2016. It brings our whole team great joy to hear Kayla's words and to see her own business embodying the same principles of connection.

Read more of Kayla's story here:



Tamara Tuckson

1st place Spring 2023

"I had no social media. I had no website, nothing. But I had the work, the purpose. The Academy pushes you off the porch without pushing you down. And I mean that. They push you off that porch. They stretch you. But the bonding is real, and it gives you a team and it gives you a network of people that are there for you."

And that's what Corner to Corner is all about: the network. Connecting our 1,000+ and growing community of Black entrepreneurs with each other, with other business leaders in Nashville, with funding and mentorship and so much more. Building that network with intentionality, so that entrepreneurs like Tamara can flourish within the program - and maybe even make it up on the stage for our Compassionate Pitch Contest.

Read more of Tamara's story here:



Jaquishia Buddie

Jaquishia Buddie

1st place Fall 2023

"I believe in God wholeheartedly. My faith is so strong, and before I did this class, I was like, 'God, I've been an entrepreneur and this is all I'm doing. I don't have a nine-to-five. Like, what do you want me to be doing?' And I was like, 'Give me this undeniable experience that no other human can give to me.' And ever since I went through The Academy, the doors have just been opening. So okay, God, I hear you loud and clear! This is where I'm supposed to be and this is what you want me to be doing!"

Jaquishia's faith has shown up in more ways than just finding her stride in The Academy. As our first-place pitch winner, she was awarded over \$10,000 worth of cash, prizes and business resources.

Read more of Jaquishia's story here:



"...it gives you a team and it gives you a network of people that are there for you."

Tamara Tuckson



Carlos Partee is a serial entrepreneur, with multiple thriving businesses under his belt, including a brick-and-mortar that launched this year!

Learn more about one of the minds behind The Nashville Black Market in this mini-doc, *Cas\$ville Etc.*, A Carlos Partee Legacy.



Honey Simmons, aka ReptiGurl, has been sharing her love of all things reptile with the Nashville community aboard her mobile reptile petting zoo.

Learn a little about her story - the obstacles she's overcome and the joy she's brought to our neighborhood - in this mini-doc, *The Evolution of Honey*.





SCRIPT TO SCREEN

Script to Screen helps kids fall in love with literacy by making their own movies. Right now, there is a literacy crisis here in Nashville. Did you know that 3 out of 5 children over the age of 10 are below reading level in Davidson County?³

This isn't just an educational issue, it's an economic one, too.

Literacy is a key factor in predicting future earnings,⁴ with a proficient reader earning \$23k/year on average more than peers not reading at a proficient level by the time they leave high school.

Our young creators watch popular films (like Hair Love, Inside Out, and Spider-Man: Into The Spider-Verse) while reading the script at the same time.

They collaborate with their peers to create an entire movie - from plot points to dialogue and everything in between. We put industry-grade cameras directly into the hands of our young creators, and they get time behind AND in front of the camera.

As they work together to write, act in, and film their own short films, students grow in confidence, both in themselves and in their ability to read!

Taking It To The Next Level!

In 2023, our young creators at Imani Montessori learned a new skill: how to edit their own movie creation! It was incredible to see them learn new technology and new ways to harness their love of reading and creating, and then put it all into action to bring their vision to life.

"Our children really enjoy reading and what we like about the Script to Screen program is that it increases literacy. I am very pleased with the Script to Screen program, and I am very glad they get to participate through Imani Montessori."

- **Jaminthia Pillow**, Script to Screen parent

Watch the full video here:



Shades Are His Super Power

The first thing you'd notice about **Mason**: his epic sunglasses. The Fall Red Carpet Premiere is in full swing, with Studio 615 packed with neighbors screen printing their own shirts, grabbing a slushie, and taking photos before they settle in to watch the three films debut. It's a party!

