A WORLD WHERE BLACK GIRLS THRIVE IS A WORLD WHERE THE COMMUNITY LOVES, HONORS AND SUPPORTS THEM.

This year, we called on the support of our community to help us purchase and remodel our center in Chesterfield through our One Million Reasons to Build campaign. We have been blown away by the support of our community! We put our needs and intentions out into the world and the community stepped in to help in so many ways. But it wasn’t just the building campaign. For every program, event, and GFAC endeavor, there was a community partner who really stepped up to help us make a bigger impact on our girls.

This support really captures the principle of Ujima, which means collective work and responsibility. This Kwanzaa principle reads: “to build and maintain our community together and make our brothers’ and sisters’ problems our problems and to solve them together.”

From fundraising campaigns to major donations to volunteerism to offering expertise, this community sees the value in investing in Black girls and has come together to help us create a bigger and better space for them.

$5000 was awarded to participants to use seed money to prove that their concept works, launch a specific product or idea, or even pursue a new market.

16 EVENTS HELD THIS YEAR


13 stories covering our programs, events, and impact

Social Impact Heroes: Why & How Angela Patton of ‘Girls For A Change’ is Helping to Change Our World
FROM THE CEO

I remain humbled and delighted to be in this role for almost two decades in the Richmond Metropolitan Area and am thrilled about our accomplishments. As we celebrate the first year of our $1M campaign and plan for 2023, the African ideal of Sankofa comes to mind. The word is derived from the words: SAN (return), KO (go), and FA (look, seek and take). The symbol is based on a mythical bird with its feet firmly planted forward and its head turned backwards, showing that the past serves as a guide for planning the future. As the CEO, I am always looking towards the future but never forget where we started and what we’ve learned along the way. The literal translation of the word and the symbol is “it is not taboo to fetch what is at risk of being left behind.”

ANGELA PATTON

We now own the building we have been leasing for 5 years. The next step is to raise funds for renovations so that our space can fully meet the needs of Black girls, developing their individual and collective leadership skills and providing opportunities for girls to foster positive peer and mentor relationships. GFAC embodies Sankofa by taking up space, claiming what is ours, and bringing Black girls along so that no one is left behind.

We are here to make sure the momentum grows, to hold the industry accountable for change, to educate, mobilize, and do whatever it takes to secure a better future for everyone. That is the role we play in society, and we do it with your support.

It is the founder in me that pushes me to work so hard for GFAC. It’s the little Black girl from Chesterfield County who inspires me to stay the course for Black girls but it should be the willingness, love and compassion in all of us that leads us to fight for the equality and justice Black girls deserve. I am asking for all hands on deck—GFAC board members and committee members, educators, parents, college students, sponsors, and even our participants to build this movement together. I believe in the power of Sankofa and owning land built by us on the legacy of resistance and sustainability.

2023 will once again offer us an opportunity to amplify the (silenced) voice of Black girls, offer culturally responsive programming to advance opportunities, and stand for justice and equality. We will continue to convene, communicate, and change hearts and minds in solidarity with Black girls.

As we enter into the next phase of our strategic plan and look to secure funding to pay off the mortgage and renovate the building, I ask that you consider donating, hosting a fundraiser, and/or reaching out to your network to share the message of GFAC.

I’d genuinely like to thank all of you who have engaged with and participated in Girls For A Change’s mission, supported us, and motivated us. You’ve enabled us to accomplish what we know is possible.

If you are new to the GFAC initiative we invite you to join us. Come take a tour and get involved! Bring your energy and resources and find out how you can be a part of a movement that will change the world, starting with our One Million Reasons to Build campaign.

Happy New Year! Sistah Angela
As we build community and work towards a renovated building, we are also focused on building our team of passionate Black women. This fiscal year, we promoted Na’Kera Richardson to Director of Operations and brought on a GFAC alumni, Karimah Turner, as our new Program Director. We are excited to share that the Girls For A Change team is growing to include more full time and part time staff members in the future. That kind of capacity building for a nonprofit organization is a huge milestone that we are proud to have reached.

Sister Karimah is a Camp Diva alumni who was part of Camp Diva from ages 11–14. She also participated in the Annual Date with Dad Dance and was always willing to volunteer in her spare time. She returned to Girls For A Change this summer to serve as our Camp Director. After a successful summer, we offered her a full time position as our Program Director.

“I came back to GFAC to be the mentor I had as a child. I wanted to be able to give back to an organization that had such a positive impact on my life and to continue to help Black girls. I strongly believe and value GFAC’s mission as I was once that young black girl taking her place in a society that was not and still isn’t prepared for strong successful black women. Working for GFAC allows me to be on the frontlines of the social change we need and desire as a community.”

