



2023

WFL COLLECTIVE[®] &
PROJECT
COMMUNITY CAPITAL[®]
IMPACT REPORT

MESSAGE FROM FOUNDER



Dr. Gina Merritt
Principal of NREUV
Founder of PCC and WFLC

“People from low-income communities struggle to find employment, even when they have years of stable employment experience on their resumes or they successfully complete numerous workforce development programs. What they need is a network.”

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A DUO

The Duo

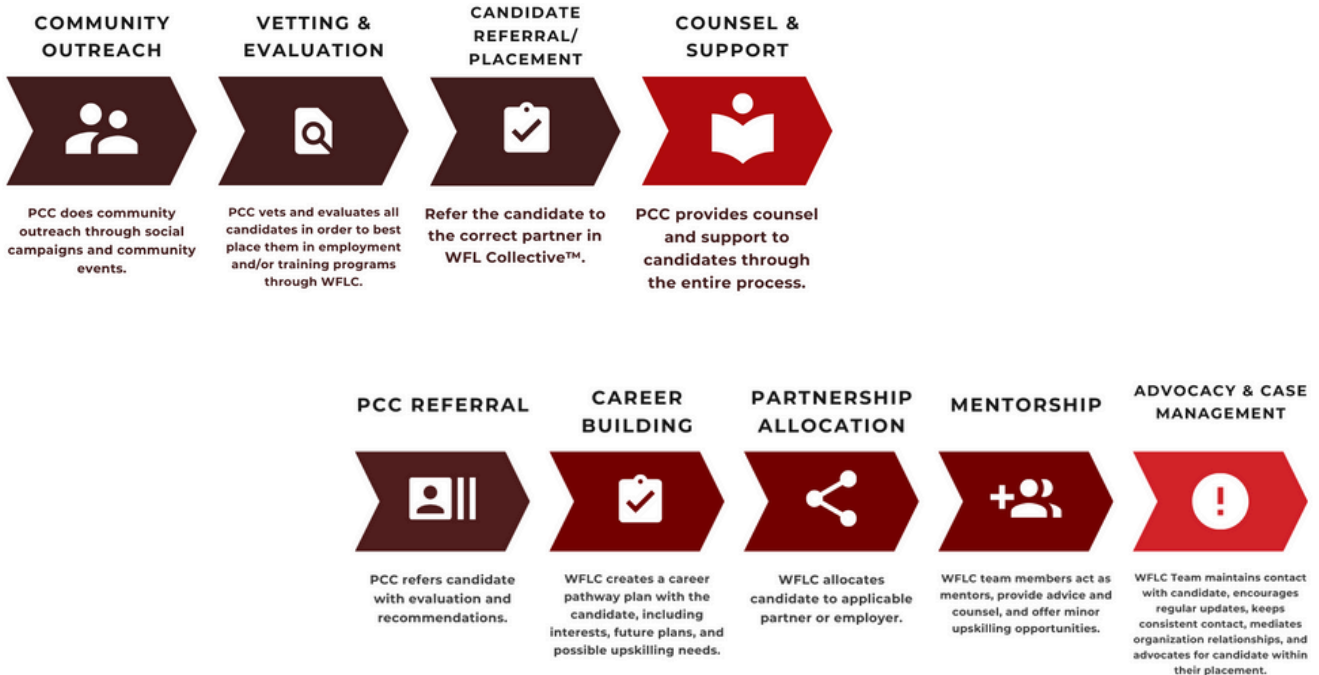
PCC and WFLC work together, seamlessly streamlining care, advocacy, employment, and economic empowerment. The Duo act, through the Collective Impact Model, to boost each other and create large-scale, significant change in lives, communities, and ultimately, entire demographics. Economic Empowerment is not only about employment, upward mobility—PCC & WFLC are also changing lives through mental health, hope, and support.

PROJECT COMMUNITY CAPITAL®

Project Community Capital® is a community development organization that executes community outreach, vetting, and placement, to get underserved candidates employed and on their way to economic stability & prosperity.