Amongst the crowd, Mason is rocking some seriously awesome sunglasses. Later, when we got to talk to Mason's grandmother, we learned that he was pretty nervous to be a host that night, standing up in front of that crowd and talking about Script to Screen. And those sunglasses were his secret weapon - they kind of obscured his vision just enough to take his mind off the crowd and help him refocus on what he loves: making movies and sharing them with his community!

Mason started off at Script to Screen on the shy side, not volunteering to raise his hand or voice his opinion. But very quickly, he found his footing and discovered something else: his love of writing

scripts, helping set up different scenes and being in front of and behind the camera. Mason was on fire in Script to Screen, impressing his facilitators and his family throughout the program, especially at the Red Carpet Premiere.

Script to Screen provides a place for students to put their creativity to work and look at literacy in a fresh, new way. Kids like Mason find a passion for movie-making and along the way, they learn how to apply a love of reading to other aspects of their lives. His grandmother was certainly dazzled with Mason - and our Script to Screen program!

"I am totally impressed not only by the kids but also the community support and the collaboration between all of the kids. [This program is] positive for our students in every way."

Watch the full video of Mason's grandmother here:



Mason

2023 PROGRAM STATS

Our Script to Screen program provided students with an additional **4,160+** classroom hours to explore their creativity and curiosity and to deepen their reading comprehension skills.

117 students participated in Script to Screen and worked to create **10** incredible short films



IN 2023



In 2023, these were 3 major moments at Corner to Corner that we HAVE to share with you!



1 The Audacious Goal

This is the goal: Launch 10,000 Black-owned small businesses in and around Davidson County in the next 10 years.

But why? As part of our mission to build sustainable communities, push toward equity, provide opportunities to underestimated entrepreneurs, and love our neighbors, Corner to Corner launched an initiative to scale Black entrepreneurship in Nashville. Our goal is to support 10,000 Black entrepreneurs in launching and scaling their businesses over the next 10 years. We believe this initiative will create a sustainable economic engine for families and have a significant and lasting impact on our community.

A 2021 report by Goldman Sachs found that Black women face a 90% wealth gap when compared to White men.⁵ This gap was not created based on lack of talent, passion, or drive, but because of a lack of opportunities for Black women. Research from Path to 15/55⁶ suggests that Nashville has the capacity to support this sort

of growth in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. The city is home to over 183,398 neighbors who identify as Black. Yet rates of Black entrepreneurship in Nashville lag national averages. Because of these facts and many more, we are dedicated to launching 10,000 Black-owned businesses in the next 10 years!

Learn more about this initiative from 3 Academy Alumni - Danielle McGee of Black Business Boom, Carlos Partee of The Nashville Black Market, and Shana Berkeley our Executive Director [in this video:](#)



⁵ cornertocorner.org/2023AR-OMBG

⁶ cornertocorner.org/2023AR-1555



2 The Social Investment

Much of the data surrounding access to capital for minority groups discusses the biases that exist in traditional investing practices across the United States, but most never discuss helpful solutions. So imagine our excitement when we were connected to a woman named Sallie, who was interested in trying something new – at least, it was new to us!

Her curious and creative spirit was infectious, and as she connected with other like-minded professionals, The Vanderbilt Impact Investment Fund⁷ was born! “The Vanderbilt Impact Investment Fund is a collaboration bringing together Nashville-based entrepreneurs from Corner to Corner, students from Vanderbilt Owen School, donors, and investors to positively impact underestimated communities and build generational wealth. Based on a field study class started at Harvard Business School in 2021, the Fund’s mission is to create a new capital pool that expands access to affordable and flexible financing for Tennessee-based entrepreneurs who have historically faced barriers to access capital. The Fund’s goals are to make profits and create social change while engaging Owen Business School students in experiential learning.”

This \$100,000 fund approved funding for FOUR Academy graduates, allowing them to invest in industry-grade equipment, an app, and manufacturing their product in mass quantities!

