



BLOOM & BOUNCE BACK

Annual Report 2021



GIRLS | FOR A
CHANGE





Our Impact

The pandemic may be dragging on, but at Girls For A Change, we Bloom & Bounce Back, finding ways to continue to support, lift up, and energize Black girls in our programs. Our focus this year was on offering safe in-person experiences while continuing to help girls navigate the digital world.

“

Behind the numbers are lives upended, dreams shattered, the burden of suddenly becoming a caregiver or a provider. [...] There was no time to be a child.”

– [New York Times article](#)

THE CHALLENGES OF BEING AT HOME AS A BLACK GIRL

Can you image what it would be like to stay focused on school and growth in the midst of a pandemic—all virtually? Now add on barriers like unstable broadband and lack of adequate space to study or be “in school” online. Additionally, staying home for some girls means spending more time in a household that may be unstable, being placed with the responsibility of caring for family members (younger siblings, grandparents, or sick parents), and increased household responsibilities. Girls need peer support, they need to feel connected to a community outside of their home, they need to play, and a space to thrive and be children.

Research shows that Black and Hispanic youth were more likely to have lost a parent or a family member to Covid-19, that they’ve fallen further behind in school, have become crucial breadwinners due to family members being laid off, and are more likely to shoulder care responsibilities at home. At the same time, they were leading racial justice demonstrations across the country.

BLOOMING & BOUNCING BACK

Our team leveraged partnerships to create several hybrid and in-person experiences to get Black girls back with their peers, out of the house, and continuing to learn, grow, and thrive in and out of school. We had to be creative to bring together the community with our girls as we were all stuck. Here are just a few creative ways we partnered with others.

- ✿ Created Hybrid Girl Action Teams leveraging strong partnerships with the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Jr. NBA, and Martin Agency
- ✿ Offered two new hybrid programs around food justice in partnership with Griffith Foods, Shannon Leighty, Mid-Atlantic Food Resilience and Access Coalition, and Vegan Action
- ✿ Partnered with GFAC Celebrity Advocate Erica Ash to hold a Vision Board Party meant to encourage girls to dream big and stay focused on their goals
- ✿ Supported Voices for Virginia Children’s research around mental health through listening sessions so that we can all provide better support

20

number of events held this year including: Black Girl Rally, Vision Board Party, Girl Ambassador Headshot Day, Common Table, Girl Talk with Sisterfund, A Night in the Fashion Industry, Fresh Start events, Girl Ambassador Speed Networking, Annual Black Girl Showcase, Movie Screening of “Respect,” Annual Closing Ceremony, WNBA Q&A, virtual college tours, Senior Celebration, End of Summer Garden Party, Black Girl Rally, Fighting For Forgotten Women photoshoot at Marcus David Peters Circle

Started a Scholarship fund in collaboration with Ezer Agency that awarded

\$5,000
in scholarships to Girl Ambassador participants

Celebrated the completion of **44** girls in our programs

Distributed **22** laptops and iPads to girls to ensure they had what they needed to succeed

Total number of people reached through communications:

Website	Newsletter	Social media
25,604	7,268	774k

Letter from the CEO



Angela Patton

We are excited to share our 2020-2021 Annual Report, a yearly snapshot of successes across our organization. We are extremely proud of our accomplishments over this past year, which were made possible thanks to our devoted community of students, parents, board members, donors, faculty, staff, volunteers, friends, and family.

In a fiscal year filled with unexpected challenges, one of the most important things we did was adopt a new mission statement for our organization. This mission articulates what each of us has long felt is our organization's being:

Preparing Black girls for the world and the world for Black girls.

As you read through this highlight of our programs, successes, and challenges overcome, I'd like to offer a glimpse into the future—at what's next for Girls For A Change. It has been a long time goal of ours to own the building we have been occupying for five years. While the Covid-19 pandemic has temporarily re-focused our fundraising efforts, we remain committed to purchasing the property. That's why before 2021 is over, we will launch a crowdfunding campaign with the goal of raising \$1 Million, which will help us purchase the building outright so that we don't have to struggle each month paying a monthly mortgage.