WFL COLLECTIVE™

WFL Collective™ is a nonprofit organization that specializes in economic empowerment through partnerships, employment barrier removal, case management, support services, and candidate advocacy.



PROJECT COMMUNITY CAPITAL®

WFL COLLECTIVE™

About WFL Collective™

The WFL Collective™ is a group of social service providers that assists, educates, and develops people from low-income communities to elevate themselves and achieve career success. As an organization, WFLC cultivates and empowers its network members to excel professionally. By establishing a robust network of social service, educational, and training providers, WFLC facilitates access to employment opportunities and career pathways. Through our network of support services, educational institutions, and training providers, we equip individuals with the necessary skills and resources for employment readiness, subsequently linking them with employers seeking to hire. WFL is a 501(c)(3).

Project Community Capital®

Project Community Capital®, a partner in the WFL Collective is the for-profit organization that connects constituents from the WFL collective to employment opportunities through social capital.



PROJECT COMMUNITY CAPITAL®

WFL COLLECTIVE™

Mission

The mission of The WFL Collective™ (WFLC) is to limit and disrupt the economic and social barriers and increase employment opportunities for people living in low-income, underinvested communities. WFLC is founded upon values of empowerment, collaboration, and coalition building. WFLC is a group of social service providers that assists, educates, and develops people from low-income communities to elevate themselves and achieve career success. Our network of providers, educational organizations, and training institutions, provide support services, barrier removal and skills development needed to be ready to work, then connect individuals to employers ready to hire.

Economic empowerment originates at the source of success and independence. WFLC increases access to the resources people need to meet their unique background and employment interests. WFLC helps its partners have greater impact by leveraging complementary resources to provide clients with comprehensive support to more quickly secure employment.

Vision

Our vision is to use economic empowerment as the catalyst for generational wealth and stability. We envision a future where individuals are equipped with the resources and opportunities to build a strong financial foundation through education, entrepreneurship, and asset acquisition. This wealth will serve as a legacy, ensuring stability and prosperity for future generations, creating a ripple effect of success within underserved communities. WFL Collective™ is committed to fostering a supportive environment for individuals facing barriers to economic empowerment. By harnessing our strong ties with social service providers, non-profit partners, and grassroots leaders, we strive to empower and connect candidates who lack access to job opportunities with support and resources that empower them to thrive.



THE COLLECTIVE IMPACT MODEL

CREATING IMPACT WITH EFFICIENCY

The concept of the WFL Collective™ Collective Impact Model is founded upon the principle that large-scale social change requires a collaborative approach that doesn't focus on a singular problem: each problem is related to several others and this is why they are so difficult to solve (Kania, 2011). By assembling various businesses, nonprofits, government organizations, and individual leaders and working together to address different pieces of the larger problem, large-scale change can be achieved.

The WFL Collective™ Collective Impact Model also offers the opportunity to connect employment candidates to social services, training, and education which addresses the systemic issues that can prevent work readiness. Beyond initial job placement,

The WFL Collective™ Impact Model components include: partnership development, community outreach and referrals, employment pre-screening, case management, and a recognition program.

the model provides a career pathway that enables the employment candidate to earn greater wages over time.

Social Justice has been a core component of all public discourse since the summer of 2020. WFL Collective™ expects to add to that public discourse by focusing on using a collective impact model that leverages technology, private industry resources, and government policy to deliver a solution based on best practices. WFLC will advocate influencing government policies that ensure investments are made in workforce development, education, and training. WFLC will need to create consistent and ongoing messaging targeting politicians, government agencies, and think tanks in an effort to impact the budgeting process.