Check out this recap video featuring Thomas Kelly (Creative Soulz Printing), Jessica Doaks (The Black Candle Co.), Christopher Smith (Bunshine), and Adrienne Bowling (A-1 Mobile Notary).



⁷ cornertocorner.org/2023AR-VB

3 BETTER than an Oscar!

As part of the Hope Summit sponsored by Belmont University, **Corner to Corner was selected as one of the 2023 Champions of Hope recipients!** This award seeks to showcase organizations that exemplify hope in their industry, sector, and/or community. What a gift of encouragement it was to know that Belmont, a university that is such a leader in our community here in Nashville, honors our efforts and achievements. A big thank you to Belmont and our entire staff for their hard work and dedication throughout the years!

In addition to this epic award, we were also honored to be one of Belmont University's first Social Innovation Lab Partners. The goal of the lab is to "activate agents of hope to pursue human flourishing and community thriving for all." Belmont will be bringing some of their most creative students, professors, and research scientists to walk with Corner to Corner as we work to effectively develop successful small businesses throughout historically underestimated communities. It is always a joy to have brilliant people motivated by love become key partners! Follow us on socials to hear more about this work in 2024.

Hear more of Will's POV here:





A LETTER FROM OUR **CO-FOUNDER**

“ When Tiffany and I first sat at our dining room table praying and dreaming about what shape Corner to Corner would one day take, we had no idea what God would do. To say that it has outstripped our wildest hopes would be putting it mildly. But of course, He can do far more than we can ask or imagine. As I look back at 2023, it was a year of tremendous growth in the team’s ability to lead and execute increasingly large projects while simultaneously staying grounded in joy. *This is a big deal.*

Often, when organizations grow, some essential piece of them goes missing. As if the life that gave them their vitality has left the building. But that has not happened here at Corner to Corner. Why? I believe it is because we have stayed grounded in the call of Christ to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. What this practically means is that we have stayed in a place where we are able to be compassionate to ourselves while extending that same compassion and mercy to others. This gives our growing team the spiritual, physical, and emotional space of safety that fosters growth. They are free to try new things to improve, see some areas of success and some setbacks, and learn from each.

This same spirit of love and compassion is then infused into our programs.

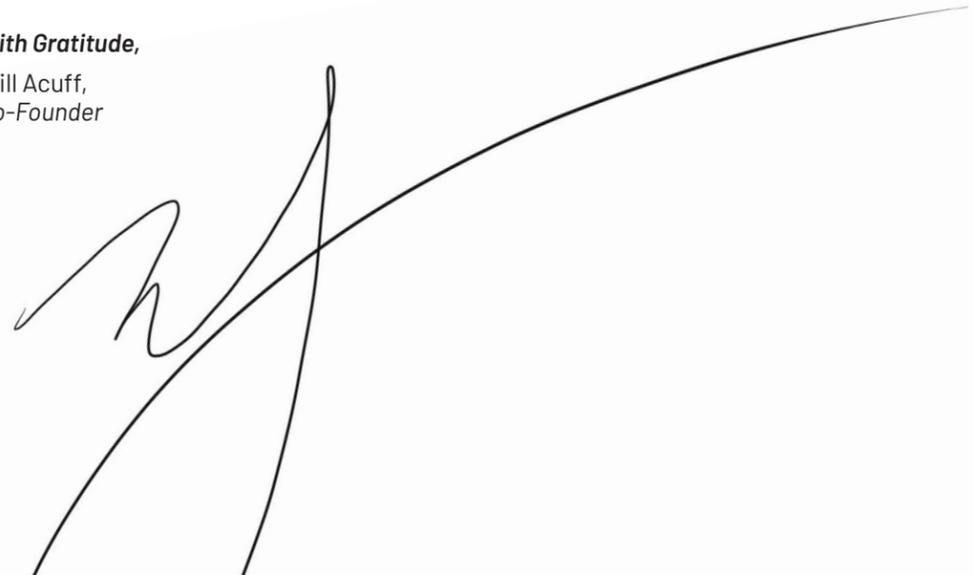
Neighbors are welcomed with joy and find people who are excited to know them, walk with them, and see their ideas grow.