With so many supporters, a strong presence, our celebrity advocate, and incredible donors, we are optimistic for its success. Our board has been vigilant in maintaining regular contact with the seller, who is committed to our mission and willing to work with us during a time where uncertainties seem never ending. With the help of our community, we are confident that we will close on the property by the end of our 2022 fiscal year.



Why a building? Why now? GFAC has already invested over \$100k in beautification of the space since we signed a lease because it's important for us to make sure our girls feel welcome and comfortable. It's fiscally important for us to own our space and in doing so, it sets an example for our girls. Black ownership and equity matters. We want our girls to see how important they are to the community, and how committed we are to having a safe space: a Black space where they can be themselves and thrive. It may just be a building for some, but this building works to build Black girl magic and confidence. It helps girls see their worth and model the behaviors they see from our staff. It also shows girls that Black women can own businesses, own property, and **create the spaces we want on our own terms**. Finally, it shows how a community can come together to support a Black nonprofit and Black girls.

All funds contributed for the purpose of purchasing the property will remain separate from operating funds. We will continue to maintain donor relationships, run programs, and apply for grants to keep operations funded. Your contribution and the contributions of those who share our mission will be used to secure a permanent home for Girls For A Change. One where we will remain committed to serving Black girls, the community, and families.

I begin this fiscal year filled with love, patience, and excitement for the future of our beloved Black girls and community! Together, we will continue to build on the legacy of Girls For A Change in a place of our own.

In gratitude,

Sistah Angela

Celebrating our girls



BLACK GIRL RALLY: “YOU’RE THE ANSWER, NOT THE PROBLEM.”

On the heels of the unrest protests, we gathered in the name of social justice to explore GFAC’s “7 Steps to Social Change” and how to repair the harm to Black America. We reminded the community of the powerful voices we have in our Black girls and of all the young social justice leaders who have come before them and created change. We called on Black girl allies to join our girls in exploration of what social justice means to Black girls, what it looks like, and how they can become social change agents in their own right. We also gave away iPads and gifts to help girls have a great remote learning experience.

Partners: Capital One, City of Richmond, Richmond Public Schools, Voices for Virginia’s Children, See Me I Am Here

BLACK GIRL SHOWCASE

Our Black Girl Showcase brought girls together in-person at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA) to celebrate

accomplishments and end our Fall and Spring programs. OurGirl Action Teams presented their social justice projects and we celebrated our scholarship winners and graduating Girl Ambassador Participants.

Shout out to our presenting sponsor, Chase Bank for funding the space rental and providing 50 students from all GFAC Girl Action Teams with Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA) Memberships, Amanda Gorman’s book, “The Hill We Climb,” and other goodies. We are also grateful to the VMFA for the hospitality and continued partnership. Photos from the Black Girl Showcase are courtesy of the VMFA.



Tiye Phoenix



Lindsey Blackwell

SPECIAL PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

This year we built stronger partnerships by collaboratively coming together to safely support girls in ways we knew they needed. Here are some of the special programs and events we held thanks to our partners. We incorporated these to keep our girls engaged and in tune with the world still moving instead of staying home and waiting for the pandemic to go away. This was just one way we stepped in to fill the gaps we saw.

