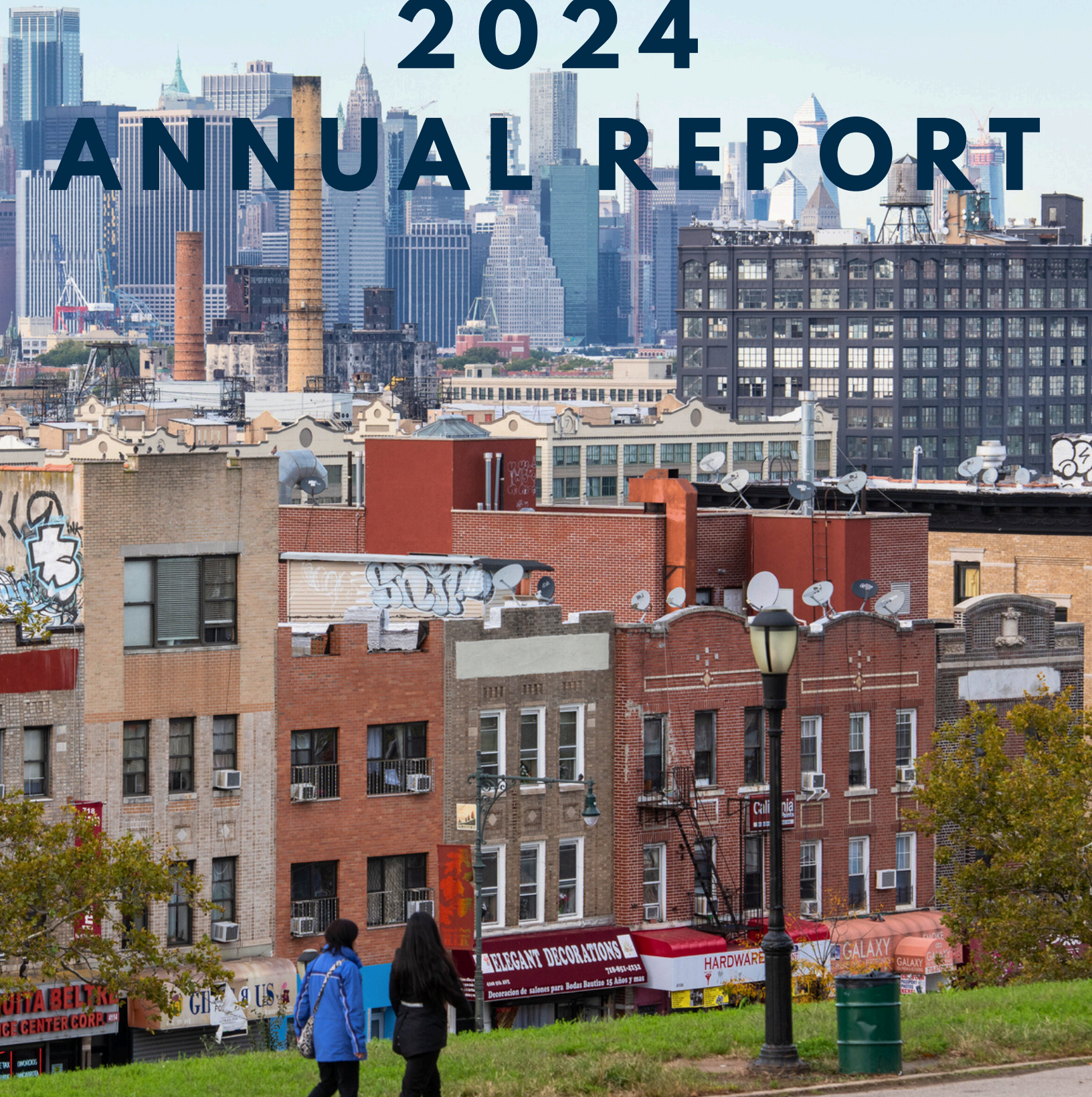


BROOKLYN COMMUNITIES COLLABORATIVE

2024

ANNUAL REPORT



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear friends and partners,

Five years ago, Brooklyn Communities Collaborative (BCC) was founded with an understanding that lasting change in health and wealth equity can only be achieved when communities come together. We knew that no single organization could tackle these systemic challenges alone. It would take collaboration across sectors and institutions — among community-based organizations, local businesses, unions, anchor institutions like hospitals and universities, and, most importantly, the people who call Brooklyn home.

