



THE POLISHED PEARLS
FOUNDATION

Annual Report 2022

Programs Empowering & Affirming Resilient Lives Significantly

Table of Contents

● Who We Are	3
● What We Believe	3
● Mission and Vision	3
● Strategic Plan Summary	3
● Message from The President	4
● Message from The Executive Director	4
● Administrative Officers	5
● Directors	5
● 2018-2022 Programs of Service Targets	6
● 2022-2026 Programs of Service Initiatives	6
● 2022 Snapshots of Community Impact	7
● Youth Impact	8
● Scholarships	9
● Community Collaborations	10
● Fundraisers, Grants and Donors	10
● Sponsorships	10
● Financial Summary	11
● Meet the 2022-2024 Administrative Officers	12
● Meet the 2022-2024 Directors	12

Who We Are

Established in 2016 for educational, outreach and charitable purposes, The Polished Pearls Foundation is the IRS approved 501©3 non-profit fundraising entity for Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated-Theta Tau Omega Chapter.

In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding, we strive to facilitate programs for success through meaningful initiatives in alignment with the mission of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated and the unique needs of the local community.

What We Believe

Our objective is to secure resources, foster educational enrichment and awareness through a variety of components including but not limited to promoting Historically Black Colleges and Universities, encouraging academic excellence, providing scholarship opportunities as well as advance nutrition and wellness, financial literacy, performing and visual arts within Fairfield County while placing emphasis on the Greater Bridgeport Area.

Mission and Vision

To award scholarships in higher education and promote philanthropic programs designed to enhance the health, welfare and educational development of individuals and families in Fairfield County, Connecticut with special emphasis in the Greater Bridgeport community.

Strategic Plan Summary

The Polished Pearls Foundation Board of Directors engage in strategic planning at the retreats that are scheduled in January. The planning process allows the Board to evaluate our programs and our progress toward our stated goals and objectives. The evaluation also provides the opportunity to identify those areas where significant progress was being made and to identify areas needing more development and/or definition. Reports from Committees provide recommendations for future consideration.

Additional information is garnered from our principal partner Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated-Theta Tau Omega Chapter to review and discuss the scholarship awards process, fundraising implementation, and programs of service.



Message from Foundation President Shamain Johnson-Cohen

The Polished Pearls Foundation was established in 2016 for educational, outreach and charitable purposes. The Polished Pearls Foundation is the IRS approved 501 © 3 non-profit fundraising entity for Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority®, Incorporated-Theta Tau Omega Chapter. The foundation supports educational initiatives and secures financial resources to support programming and local initiatives in the Greater Bridgeport community.

Over the years, the Polished Pearls foundation worked tirelessly to serve the community and support our youth in a variety of ways. We are proud of the work accomplished thus far. Some of the community contributions include helping local teens transition from high school to college, extending scholarships to local youth, serving community members in need with toiletries, providing financial literacy, recognition and support to our caregivers.

Our foundation can continue to thrive and impact the greater Bridgeport community with your support and resources. Please consider giving your time and resources to help the foundation support new initiatives while improving the lives of others one at a time.



Message from Executive Director Regina Vermont

The Polished Pearls Foundation and the members of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated® Theta Tau Omega Chapter are truly appreciative for the support provided to us which helps us make a difference within the Greater Bridgeport Community.

We believe that the successes in this Annual Report represent programs and activities for 2022. We are grateful for all that you have done individually and collectively to enable The Polished Pearls Foundation to achieve its mission and realize its vision. **“Thank You.”**

Know that your financial support changes lives. As we share the outcomes of the various programs undertaken during 2022, you will be able to see the difference you are making in the lives of others. In addition to the scholarships awarded to graduating high school seniors, The Polished Pearls Foundation also provides support to students ages 11-13 through our Young Leader Institute (YLI).

Additionally, we appreciate your support of our fundraising activities such as Give Day, Dashikis and Denim and “Luck of The Ivy Raffle.” So, we thank you again for your generous donations and community partnership.