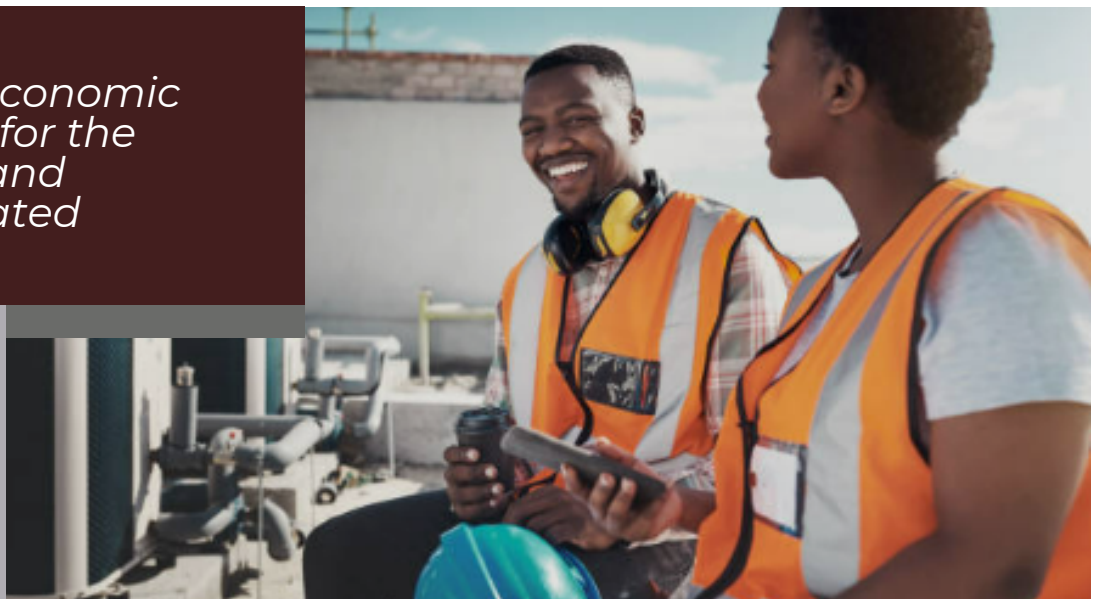
WFL COLLECTIVE™

About Project Community Capital[®]

Project Community Capital[®] (PCC) is an economic empowerment platform that connects people in underserved communities with jobs and contracts by leveraging social capital. PCC bridges the social capital of employment decision-makers of companies with individuals in low-income communities. PCC finds, vets, and connects candidates to employers, and entrepreneurs to firms and contractors—compiling exceptional, underserved individuals with unique talents and business acumen. Through the PCC platform, employers have access to a web-based application that includes a database of prescreened "Ready-To-Work" job candidates, and small and/or BIPOC businesses can gain access to resources, projects, and counsel.

- The **Workforce Leverage**[™] platform consists of structured employment services through a collective impact model that leverages social capital, social services, and technology.
- The **Heighten The Hustle**[™] Program is all about entrepreneurship elevation, whether through course or counsel, entrepreneurs learn the basics of business development and can even receive grant money to prop up their businesses.
- The **Firm Advantage**[™] arm consists of avenues for subcontracting opportunities and business advice.

We unlock economic opportunity for the overlooked and underestimated



Mission

Project Community Capital® (PCC) serves as an economic empowerment platform, connecting underserved communities with employment and contracts through social capital. Project Community Capital® (PCC) is an economic empowerment platform that connects underserved communities with employment and contracts by leveraging social capital and technology, offering structured employment services and business guidance through its Workforce Leverage and Firm Advantage arms. Through PCC, individuals are matched with suitable employers, while entrepreneurs gain access to subcontracting opportunities and business advice.

Vision

In the short term, our economic empowerment platform with a key emphasis on social capital, but in the long term, Project Community Capital® aims to foster experience and job stability for underserved individuals. PCC utilizes our network and social capital to employ low-income individuals who struggle to find work otherwise, ultimately growing their social capital as well.

We connect ready-to-work candidates in low-income communities to entry-level employment, serving as a bridge to long-term careers. With a focus on innovative solutions, PCC aims to address unemployment issues nationwide. With a remarkable employee retention rate of 94%-98%, we not only secure employment but also ensure its longevity. Our vision is to streamline the hiring process for employers through the Workforce Leverage™ application, reducing costs and turnover while providing stable employment opportunities for individuals in need.