I am incredibly proud of what we have accomplished together. Through trust, partnership, and persistence, over the past five years, BCC has helped to organize, empower, and elevate a borough-wide network committed to equity and opportunity.

In 2024 alone, BCC and our partners demonstrated what is possible when solutions are driven by — and for — our communities. Together, we graduated two workforce development cohorts of justice-involved individuals, helping to open new career pathways and brighter futures. We launched our first Local Small Business Accelerator, supporting Brooklyn entrepreneurs and strengthening our local economy. Through our Strong Communities Fund, we provided grants to 10 community-based organizations tackling the maternal health crisis, ensuring that mothers and families receive essential care and support.

These efforts are making a difference: graduates from our workforce program are finding employment, small businesses are securing the tools they need to grow, and community-based organizations are expanding their impact.

Beyond direct programs, BCC has been a convener and catalyst. We've brought together community action committees and workgroups to confront pressing challenges — from organizing for a more sustainable energy future to advancing anchor institutions' investment in local hiring and local businesses. We also continue to grow our network of anchor partners, most recently welcoming the Brooklyn Public Library and Wyckoff Heights Medical Center.

BCC's work is built on a foundation of trust, accountability, and deep relationships. We are thrilled to strengthen that foundation this year by welcoming two distinguished leaders to our Board of Directors: J. Phillip Thompson, Professor of Political Science and Urban Planning at MIT and former NYC Deputy Mayor; and Jonnel Doris, CEO of Start Care and former Commissioner for the NYC Department of Small Business Services. Their expertise, leadership, and unwavering commitment to community will help guide BCC as we chart our next chapter.

We know that the work ahead will not be easy. The challenges facing Brooklyn's communities — economic inequality, health disparities, environmental injustice — are complex and urgent. We also know that partnership, collaboration, and collective action will continue to drive meaningful change.

As we look to the next five years and beyond, BCC remains steadfast in our vision: a Brooklyn where every community is healthy, economically strong, culturally vibrant, and civically engaged. Together, we will keep building toward that future.





ADVANCING AN ANCHOR MISSION

Since BCC's founding, our team has worked to advance health equity in Brooklyn by harnessing the power of anchor institutions, which include hospitals, universities, libraries, and academic institutions. Anchor institutions use their significant financial and community resources to improve health and well-being in the communities around them. These partners are committed to leveraging their economic power through purchasing, hiring, and programming to benefit the communities they serve.

In 2024, BCC welcomed the Brooklyn Public Library and Wyckoff Heights Medical Hospital to our growing anchor network. BCC offers its anchor organizations unique support to reach their local and diverse goals, whether with workforce development programs, connections to local, small businesses providing key services, or partnership opportunities with other anchor institutions.



THE BRIDGE: DIVERSIFYING AND LOCALIZING BROOKLYN'S SUPPLY CHAIN

BCC's Bridge is a multi-faceted initiative designed to connect Brooklyn's anchor institutions with small, locally owned businesses. Rooted in the understanding that economic opportunity is essential to community health and well-being, The Bridge works to localize procurement spending and build wealth within Brooklyn's neighborhoods.

Each year, anchor institutions in Brooklyn collectively spend billions of dollars on goods and services—from medical supplies and IT support to food services and maintenance. Yet, the majority of that spending historically bypasses local, minority-owned, and small businesses. The Bridge is changing that.

On one side of the bridge, BCC works with anchor institutions to increase their procurement from diverse local businesses. On the other, we prepare and support local entrepreneurs to compete for contracts by offering mentorship, training, and access to networks and resources.

The Bridge represents the latest evolution of the Brooklyn Health Enterprise Hub, launched in 2019 to help Brooklyn residents and enterprises participate more fully in the local economy. That work is now reflected in The Bridge's dual strategy: supporting institutional procurement shifts and local business readiness.