Whether this is a kid afraid at first to step into their creative writing chops as they shape a script with their friends, or a new entrepreneur who has had an idea for years but was constantly told ‘business is not for you.’ In this community, they find people who say ‘Welcome, we will walk this path together in love.’

There is a power in this kind of community formation that transcends spreadsheets, org charts, and strategic plans. Thank you for being a key part of that formation, whether donor, volunteer, corporate, or church partner. This community would not be the same without you. We look forward to seeing what this loving community creates in 2024.

With Gratitude,

Will Acuff,
Co-Founder



“ We long for our work to **showcase the love of Jesus - to those who believe and those who don’t...**”



HOW OUR FAITH **INFORMS US**

Love Thy Neighbor as Self

At Corner to Corner, we are compelled by the love of Christ to love our neighbors as ourselves. The heart of the gospel is the graciousness of God who did not spare even his own son. That transforming love, shown in Jesus, is also at work in us as believers.

It compels us to pursue the radical invitation of Jesus to love our neighbors.

One of the primary ways that we love ourselves and our own families is through taking care of our financial needs. We believe the call to love our neighbors well is

a direct invitation to invest in their financial future as well as our own.

This shows up in how we seek to create a culture of “us” in all of our programs. It shows up when we emphasize the people over the programs. And it shows up as we move toward a Nashville where all neighbors flourish.

Image Bearers

We believe that all of us are Image Bearers of a loving and creative God - meaning that ALL of our neighbors have passion, creativity and a drive to succeed. As an nonprofit, it is not our job to try and give our neighbors something they already have.

Instead, we build on-ramps of opportunity so our neighbors can use their God-given passions in a way that leads to economic flourishing for them and their families.

We long for our work to showcase the love of Jesus - to those who believe and those who don’t - that invites people into the joyful party that God is throwing. These values of the gospel inform all that we do and push us toward the gospel-informed priorities of racial justice, economic development, and faithful presence that are embodied in all of our programs.

**THE ACADEMY
HAS GRADUATED**

**1,072
ENTREPRENEURS!!**





A LOVE LETTER TO NASHVILLE

“ This Annual Report is our love letter to Nashville.

A Nashville where we have so many that we call friends, co-workers, alumni, and neighbors. And as you flip through the pages of our Annual Report, **to see how truly remarkable our community is**, I have to say that my mind is blown at the gift God has entrusted to my leadership. It feels like God’s love for me is personified in new faces and places every single day.

Our staff is hyper-focused on creating a feeling that is hard to describe... a cross between sunshine on our faces and deep belly laughs; the kind of feeling that makes you want to bottle it up to keep forever, to take a mental picture that you can revisit often. Of course, this feeling is coupled with bold goals; to graduate hundreds of entrepreneurs, to expand our alumni services, to increase access to capital and to tap into new ways to invite kids to fall in love with literacy.

We have been able to achieve these goals and so much more this year! But, as you continue to look through these pages, can I ask for two small favors?

- 1. Flip through this Annual Report twice.** Once for the stats, facts and figures. We are really doing some transformative work right here in our Nashville neighborhoods. And then a second time to simply look at the pictures and watch the videos. Scan the QR codes and meet the businesses. Study the smiling faces and the families who joined our community in 2023. See the joy, achievement, and hope that exists right here.
- 2. If you are not already signed up for our newsletter, please email me** at Shana@CornerToCorner.org to join the party. Honestly, to call it a newsletter doesn't begin to scratch the surface of what it really is. Each week, you and I can have an inbox conversation about the fun, emotional, exciting, confusing and hilarious things that we encounter every day doing what we love. So thank you for your commitment this past year; with your continued support, we will do so much more in 2024!