THE POWER OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

ESTABLISHING YOUR NETWORK

Fifty-six percent of jobs are found using social capital, and seventy percent of jobs are not publicly marketed. PCC's goal is to get low-income residents employed through the most effective employment tool: social capital. Affluent and connected people often have extensive networks and get employed easily. Underserved people rarely have that opportunity. PCC tips the scale.

"I have leveraged my social capital to assist over 100 low-income people, including public housing residents and formerly incarcerated individuals, in obtaining employment with people I know."

- Dr. Gina Merritt, MBA | Founder

Social capital is capital based on relationships that provide useful support when needed and those relationships are built on trust.

PCC helps build social capital for low-income individuals. By leveraging social capital under a collective impact model, PCC can be a stepping-stone to long-term job opportunities, a bridge to building social capital for its members, and a means to reduce extreme economic inequality. If PCC can accomplish this, it will change employment practices in general and could help increase the income of more than 15 million people.

A lack of social capital has impacted generations of families who have been unable to access employment opportunities. Once underserved and underestimated ready-to-work residents get started on a more stable employment journey, their social capital networks will grow as well, sustaining the power of social capital and boosting employment.

MESSAGE FROM THE WFLC LEADER

Dear Stakeholders, Partners, and Community Members,

As the leader of our organization dedicated to breaking down economic and social barriers and creating more employment opportunities, I want to express my deepest gratitude for your unwavering dedication and commitment to our mission. In a world where inequality and barriers persist, our work is more vital than ever. Every day, we strive to dismantle the systemic obstacles that hinder access to employment and economic prosperity for countless individuals. Together, we are making a tangible difference in the lives of those who have been marginalized or overlooked.

But our journey is far from over. As we continue to forge ahead, let us remain steadfast in our resolve to challenge the status quo and push for meaningful change. Let us amplify the voices of those who have been silenced and advocate tirelessly on their behalf.

Through our collective efforts, we have the power to create a more just and equitable society—one where opportunities are accessible to all, regardless of background or circumstance. Let us never lose sight of our vision, and let our passion for progress propel us forward.

Thank you for your dedication, your passion, and your unwavering commitment to our cause. Together, we will build a brighter future for generations to come.

With gratitude,

Khrys Shefton
Executive Director,
WFLC[®]



KHRYS SHEFTON

WFLC
EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR

MESSAGE FROM THE PCC LEADER

Dear Stakeholders, Partners, and Community Members,

As the curtain falls on an eventful year, it is with great pride and a deep sense of gratitude that I share with you the Project Community Capital® (PCC) Annual Report. This document is more than an accumulation of data; it embodies our collective journey, the milestones we have achieved together, and the challenges we have faced head-on, all propelled by our commitment to our foundational mission.

The year 2023 stands as a beacon of growth and transformation for PCC. We broadened our horizons, ignited new initiatives, and fortified our alliances, steadfast in our dedication to community empowerment and sustainable growth.

Our endeavors this year have brought tangible benefits to numerous communities, offering sustainable solutions and forging pathways for development. From the launch of innovative projects aimed at addressing critical needs such as affordable housing and skill development to the expansion of our partner network, enhancing our capacity for a broader impact, this year has been marked by significant strides toward our goals.

Despite facing unprecedented challenges, it is our shared resilience and capacity to adapt that has allowed us to convert obstacles into opportunities for advancement and learning. Looking ahead, we are buoyed by hope. The forthcoming year is set with ambitious plans that resonate with our aspiration for a world marked by equity and sustainability. We are more committed than ever to enriching our programs, extending our reach, and intensifying our influence.

At this juncture, I wish to express my profound appreciation to our dedicated PCC team, our altruistic partners, and, most importantly, the communities at the heart of our mission. Your enduring trust, support, and cooperation form the bedrock of our accomplishments.