BROOKLYN COMMUNITIES COLLABORATIVE'S BRIDGE PROGRAM

COMMUNICATION

Catalyzing and facilitating communication between anchors and local small businesses

CONVENING, FACILITATION, AND NETWORK BUILDING

Purposefully integrating local small businesses into key networks to develop knowledge, relationships, and access to credit

DEDICATED TEAM AND CULTURE

Integrating supply chain diversification and localization into the culture of BCC anchor institutions

PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

Conducting evidence-based and participatory action research to inform ongoing program design and implementation

ROLLING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND MENTORING

Supporting small businesses to navigate complex contracting processes and requirements, including BCC's small businesses Accelerator Program

ANCHOR
INSTITUTIONS

SMALL
LOCAL
BUSINESSES

WORKING WITH ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS' SUPPLY CHAIN TEAMS

The Bridge fosters collaboration between institutions' procurement teams and local small businesses to advance local, equitable purchasing practices. BCC:



Partners with a leading supplier diversity platform to help anchor institutions track spending, supplier participation, and local, diverse procurement opportunities



Analyzes spending patterns to identify gaps and procurement needs



Facilitates collaboration across hospital procurement teams to ensure consistent data sharing and accountability.

Through these efforts, The Bridge helps anchor institutions meet their local procurement goals while strengthening Brooklyn's small business ecosystem.

BROOKLYN HEALTH ENTERPRISE SMALL BUSINESS ACCELERATOR

To prepare local businesses to successfully engage with anchor institutions, BCC launched the Brooklyn Health Enterprise Small Business Accelerator in 2024, in partnership with the Department of Urban Policy and Planning at Hunter College-CUNY and Eleven3Seven5.

The accelerator offered a cohort of local, minority- and women-owned businesses expert-led seminars, personalized technical assistance, and education on procurement processes. Participants also gained access to a network of professionals and procurement leaders from BCC's anchor partners.

Originally designed for nine businesses, overwhelming interest and qualified applicants prompted BCC to expand the program to include 13 participants.

Participants graduated from the accelerator in early 2025 and will continue to engage with procurement teams and business development opportunities throughout the year.



Small Business Accelerator participants receive their certificates of completion

BUSINESS ACCELERATOR PARTICIPANTS

Around the Clock Tots LLC – Childcare services

Bear Magic Workshops LLC – Mobile stuffed animal workshop business

Brooklyn Food Guild – Food micro-business collective

Clean to the Max LLC – Office, residential, and janitorial cleaning services

Collective Fare Enterprises, Inc. – Hospitality and food services company blending culinary excellence with social impact

D&S Visions Home Improvement LLC – Affordable, high-quality home renovations and repairs

Effie's Paper, Stationery & Whatnot – Designer and supplier of stationery, promotional items, and apparel

ESEN Translation Services –Language translation, interpretation, transcription, and instruction services

JetEx Mechanical LLC – HVAC, plumbing, and Building Management Systems provider

Munch Hours Inc. – Catering with a focus on community engagement and food justice

Mwah Flowers – Full-service florist serving Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens

nCourage Arts Mobile Studio, LLC – Mobile arts studio offering guided, sensory-friendly creative experiences

TheraMotive – High-tech mobile physical therapy clinics powered by AI, virtual reality, and wearable technology



Small Business Accelerator participants at the programs' closing reception





WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: CREATING CAREER PATHWAYS AND ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BCC's workforce approach brings together three essential groups – community members seeking employment, organizations providing workforce trainings and certification programs, and large institutional partners (called anchor institutions) facing workforce shortages – to fill high priority jobs, increase economic opportunity for Brooklynites, and bridge the gap between employment training and opportunity.

ADVANCING WORKFORCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR JUSTICE-INVOLVED INDIVIDUALS

In neighborhoods like Brownsville and East New York, disproportionately high incarceration rates have led to elevated unemployment and reduced economic opportunity. Formerly incarcerated individuals face an unemployment rate five times higher than the general population. Stable employment is key to reducing recidivism, supporting successful re-entry, and establishing sustainable and healthy lives.

The Advancing Healthcare Workforce Opportunities for Justice-Involved Individuals (AOJI) pilot project began in late 2023 and was supported by the Affinity Health Foundation. This 18-month initiative was designed to strengthen Brooklyn's healthcare workforce while providing job training and career pathways for justice-involved individuals aged 18–45.

With BCC partners including Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, Kingsborough Community College, and STRIVE, BCC recruited and trained 40 participants, out of 200+ applicants, as Community Health Workers or Environmental Service Technicians – career paths identified as immediate job opportunities.