Wishing you a year of deep belly laughs and memories worthy of mental pictures,

Shana Berkeley,
Executive Director



WHERE ALL



NEIGHBORS FLOURISH





STREET TEAM

Jan 2023 -

Black Men Vent Too featured Jaron, our Academy Amplified Program Director, on their podcast

Jan 2023 -

Shana shared advice for nonprofit leaders with Karen Williams on her OnPause Podcast.

Jan 2023 -

Alongside one of our Academy Alumni, Lamar Allen of LaMarvelous Balloons, Shana sat down with WPLN to talk entrepreneurship and share the mission of The Academy on This Is Nashville

Sep 2023 -

We were so touched when Greg Baumer dedicated his episode on The Breakthru Podcast to Corner to Corner. Will was able to speak a little about the work we do (around 37 minutes in!).

Nov 2023 -

Our Academy Alum, Jonathan of Black Men Vent Too, joined us at The Academy Celebration to host a LIVE podcast during the event! It was such an awesome experience, and we got to hear from three of our neighbors throughout the night.

Dec 2023 -

Will talks GROWTH and leveling up on Smart Business Dealmakers Podcast

For direct links to these podcasts please visit our Instagram or go to cornertocorner.org/2023AR-Podcasts



Juneteenth

We were a sponsor for the Fort Negley Juneteenth celebrations. Jasmine and Keybra were out there with a recruitment tent, sharing The Academy and celebrating with our neighbors. We had so many people sign up for the waitlist! Some of our other team members also stopped by the Black on Buchanan event to support Academy Alumni who were vendors.

Nashville Soccer Club grant for Script to Screen

We received a grant from the Nashville SC Community Fund to support students as they fall in love with literacy and discover their creative voice. With these funds, we were able to hire brilliant facilitators to help students bring their ideas to life! The grant also helped to create the magic that we all experienced at the Red Carpet Premiere in November.



2023 Team Members



Shana Berkeley
Executive Director



Will Acuff
Co-Founder



Tiffany Acuff
Co-Founder



Aman Nasser
Strategic Scaling Director



Tara Holt
Director of Operations



Tiffani Alexander
Communications Director



Marcia Smith
The Academy Program Director



Bethany Burney
Script to Screen Program Director



Jaron Spicer
Academy Amplified Program Director



Jasmine Lafayette
The Academy Recruitment Director



Ashley Broadnax
The Academy Program Specialist



Amanda Key
The Academy Program Specialist



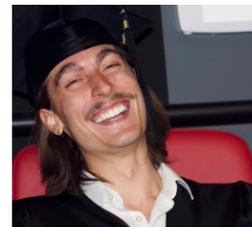
Chevy Thomas
Academy Alumni Support Specialist