Within the pages of this report, you will find a detailed account of our endeavors and the narratives of individuals and communities whose lives we have had the privilege to touch. Please delve into this report and join us in commemorating the achievements of this past year. Your involvement in our journey is invaluable. We eagerly anticipate continuing this partnership and embracing the opportunities that lie ahead in our ongoing quest to make a lasting difference.

With deepest thanks and regards,

Alexis Green
Economic Empowerment
Platform Director,
Project Community Capital®



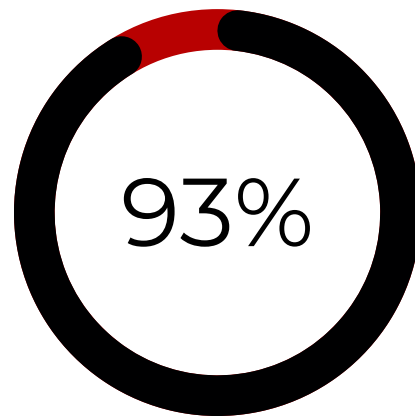
ALEXIS GREEN
PCC ECONOMIC
EMPOWERMENT
PLATFORM DIRECTOR



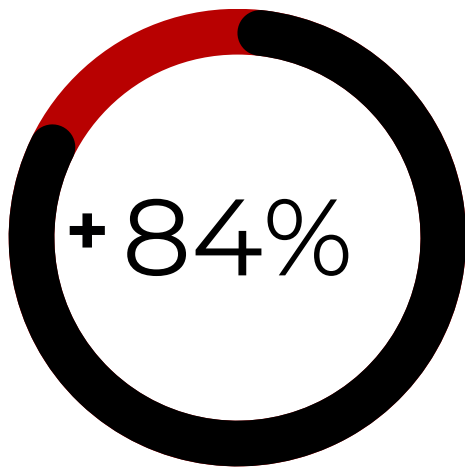
WFLC OUTCOMES

120+

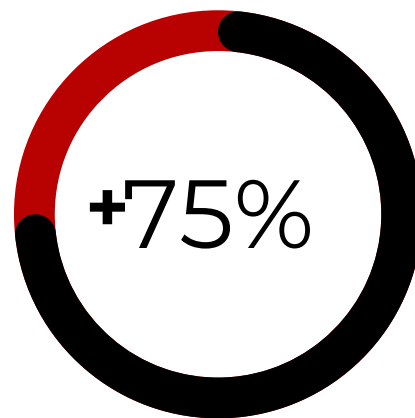
Number of People Hired



Retention Rate for Hires



Increase in Incomes



Increase in Access to Jobs





PCC OUTCOMES

33%

Of placed candidates were already given a raise or two.

58%

Of placed candidates are justice involved.

40%

Of the candidates that were given more responsibility were justice involved.

42%

Of placed candidates have been granted more responsibility since they started their position.



Ashley Bowens

When Ashley Bowen met PCC, she was working 4 jobs and making \$64,000 a year working 80 hours a week to support herself and her son.

After an interview facilitated by PCC, Ashley got a job at Urban Atlantic. As soon as she started, Ashley took over purchasing the snacks for the office, and her supervisor noted that she was economical with snacks, and started saving the company money... intuitively.

Ashley is now making over \$75,000 a year, in a position Urban Atlantic created specifically for her. After just a few months, she was promoted, for a second time, to the office manager job.

"She's very cognizant of spending money and things of that nature, whereas our other employee...wasted a lot of money. She is running our social committee meetings now. She is totally in control. She just keeps it on task. She involves everybody. It is really pretty awesome."

- Ashley's Supervisor

PROJECT COMMUNITY CAPITAL®

Carlos Abney

Carlos served eight years in the system. He dealt with countless issues including being sent to a halfway house in Delaware and having no clothes. He also had trouble getting a license as he had a lot of back-child support. He also had access to a car revoked once his family realized he was on the straight and narrow.