THE COMMON TABLE

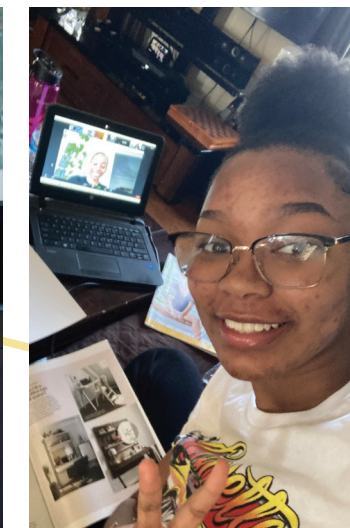
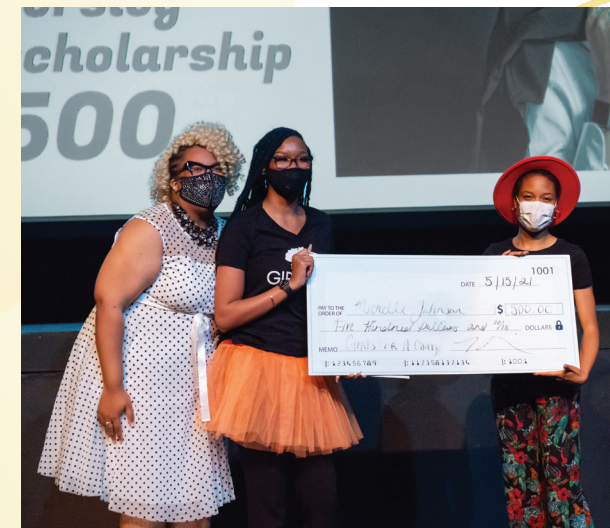
The Common Table brought middle school girls together for discussion, appreciation, and community. We grew our organic food in GFAC’s teaching garden, created ceramic vessels, and then came together to have a meal using the very food we grew and the vessels we created. In the midst of living in a virtual world, we connected to our culture’s rich traditions and to each other.

CULINARY ARTS AND FOOD SCIENCE

Nutrition is vital to growing healthy habits. During this special program we partnered with Griffith Foods to inspire future chefs and home cooks. Each week, families came to the center to pick up groceries and then tuned in to learn culinary skills from well known chefs at Griffith Foods. We learned new recipes, new techniques, and the science behind food preparation and ingredients. This special program was an awesome learning opportunity for our families and was well attended!

VISION BOARD PARTY

When Erica Ash invites you to vision board with her, you do it. The girls got a chance to spend some time with GFAC Celebrity Advocate Erica Ash virtually for a fun and inspiring vision board party. We goal set, dreamt big, and got creative with markers, glue, and glitter!





GIRL ACTION TEAM

COLLABORATION. CREATIVITY. CONNECTION.

We partnered with The Martin Agency, VMFA, and Jr. NBA for three hybrid Girl Actions Teams whose projects made headlines. We also partnered with NextUp and artist Austin Miles to continue our NextUp virtual Girl Action Team.

Our VMFA Girl Action Team contributed a video to the VMFA's Dirty South Exhibit where they explored Southern culture and the changing perceptions of the south. Together they answered the question: What does the Dirty South Mean to You?

“

The Dirty South is everything they told us was wrong with us. But it's actually our super power.”

– Coach Nickey McMullen



Our Huguenot Girl Action Team wrote a podcast episode for The Martin Agency's "Now Upon A Child" podcast. These stories are meant to flip the script on the age-old fairytales and bring a modern twist that sparks change. The girls did a great job weaving their own experiences into a narrative that shares the Black experience, flipping Jack & Jill on its head and into "Jacky & Jill".

"Jacky & Jill went up the hill one fateful spring day. After they came tumbling down, the twin sisters would never see each other the same way again."

Our JrNBA Girl Action Team explored gender bias in sports and created a campaign around equality for female athletes and women who work in sports.

The Petersburg High School Girl Action Team launched an entire series of events across three

schools in celebration of going back to school IRL (in real life as they say) and the resilience of students in the face of adversity. The Fresh Start initiative partnered with DTLR, Metro Public Schools, Happily Natural Day, and Hamilton Glass to host three events at Petersburg High School, Thomas Jefferson High School, and John Marshall High School. The celebration focused on health and wellness with groceries, RVA Fit2GO boxing sessions, lots of dancing, and vaccines available from the Department of Health. We also had a DJ spinning, games to play, special guests like the Mayor of Richmond and the First Lady of Virginia, and a community art activity with Hamilton Glass. The collaborative murals, sponsored by DTLR, now hang in each of the schools.

Special shout out: Capital One sponsored the Girl Action Teams and Black Girl Rally. Chase Bank sponsored Family Day and the VMFA Girl Action Team

READY TO WORK GIRL Ambassador Program

OUR GIRL AMBASSADOR PARTICIPANTS ARE ON A TRAJECTORY FOR GREATNESS.