The comprehensive program included:

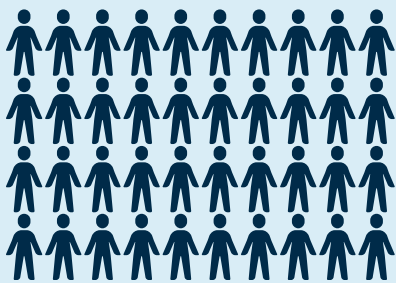
- Four weeks of career readiness training
- Three weeks of occupational skills development
- Three weeks of referral services and job placement assistance



BCC EVS worker trainees

Participants also received soft skills training, résumé development, mock interviews, and introductions to potential employers. BCC covered all program costs and provided participants with MetroCards and a \$1,000 stipend to help offset living expenses.

AOJI WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OUTCOMES



Trained **40** justice-involved individuals



Achieved a **90%** graduation rate

Placed **75%** of participants in jobs

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES: ADDRESSING PRIORITY COMMUNITY NEEDS THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS AND PROGRAMMING

Strengthening Communities brings together local partners to improve economic wellbeing and overall health in Brooklyn. BCC connects community leaders, organizations, and policymakers, and funds community organizations through participatory grantmaking initiatives.

STRONG COMMUNITIES FUND - MATERNAL HEALTH PROGRAM

In 2024 BCC launched a third round of funding through its Strong Communities Fund regranting initiative, focusing on improving maternal health in Brooklyn communities. This effort is supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Building Local Alignment Initiative.



BCC Maternal Health Program grantees

A community-led, multi-disciplinary review committee — comprised of nonprofit leaders, maternal health care providers, doulas, OBGYNs, and local residents — reviewed applications and awarded grants to 10 organizations committed to advancing maternal health outcomes.

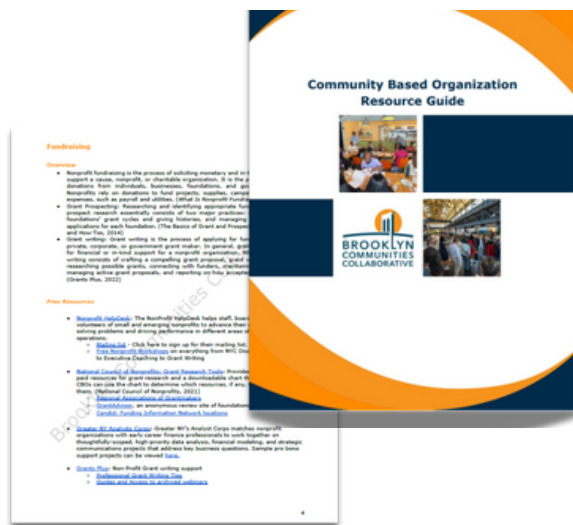
BCC staff and advisors work closely with grant recipients to ensure they have adequate support as they implement their programming. Through these investments, BCC is helping to improve maternal health outcomes, strengthen family supports, and build healthier communities across Brooklyn.

A PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING APPROACH

BCC's Strong Communities Fund uses a participatory grant-making approach. Participatory grantmaking is a process that directly involves the people most affected by the issues being addressed in the grantmaking process.

Participatory grantmaking empowers communities, organizations, or individuals from the target groups to have a say in the funding decisions, and is designed to be more inclusive and reflective of the community.

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION RESOURCE GUIDE



Informed by over five years of ongoing feedback and input from partners, BCC created a Community-Based Organization (CBO) Resource Guide that includes key resources for fundraising, HR, data tracking, compliance, and more. The guide aims to meet partners' frequently expressed need for capacity-building, professional development, and technical assistance.

STRONG COMMUNITIES FUND MATERNAL HEALTH GRANTEES

Anne Kastor Brooklyn Free Clinic: expand community outreach, educational opportunities, and medication access across Brooklyn.

Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health: leverage local community assets to address the maternal health crisis in Brooklyn, and particularly in Bedford Stuyvesant, Crown Heights, East New York, Brownsville, Flatbush, Coney Island and Sheepshead Bay.



Expecting Relief: expand maternal relief pre- and post-natal services in East New York, Brownsville, Williamsburg and Bushwick.

Little Essentials: provide diapers, clothes, and other essential items to low income families across Brooklyn.

Neighborhood Technical Assistance Center: support Project Imhotep, a holistic community-driven community outreach campaign for Black mothers across Brooklyn.



Photos: grantees speaking at BCC Strong Communities Fund Maternal Health kickoff



Brooklyn Perinatal Network: study factors impacting availability and access to community and social services that address health related social needs.