Carter Site loved Carlos and hired him on the spot. Unfortunately, after his first paycheck, Carlos had his bank account drained by the child support office in his state in error. WFLC reimbursed him to keep him on the road to success, and we met with the child support office in his home state and managed to get Carlos' child support debt issues fixed. His license was reinstated.

Carlos used the funds we reimbursed to save for and purchase a car.



WFL COLLECTIVE™



PROGRAMS AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH



- ***Heighten The Hustle™ (HTH) 2023***
- ***Fresh Food Delivery***
- ***Coat Drive***
- ***Hough Day***
- ***Chat & Chew***

HEIGHTEN



2023 MLK PLAZA HEIGHTEN THE HUSTLE PITCH COMPETITION

CLEVELAND, OH

Heighten The Hustle™ (HTH) is Project Community Capital's (PCC)® entrepreneurship elevation collaborative program. Applicants apply, explaining their lucrative or innovative side hustles and their dreams for their business concepts. PCC's team then provides both vital resources and expert counsel on how the applicant can heighten their business endeavors. Executive members meet with applicants about their business and goals on a regular basis and work behind the scenes to connect those applicants to networking opportunities.

In 2023 PCC held the First Annual Cleveland MLK Plaza Heighten The Hustle Pitch Competition in Cleveland, Ohio. There was a total of 52 Entrepreneurs who applied to compete at the event. After prescreening rounds, 16 entrepreneurs made it to the live event. They each had hopes of winning funding and potentially opening a storefront at the Black-owned business market that Dr. Gina Merritt is bringing to Martin Luther King Jr. Plaza in Cleveland's Hough neighborhood.

Four finalists ended up winning funding for their businesses, but all 52 businesses that registered will receive free support and resources through a partnership with Cuyahoga Community College.



1ST



PawGone Good

2ND



DRESSEDuKale

3RD



Inspector Flow

HONORABLE
MENTION



Skin District Store



HOUGH DAY

CLEVELAND, OH

Hough Day 2023 witnessed an impressive turnout with over 150 attendees, making it a vibrant and engaging community event. Families, job seekers, and local residents actively participated in the festivities, including job fair, family activities, and more. The community's excitement was palpable, with attendees expressing their appreciation for the event's diverse offerings. As the titled sponsor of Hough Day, Dollar Bank played a central role in making the event a grand success. Their commitment and support were instrumental in ensuring a memorable day for all attendees. The community greatly appreciated Dollar Bank's involvement and contribution, including their valuable home-buying seminars, which provided attendees with essential insights into the home-buying process.



CHAT & CHEW

WASHINGTON DC

The Chat & Chew event brought together past and present residents of Park Morton to address disparities and miscommunication surrounding programs for the community. Led by the Park Morton Resident Council[®] and the Park Morton Equity Team, in partnership with Project Community Capital, the event provided a platform for open dialogue and real-time feedback. Over 50% of residents engaged in interactive conversations, expressing their needs and viewpoints, while exploring potential solutions. 26 individuals attended, contributing to the candid discussions and suggesting ways to address community issues.

Funded by the Grant Diverse City Fund, in collaboration with Empower DC and WFL Collective™, the event aimed to foster a supportive environment where residents could voice their concerns and offer suggestions for improvement. By creating a space for dialogue and collaboration, the organizers sought to bridge gaps in communication and work towards enhancing programs and resources for the Park Morton community. Through the collective efforts of residents, community organizations, and partners, the Chat & Chew event facilitated meaningful discussions and laid the groundwork for future initiatives to address the community's needs.

TESTIMONIALS

“Thank You! The Park Morton Chat & Chew was a success and achieve most of our goals, it would not have been possible with the PCC team. A special thanks to Alexis and Corey!”



FRESH FOOD DELIVERY

WASHINGTON DC

At Mobile Market Mondays, in partnership with our dedicated volunteers and generous sponsors, we're on a mission to combat food insecurity by bringing fresh, nutritious food directly to residents in underprivileged properties. Our team works tirelessly to ensure that every Mobile Market Monday is a seamless and personalized experience for residents. We provide them with a customized list, empowering them to choose exactly what they need and want. It's all about dignity, choice, and giving everyone the opportunity to enjoy wholesome, nourishing meals.