We applaud their dedication to skill building, learning, and working their internships. These girls were vigilant when it came to virtual learning and it really paid off. The practice not only helped them better adjust to virtual school, but they got to learn from a diverse pool of instructors who joined us on Zoom from all over the country!

**Applications open December 20th
through January 31st.**

"Interns are the key players for many businesses and I know that each of you has given the best of you to your selective positions. Your way of working and dedication towards your job influenced many of us. Thank you for showing up in spite of all we had to bear, making the Girl Ambassador Program a priority, scheduling valuable time and working hard for your employer. We know you will achieve nothing but success in your life. That's Girl Power!" – Sister Angela Patton

In addition to the skills and internships, each of our Girl Ambassador participants was paired with a mentor from the Margot Community to help guide them towards additional career development opportunities, share life lessons and experiences, and offer advice.

“

I have enjoyed the peaceful atmosphere at the museum, meeting new friends + Networking opportunities, Seeing the different roles and hard work that goes into the museum and events, working on social media marketing, learning about marketing in general, helping out with the camps, being able to shine my creative light on projects and ideas, learning how to present myself confidently in a workplace, talking to such a wide range of people... and so much more."

– Madison Wright,
GAP participant who interned at VFMA



GAP ACCOMPLISHMENTS

6 girls graduated High School with admission to the college of their choice 14-17 participated

6 girls received college scholarships totaling \$5500

1 girl received a full ride to James Madison University

2 girls completed their Microsoft Certifications





IMMERSION LAB

Applications open February 1st through February 25th. Accepted applicants will be notified on February 28th.

OUR IMMERSION LAB MEMBERS CONTINUE TO LEARN VIRTUALLY WITH DYNAMIC SESSIONS FROM PARTNERS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY. The Martin Agency led a full six week session on breaking into the creative industry, Target designers led sessions on their process, Dr. Dapper taught personal branding, Netflix gave a behind the scenes look, the girls learned about storytelling and creative writing from award winning journalists and International agencies like DCI, Maxx Potential taught web design classes, and Microsoft gave a crash course in starting a business. It was a busy year for Immersion Lab Members with so much knowledge to soak up!

Many of our Immersion Lab instructors also offered special perks like in-person mentoring sessions or paid resources like Grammarly Pro. Facebook also sponsored memberships for every girl who attended Eastern Henrico Schools.