Lesa Dowdy
Resident Artist & Script to Screen Film Coordinator



Paige Blye
Digital Media Specialist & Copywriter



Austin Sena
Videographer



Mary Elizabeth Latch
Grant Specialist



Nathan Arnold
Program Specialist



Keybra Martin
The Academy Recruitment Specialist

2023 Board Members



Johari Matthews
Board Chair



Kyle Felts
Board Member



Garrah Carter-Mason
Board Member



John Rote
Board Member



Isaac Addae
Board Member



John Peek
Board Member



Alisha Haddock
Board Member



Anika Baltimore
Board Member



Thomas Branch
Board Member



Jasmine Simmons
Board Intern

2023 Advisory Members

Isaac Addae

Mikael Jacobs

Paul Roper

Greg Baumer

Jason Luntz

Emmet Seibels

Tony Groticelli

Danielle McGee

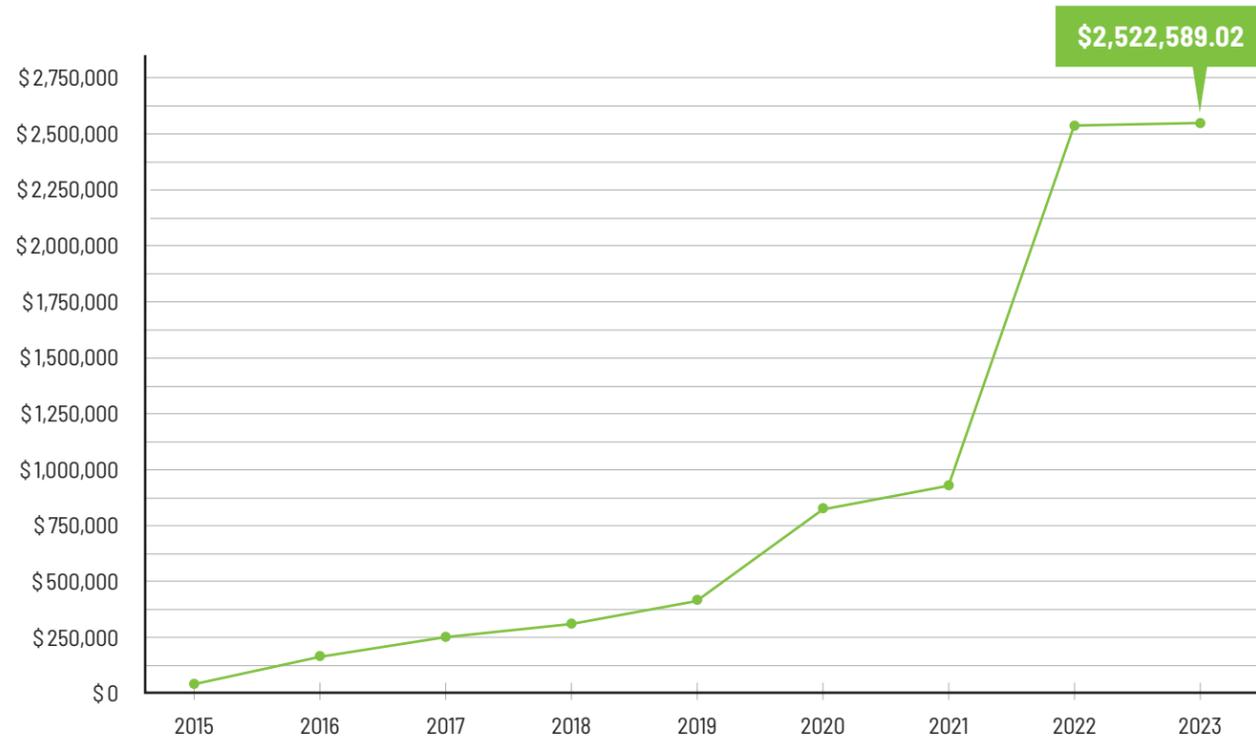
Lisa Swift-Young

Briana Hawkins

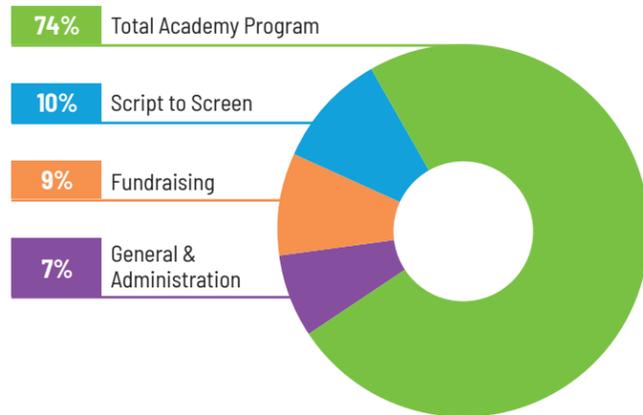
Carlos Partee

Financials

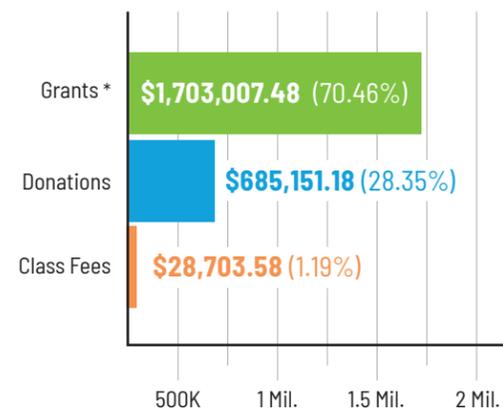
Annual Revenue Totals



2023 Program Expenses



2023 Funding Sources



* Grants includes traditional grants, foundations, and corporate sponsorships.

The People Are Talking!

"Thank you so much, I saw a difference in his confidence. He is normally quiet, but I can tell he was more confident."

- Parent at Isaac Litton Middle School

"I love the generation of leaders and entrepreneurs you all are creating - and the diversity of entrepreneurs and businesses you all are helping to launch."

- Shani Dowell, donor