COAT DRIVE

WASHINGTON DC



Project Community Capital[®] collaborated with Matthews Memorial Baptist Church to provide essential warmth and support to underserved families in the community throughout the winter season. Through our collaborative Winter Coat Drive initiative, we aimed to alleviate the hardships faced by numerous individuals by offering not only coats and clothing but also fostering meaningful engagement through coffee and conversation sessions.



The turnout for the Winter Coat Drive was heartening, with a diverse representation from both Parkway House and the broader Anacostia community. As an organization deeply committed to empowering Southeast residents, Project Community Capital stands steadfast in our dedication to being a responsive ally, ever ready to extend a helping hand when our neighbors are in need.

AWARDS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Silver

DEI Team & Workplace Initiatives

PCC won this award as a Hiring Initiative that promotes diversity and inclusion in employment and economic equality.

Honoree



The Daily Record Maryland's Top 100 Women

Dr. Merritt won this award for her extensive real estate and community development in the DMV.

Honoree



Women Who Mean Business

Dr. Merritt won this award for her extensive BIPOC empowerment in the DMV.

Gold | Silver | Silver

Social Change Maker of the Year- Race *Gold* Most Innovative Woman of the Year- Industry *Silver* Women Helping Women- Social Change *Silver*



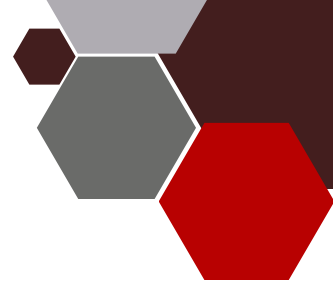
Dr. Merritt won both gold and silver in these categories for her work as a mentor to BIPOC women, making waves in real estate, and founding PCC.

"Gina Merritt is making an impact in her community and on people's lives by connecting people with jobs and putting people on the road to independence."

"Great example of supporting community progress through a focus on providing opportunity to those who could use it most."

-STEVIE AWARDS JUDGES

Meet Our Team



DR. GINA MERRITT
FOUNDER OF PCC & WFLC



ALEXIS GREEN
*PCC[®] ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT
PLATFORM DIRECTOR*



KHRYS SHEFTON
*WFL COLLECTIVE[®]
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR*