Caribbean Women's Health Association: strengthen community outreach, workshops, and counseling services surrounding sexual health, birth control, and chronic disease management.

Christopher Rose Community Empowerment Campaign: expand programming engaging fathers, grandmothers and supportive family members/network.



Seeds in the Middle: provide prenatal movement and yoga classes, breathing classes, emotional support services, and a fresh food pantry.

The Alex House Project: continue providing career opportunities, comprehensive doula services and mental health, case management and psychotherapy/education sessions.



HEALTHY BUILT ENVIRONMENT: BUILDING A SAFER AND MORE AFFORDABLE FUTURE FOR BROOKLYN

Housing, and the built environment in which it is situated, touch all aspects of our lives. BCC works alongside community leadership, government support, and local organizations to encourage lasting, sustainable change to Brooklyn's built environment.

ENVISIONING A BROOKLYN CIVIC VIRTUAL POWER PLANT

Decades of economic disinvestment in East Brooklyn have created stark disparities in income, infrastructure quality, and access to opportunity. Many low-income Black and Brown families live in older, poorly insulated buildings leading to higher energy costs despite lower household incomes.

To address these challenges, BCC launched research and planning efforts to establish the **Brooklyn Civic Virtual Power Plant (BCVPP)**, a decentralized network of small-scale energy resources — such as residential solar panels and battery storage — that function as a unified energy provider. A virtual power plant (VPP) reduces reliance on traditional utility companies, lowers energy costs, and helps decarbonize neighborhoods, paving the way for energy independence.

As part of its assessment for implementing a BCVPP in Community Districts 5 and 16 (East New York and Brownsville), BCC:



Developed communication materials and hosted listening sessions to build community awareness and support.



Created a strategic plan to engage local CBOs, leaders, and youth in conducting feasibility assessments.



Began exploring long-term sustainability strategies for the project.

CLEAN POWER PRESCRIPTION PLAN

The BCVPP incorporates the innovative work of institutions like the Boston Medical Center and their Clean Power Prescription Program, which uses solar power generated at BMC to give eligible patients energy bill credits and bring green power to the community.



Photos: community members discuss the potential for a BCVPP at event in Brownsville, Brooklyn



Five years in, BCC's impact is clear — but our work is just beginning. Together, we're building a Brooklyn where every community is healthy, economically strong, and empowered.

Growing Collective Power by convening partners to advance community-driven solutions.

98

East and Central Brooklyn Call to Action (ECBC2A) meetings

30

Community Action & Advocacy Workgroup (CAAW) meetings

Investing in Stronger Communities and community based organizations.

\$4,940,670

Regranted to CBOs through the Strong Communities Fund

50

CBOs supported through participatory grantmaking

\$940,670 TO ADDRESS THE MATERNAL HEALTH CRISIS

\$1M TO SUPPORT COVID-19 TESTING AND VACCINATION EFFORTS

\$3M FOR URGENT COMMUNITY NEEDS DURING THE PANDEMIC (HOUSING, FOOD, ELECTRONICS, ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES)

Developing a Workforce that starts and grows in Brooklyn.

8 workforce development programs

104 local residents trained and graduated

Held training programs for Health Coaching, Care Management, Property Management, Economic Democracy, Community Health Work, and healthcare Environmental Services.

Building a more **Localized, Diversified, and Resilient Supply Chain** by bridging the gap between anchor institutions and small, local businesses.

6

Anchor Institutions

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

MAIMONIDES HEALTH

ONE BROOKLYN HEALTH SYSTEM

SUNY DOWNSTATE HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

WYCKOFF HEIGHTS MEDICAL CENTER

Secured commitments from 2 anchor institutions to increase local procurement **10X** by 2030

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

With gratitude, BCC proudly recognizes the funders that have helped make this work possible over the last five years:

Affinity Legacy Foundation
Altman Foundation
Community Care of Brooklyn
Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
N.Y.S. Senator Kevin Parker
Mother Cabrini Health Foundation
Momentum Foundation
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
The New York Community Trust
U.S. Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer
U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
U.S. Representative Yvette Clarke
U.S. Representative Hakeem Jeffries

BCC also extends thanks to the partners, supporters, and team members who have worked alongside us over the past five years. Without their support and dedication to a healthier and more equitable future in Brooklyn, none of this progress would be possible.



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