Administrative Officers

Tonisha Cohen-King, Vice President

Bria McCullough, Secretary

Jamie Cook, Financial Secretary

Directors

Lataya Middleton, Director

Raina Hall, Director

Penny Valentine, Director

Nicole Bernard, Director

Jacee Rhodes, Director

Tashana Schmidt-Leeing, Director

Giovanni Salkey, Director

Tracy Johnson Russell, Director

2018-2022 Program Targets

Target 1: HBCU for Life: A Call to Action

- #CAP (College Admissions Process) Program 2.0

Target 2: Women's Healthcare and Wellness

- Breast Cancer Awareness and Prevention
- Heart Health
- Nutrition and Wellness
- Care for the Caregivers

Target 3: Building Your Economic Legacy

- Personal Financial Planning and Asset Accumulation
- Credit Repair and Monitoring
- Entrepreneurship and the Black Dollar 365
- Operation AKA Assist

Target 4 - The Arts!

- Salute to the Harlem Renaissance
- Salute to the Black Arts Movement

Target 5 - Global Impact

- National Global Impact Day
- Global Assistance Activities
 - Soles 4 Souls
 - Lions Club International
 - Pillowcase Project
- Refugees in America Assistance Program (RAAP)

2022-2026 Program Initiatives

Initiative 1: Empower Our Families

- CHIPP (Childhood Hunger Initiative Power Pack)
- Youth Leadership Institute (YLI)
- Mental Health Awareness
- Our Seniors

Initiative 2: Build Our Economic Wealth

- Financial Wellness
- Sister Circles
- Supporting Women Entrepreneurs
- Black Dollar Days

Initiative 3: Enhance Our Environment

- Tree Planting
- Community and Home Gardens
- Waste Reduction
- Shredding and Electronics Recycling Day

Initiative 4: Advocate for Social Justice

- Voter Education, Registration and Mobilization
- Public Policy Forums
- Candidate Forums
- Public Servant's Guides

Initiative 5: Uplift Our Local Community

- Celebrate Local Community Impact
- #CAP (College Admissions Process) Program 2.0

2022 Snapshots of Community Impact



Building futures with Habitat for Humanity of Coastal Fairfield County



Coordinating Soles for Souls



Fostering Financial Freedom through Empowerment



Remembering the homeless population on Thanksgiving

Providing support to our community neighbors in need

Impacting Our Youth



College Admissions Process Education &

HBCU (Historically, Black Colleges and Universities) Awareness and Preparation

Polished Pearls Foundation #CAP Student Graduate



Temple University!

Saige Hollis
(Class of 2022)



Polished Pearls Foundation #CAP Student Reflections



Bryant University!

Cedric Cohen
(Class of 2022)



Parent Testimonial

Parent of Saige Hollis (Class of 2022)

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Sandra Vermont-Hollis. I write this letter with gratitude for all the support and guidance you have provided to my daughter Saige over the past two years through your *Signature* #CAP (College Admissions Process) Program. The dedicated women of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, Theta Tau Omega Chapter coordinated programming that helped build her skill set for her milestone season to apply for colleges.

She has been actively engaged in workshops since her Junior year of high school, throughout which Saige was provided with quality sessions such as: College Essay Writing, How to Ace the Interview, HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) Panel Discussion; ACT/SAT Preparation; A Virtual Field Trip to an HBCU College Fair and so much more. As a parent, I also learned valuable information through the financial aid and scholarship session, "Securing The Bag."

Despite the uneasy challenges of the pandemic, Saige (*as well as her cohort*) were provided with quality sessions that helped navigate her college application process. Students were even provided space for them to discuss and sort their emotions during this uneasy time.

I am proud to say that Saige exits the program with nearly ten college acceptances and is ready to seize her moment and pursue her collegiate endeavors. This is in great part due to the invaluable information provided by Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, Theta Tau Omega Chapter. It is empowering to be a part of a program that believes and hopes and dreams for the best for each student participant. Thank you for always lifting us up and for believing in her future.

With Appreciation,

Sandra Vermont-Hollis

2022 Scholarship Awards

The Significance of Awarding Scholarships

“Access to providing education is one of the challenges facing African American high school graduates and The Polished Pearls Foundation is committed to providing support for their dreams. Assisting young people to achieve increasingly higher levels of achievement is our mission and the awarding of scholarships is one important means of providing support and realizing our goals.”