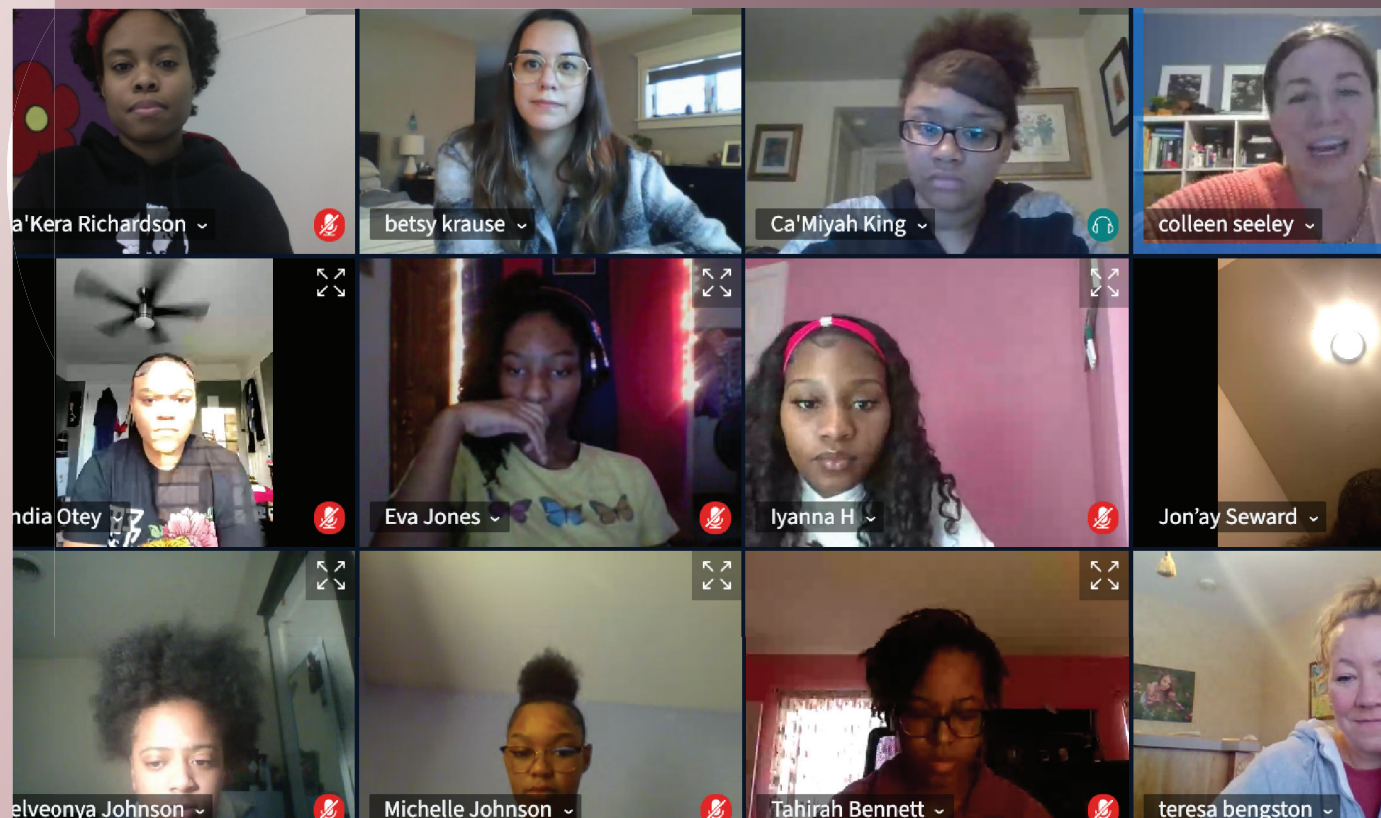
Girls Who Code

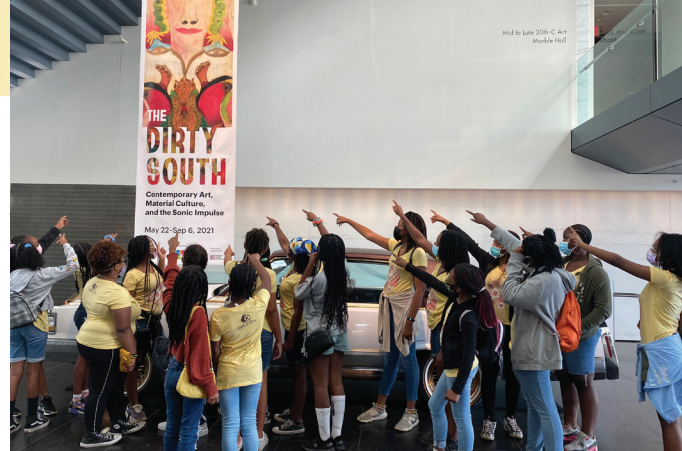


CODING IS FUN WHEN YOU GET TO WORK ON PROJECTS IN VIRTUAL REALITY AND VIDEO GAMES! Girls Who Code instructor Akela Silkman took the girls through Facebook's Play for Impact program where they worked on a sprint-like project building their own games!

This is our 5th year offering Girls Who Code. Thanks to supporters like Twitter, we can provide quality technology and equipment for our girls to experience a robust learning environment in person or from home.

girls who
code





CAMP DIVA

Girl power was seen, heard, and reverberated at Camp Diva as we welcomed middle school girls back to our space—full time—for the first time since the pandemic. We kicked the summer off with a special brunch and also invited a weekly “Woman to Watch” to join us. Each week a powerhouse Black creative facilitated a session sharing her creative process with the girls. We made jewelry, designed sneakers, built things with wood and tools, experimented with essential oils, and expressed ourselves in a variety of ways.