DAKOTAH JENNIFER
*CREATIVE DIRECTOR &
GRANT MANAGER*



BRITJNI HARDIE
*SOCIAL MEDIA
COORDINATOR*



COREY POLLARD
*COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER*



ROGER CLARK
*COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE*

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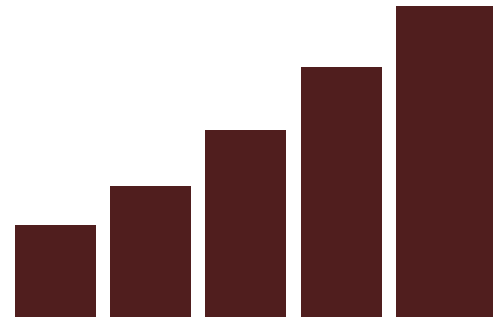
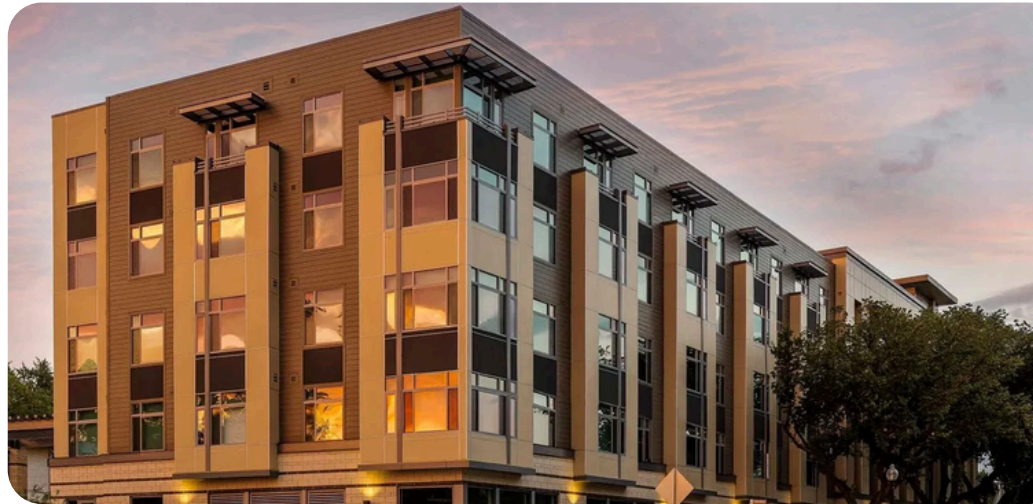
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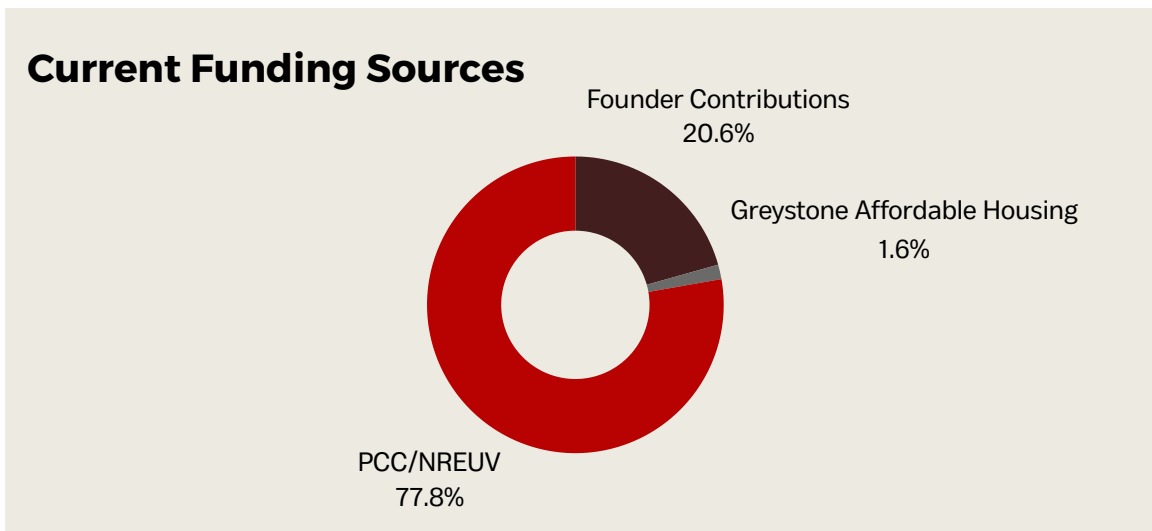
STAND WITH US AND SUPPORT OUR MISSION



At Project Community Capital® (PCC) and The WFL Collective™, we believe in the transformative power of community, collaboration, and empowerment.

Together, we are champions of economic opportunity, breaking down barriers, and paving the way for individuals from underserved communities to achieve their career aspirations. PCC specializes in employment placement, barrier removal, and career pathway development, utilizing technology and social capital to ensure sustainable employment for all. Meanwhile, The WFL Collective™ is a beacon of support, providing essential services, education, and skills development to uplift individuals toward career success.

With our shared values of empowerment, collaboration, and coalition building, we invite you to stand with us. Let's harness the power of community to create a future where every individual has the opportunity to thrive professionally and contribute to collective prosperity.



Together, we can make a difference. Stand with us. Empower with us. Let's build a brighter tomorrow, one empowered individual at a time.



DONATE TODAY

<https://wflcollective.org/donate>

PROJECT COMMUNITY CAPITAL®

WFL COLLECTIVE™