HBCU Awardees

\$1500



Sean Clemons
Graduate
Saint Lukes High School
Attending
Howard University
Major
Computer Science
\$1500

Amyra P. Bernadel
Graduate
Bunnell High School
Attending
Howard University
Major
Business Management
\$1500





Jaden E. Lazaro
Graduate
Stratford High School
Attending
New York Institute of
Technology
Major
Architecture
\$1000



Cheyenne N. Cunningham
Graduate
Central High School
Attending
University of Bridgeport
Major
Nursing
\$1000



Rising Stars
Scholarship
Awardees

Robert A. Warren
Graduate
Bunnell High School
Attending
University of Hartford
Major
Marketing and
Entrepreneurship
\$1000




In Sisterly Love & Memoriam


Elizabeth Braxton
Book Awardees




Anissa Nichelle Alicia
Graduate
Kolbe Cathedral
Attending
University of New Haven
Major
Fine Science
\$500




Cedric A. Cohen
Graduate
Trumbull High School
Attending
Bryant University
Major
Accounting
\$500



Mercedes M. Figueroa
Graduate
Bunnell High School
Attending
Rutgers University
Major
Collectible
\$500



Cocurwensia Ferdny Louissaint
Graduate
Central High School
Attending
Southern CT State University
Major
Nursing
\$500



Community Collaborations

2022 Fundraising

Principal Partner

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated-Theta Tau Omega Chapter

2022 Community Partners

ACCESS Educational Services
 Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated, Zeta Phi Lambda Chapter
 Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated- Beta Iota Chapter
 Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated-Omicron Upsilon Omega Chapter
 Bridgeport Caribe Youth Leaders (BCYL)
 Bridgeport Firebirds
 Bridgeport Newfield Public Library
 Bridgeport Public Schools Family Resource Centers
 Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, Fairfield Alumnae Chapter
 Habitat for Humanity of Coastal Fairfield County
 Headquarters Barbershop
 Jack and Jill of America, Inc.-Eastern Fairfield County Chapter
 Greater Bridgeport STEM Ecosystem, United Way Coastal Fairfield County
 Mind, Money, Media Inc.
 National Coalition 100 Black Women- New Haven Metropolitan Chapter
 Out of The Trunk Ministry
 Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Incorporated
 Stamford Alumnae Chapter, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated
 Stratford Public Schools Diversity and Equity Department
 Stratford Public Library

2022 Fundraisers

Give Day
 Denim and Dashikis
 Luck of the Ivy

Grantors

City of Bridgeport
 State Senator Marilyn Moore
 Bridgeport Rotary Club
 Prosperity Foundation (TPF)

Business Donors

Cathartic Breakthroughs
 Influence Yoga and Yoga Therapy

Sponsorship Tiers

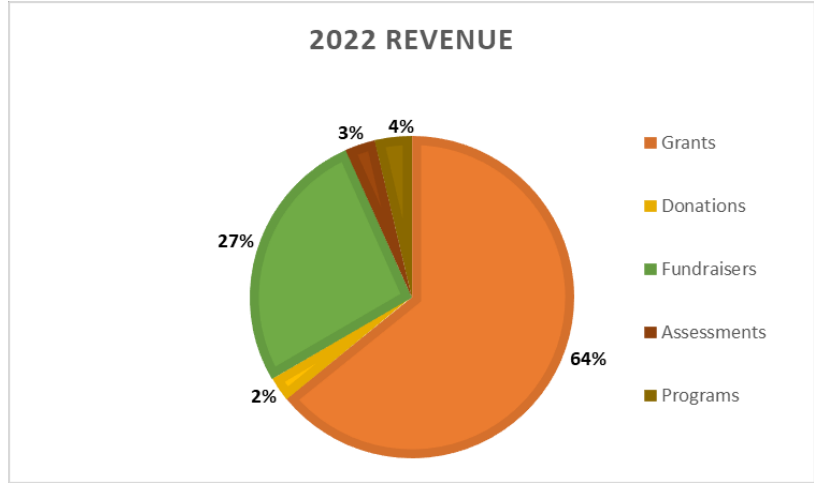
Diamond	\$5,000 and up
Pearl	\$1,001 to \$4,999
Gold	\$501 to \$1,000
Silver	\$251 to \$500
Ivy	\$50 to \$250