Thank you to overwhelming support from our community, we were able to supply every girl with her own Camp Diva box full of supplies. Shout out to all who sent items from our Amazon Wishlist to make this happen and to the Martin Agency for designing yet another gorgeous and empowering box.



A few highlights from Camp Diva this year include field trips to VMFA, The Science Museum, and Sankofa Farms; meeting and creating with all of the women from our “Women to Watch” series; our BLKRVA tour of Richmond; learning about personal style from Jonathan Copeland of Target and then going on a shopping spree for our annual photoshoot; and of course Market Day—a huge success thanks to our community!

Camp Diva Market Day was another tradition we were excited to bring back in person. Thanks to the hard work of our girls, volunteers, staff, and community who came to support, it was a big success! We were impressed by how much the girls stepped up their game, creating online payment options, creative displays, and thoughtful packaging. Many of the girls even sold out of product!

Shout out: Capital One sponsored over 50% of the scholarships to Camp Diva and hosted Capital Coders every week.

“

As I pause to reflect on it all, my heart is full of gratitude for our staff, volunteers, guest speakers, participants, and particularly for you, our camp parents who have entrusted your daughters to us. That's Girl Power!”

– Sistah Angela

2022 Camp Diva theme: Owning It
Registration and scholarship applications open December 15th through May 31st.

Welcoming new additions to the team

CO-CREATING WITH OUR GIRLS

We stepped up our communications and outreach game by starting the “Peer Advisor” program and bringing onboard a new ambassador to help reach out to girls and spread the word about our programs.

Brand Ambassador Iyanna and Peer Advisor Rachel have been co-creating on messaging and new ways to reach more Black girls. Our Peer Advisors receive a stipend for their work recruiting girls in school and through social media outreach. Our goal is to have a peer advisor at every school in the Richmond Region.



MAUREEN JULES-PEREZ, OUR NEW BOARD PRESIDENT

This year we welcomed a new Board President: tech maven and Black girl champion Maureen Jules-Perez! Maureen is the Vice President of Corporate & HR Technology for Capital One and is passionate about the digital divide and diversity and representation in the tech industry. Beyond tech, she wants to ensure that Black girls have the opportunity and options to be whatever they want to be.

“My 2021 and beyond objective is to fortify and scale operations in key areas across the U.S. that we think will continue to help Black girls be prepared for the world. That means redesigning our board, redesigning our structure and committees, and transforming the tools and technology.”

– Maureen Jules-Perez



Chelsea Vicente
Program Director



Rachel Stanton
Peer Advisor & Participant

CELEBRITY ADVOCATE ERICA ASH MESSAGE TO ALL BLACK GIRLS:

“

Every black woman you have ever seen in the media doing something positive started off as a young black girl just like you! She may or may not have had money, a lot of options or support and encouragement. But she had will. And through that will she found a way. You, the future leaders, inventors, activists, entertainers, moguls, entrepreneurs, athletes, scientists, etc, have will as well. Protect that will and FIND YOUR WAY! I believe in you and so does the entire team at GFAC. We love you and desire for you to prosper beyond your wildest dreams. All is possible so show the world your brilliance!”



In the News

2x featured on the front page of the Richmond Times-Dispatch





HOW BLACK GIRLS IN WHITE SPACES CAN SPEAK UP AND LIVE THEIR TRUTH

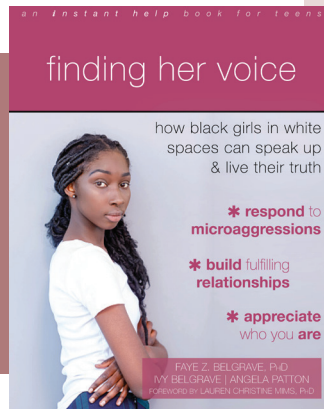
How do we help more Black girls love themselves, find their voice, and feel confident in white spaces? How do we educate white children on the daily microaggressions, stress, and frustration Black girls face?