"The wealth of knowledge was invaluable and helped me wrap my mind around what the future can hold for my business. I want to also share how transformative this program has been. I knew I had something special in Rich Lit but I was struggling with how to get it out of the 'expensive hobby' stage and this program has given me the structure I needed. Thank you for all that you do!"

- Brenda Greene, Academy Alumna and owner of Rich Lit Crew⁸

⁸ cornertocorner.org/2023AR-RLC

"Corner to Corner touches young people's lives in significant ways for their independence, growth, and contribution to our world. BRAVO."

- Chrissy Washburn, donor

"Thank you all so much for giving me hope that I can do this by just asking for help. I will need a community to assist me."

- Masterclass participant

"Corner to Corner has helped bridge the gap for many many many minority business owners."

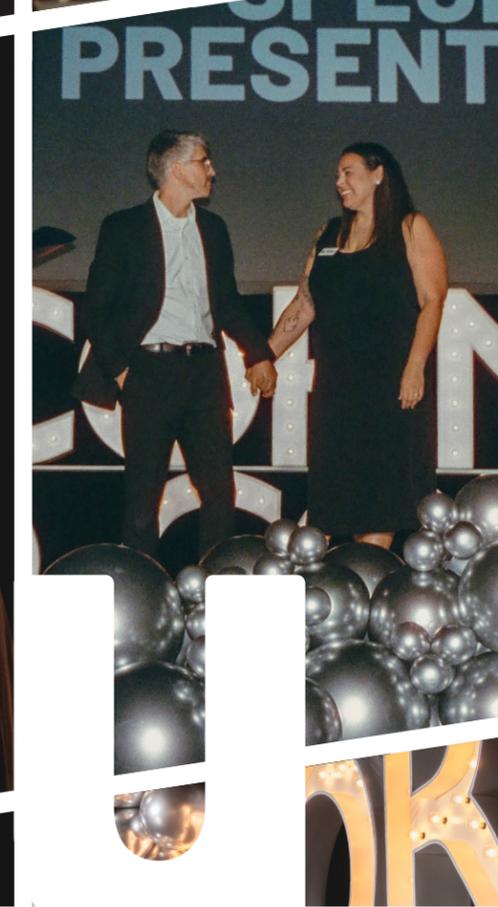
- Garrah Carter, donor and board member

Our Partners





Watch us celebrate
1,000 entrepreneurs!

Thank You

 Add impact to your email.
Sign up on our website.

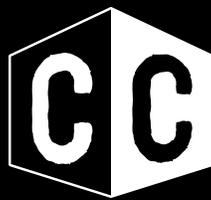
 CornerToCorner.org

 [@CornerToCorner](https://www.instagram.com/CornerToCorner)

 [Corner To Corner](https://www.youtube.com/CornerToCorner)

 [CornerToCornerNashville](https://www.facebook.com/CornerToCornerNashville)

 [Corner To Corner](https://www.linkedin.com/CornerToCorner)



CornerToCorner.org