Financial Summary

Statement of Revenue and Expenditures

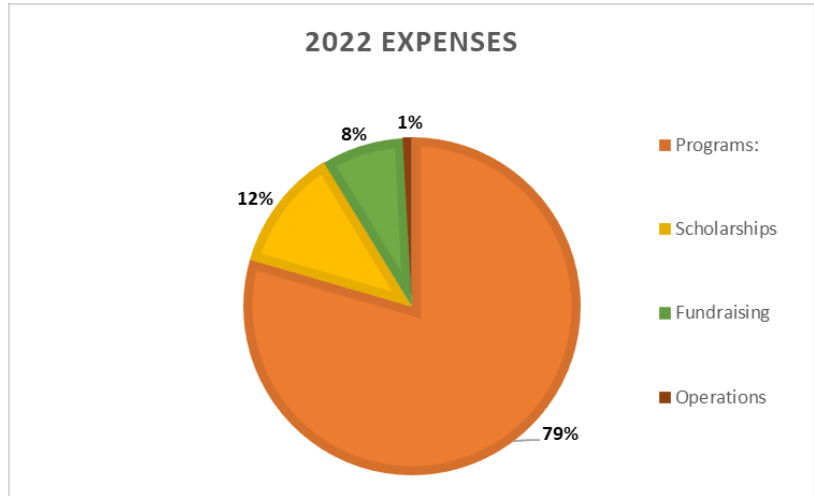
2022 Revenues

Grants	\$42,450.00
Donations	\$1,628.00
Fundraisers	\$17,701.64
Programs	\$2,400.00
Assessments	\$2,000.00
Total Revenue	\$66,179.64



2022 Expenses

Programs:	\$52,625.44
<i>CAP</i>	\$451.76
<i>HBCU</i>	\$50,322.80
<i>Target III</i>	\$1,500.00
<i>Target IV</i>	\$350.88
Scholarships	\$8,000.00
Fundraising	\$5,383.53
Operations	\$1,703.85
Total Expenses	\$67,792.82



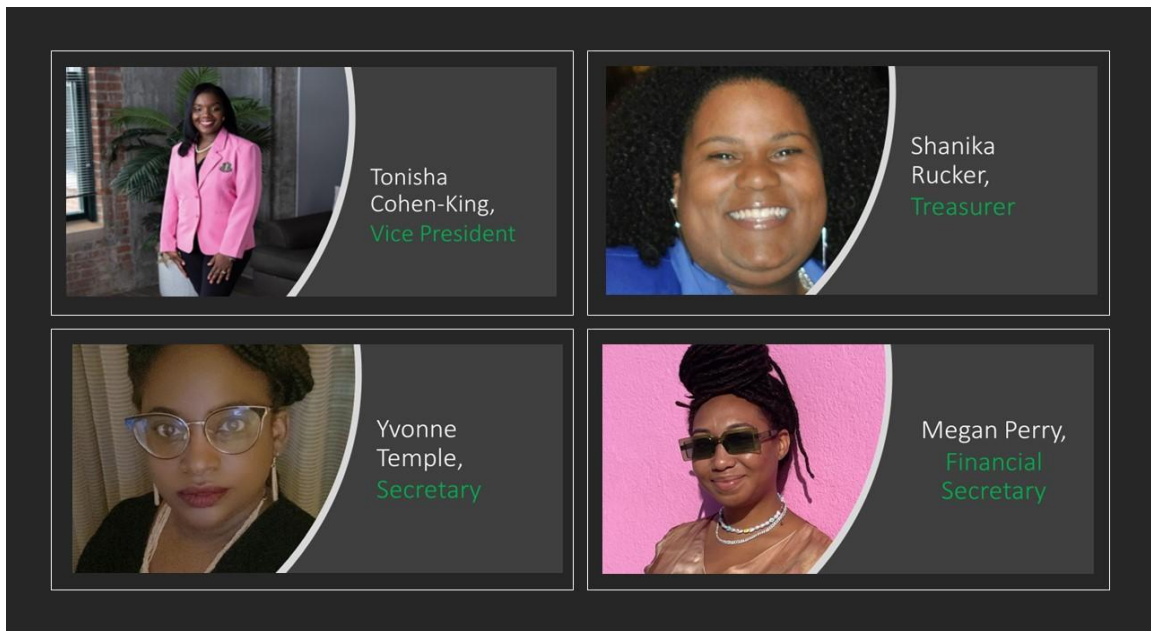
Statement of Financial Position as of December 31, 2022

Assets

Cash	\$18,659.67
Restricted	\$2,335.96
Total Assets	\$20,995.63

pending revenue transactions: 2 HBCU partnership payments \$600 + disputed fraud transactions \$839.19 = **\$1,439.19

Meet the 2022-2024 Administrative Officers



Meet the 2022-2024 Directors