“Finding Her Voice” was written by GFAC CEO Angela Patton, her mentor, Dr. Faye Belgrave, and Ivy Belgrave as a tool for teenage girls. It provides activities and exercises that help challenge dominant culture, cultivate self-compassion and self-confidence, and build resilience in a world still filled with microaggressions and discrimination. You’ll learn how to navigate awkward or difficult situations at school, with friends, and on social media.

You’ll also find real stories from other teens who share your experiences. By reading about situations faced by other Black girls in White spaces and responding to the critical questions and exercises in the workbook, you’ll learn to recognize and address some of the challenges unique to the Black girl experience.

Finding Her Voice

The book is officially on sale at Amazon and Target, and is making its way to local bookstores. It is also being distributed to girl centered programs as a teaching tool for both Black and white girls.



“Writing this book is an extension of the years of advice and practical skills my organization has bestowed on Black girls so that they have the confidence to break through and realize their own potential. My work at Girls For A Change is centered around battling and breaking down the constant barriers and stereotypes Black girls face. This workbook offers strategies and advice for Black girls who are constantly struggling with acceptance and with being told they can’t be themselves—that they are too much. I want all Black girls to know that they are not “too much” of anything. I want them to feel confident in their skin and their abilities and not feel like they have to constantly please or conform to the ideals of others. It also serves as an educational tool for white girls to help them understand how Black girls may feel when they encounter stereotypes.”

– Angela Patton, co-author of Finding Her Voice and CEO of Girls For A Change

Financials

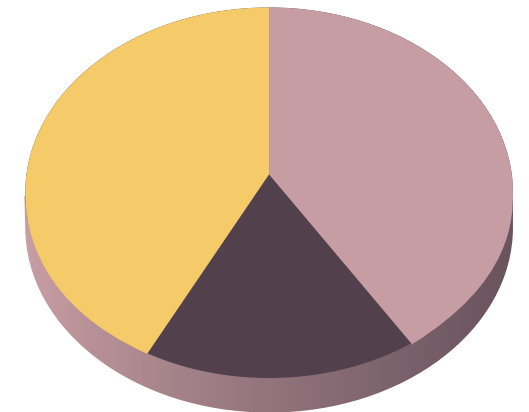
Revenue (July 2020–June 2021)

Camp Diva Leadership Academy	7,529.00
Donations	373,966.79
Grant Funding	506,442.93
Events Revenue	5,063.40
Total – Revenue	893,002

Expenses (July 2020–June 2021)

Total – Program Operating Expenses	255,329
Total – Fundraising Expenses	104,042
Total – General & Administrative Expenses	263,852
Total – Expenses	623,223

Expenses (July 2020–June 2021)



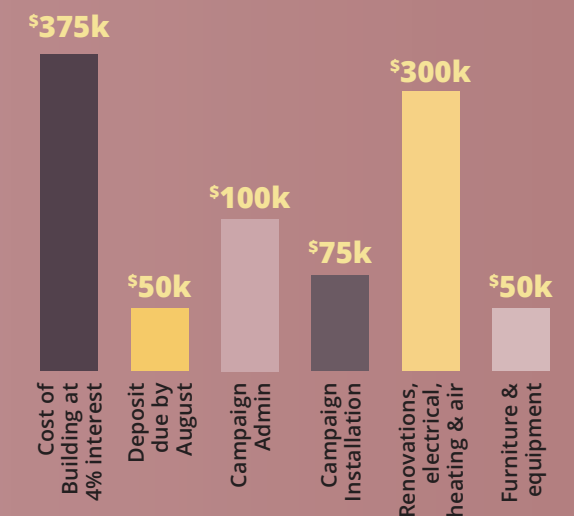
How to continue to support us

Support our Building Campaign: One Million Reasons to Build

We’re launching a year-long fundraising campaign to buy our current building. You can support it by giving \$50 or more to support the campaign! Follow us on social media as we launch fun initiatives in support of the campaign!



bitly/1MReasons





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