This year we welcomed four new Peer Advisors alongside returning Peer Advisor, Rachel Stanton. Our Peer Advisor program is aimed at supporting girls in developing their communications, social media, presentation, and community engagement skills. Each girl is tasked with developing content for our social media communications, recruiting girls to our programs within their schools and at community events, and being a part of our Board of Directors to add their voice to the future of Girls For A Change.

Peer Advisors: 
Asani Ka-Re
Kileya Johnson
Nadia Fraser
Rachel Stanton
Threvia Slayton

I’m amazed by the number and the level of opportunities GFAC has received and therefore been able to provide this year. More often than not, the main obstacle for Black girls is just that, an opportunity. The bigger our community support grows, the more opportunities we can provide, and our girls will make the most of them.

- Danielle Brown, Elevating LeadHer Development Fellow

The perfect way to describe the impact the community has had on GFAC is support. Simply advocating for our programs, attending events, and interacting through social media helps the girls we serve strive for greatness and positivity. Showing up for our girls will always have a positive impact on GFAC.

- Karimah Turner, Girls For A Change Program Director
We launched our #1MReasonstoBuild campaign in December 2021 with a kickoff event to celebrate CEO Angela Patton’s 50th birthday. We have run fundraisers along the way and have been gaining support and love from the community as we do it. The goal of the campaign is to raise $1 Million to purchase the building, expand it by 40%, and update the facilities and equipment. As of March 2022, we now own the building.

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Jen Fell of Studio 505 is our Capital Campaign strategic partner and Co-Chair of GFAC’s Building & Property Committee. She is also our building designer, offering her expertise and also fundraising ideas.

Longtime GFAC supporter and parent, Michael Hopkins of Emerge Construction Group reached out to us after seeing our article in the Richmond Times Dispatch to offer his services at cost and also assist with fundraising efforts.

"Owning the building is a fiscally responsible investment, guaranteeing longevity for our programs. Expanded space will allow us to serve more Black girls with needed resources that the current building is unable to fully provide. Owning our space demonstrates to GFAC girls that Black women can own businesses and property and create the spaces we want to address our communities’ needs."

– ANGELA PATTON, CEO GFAC

"It is time for this space to tell the story of Girls For A Change. It is time for the space to reflect, honor and celebrate the lives of Black girls."

"As a father raising two daughters, I understand, now more than ever, the importance of Girls For A Change’s purpose and mission. The complexity of the various dynamics girls of color face today is unparalleled. Often, the existing socio-emotional resources provided to Black girls and other girls of color lack cultural intelligence, and the financial support that organizations like Girls For A Change need to sustain is limited. As a result, the Emerge Construction team felt compelled to provide our industry expertise and resources at no cost. We will serve as the construction manager on GFAC’s facility expansion, working collaboratively with GFAC through this process."

"As a small African American-owned business in the Richmond community, it has always been a principal mission that we serve our community. We strongly support organizations that advocate for our children. Girls For A Change is a particularly worthy organization, targeting their services to girls of color who are particularly vulnerable and in need of mentoring and tutoring. We pledge to open our doors and introduce them to the opportunities available in the design and construction industry. We have a long history of mentoring young aspiring designers, but an even richer history of contributing time and effort to organizations that give our community hope and direction. We applaud Girls For A Change for its mission and its work to strengthen the pipeline to success for our future community leaders."

– MONICA FLIPPEN, VICE PRESIDENT OF KEI ARCHITECTS

$1.5 million has been raised toward the building fund to reach our $1 million goal for the year.
In celebration of Angela’s 50th birthday, we invited community members to donate $50 and join us at our center to celebrate. The community trickled in and out dropping off their checks and many also donated online, leaving messages of support with their donations.

“Happy 50th Birthday Angela! I am so grateful to you for all your hard work and dedication to GFAC. You have truly been an inspiration to our very own daughter Yonna Hardin since she is a member of GFAC. May Our God continue to bless you to see many more birthdays and continue to give you the strength to show your love the way you do Best for our Black Girls from the East Coast to the West.”
- MALIKAH HARDIN, GFAC PARENT

“Happy 50th Birthday Sistah Angela!! I am so grateful to you this season for all your hard work and dedication to GFAC. YOU my Sistah have truly been an inspiration to our very own daughter Iyanna Hardin. May Our God continue to bless you to see many more birthdays and continue to give you the strength to show your love the way you do Best for our Black Girls from the East Coast to the West.”
- AKELA SILKMAN, GIRLS WHO CODE INSTRUCTOR

FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

$50 FOR 50 YEARS

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DIVA BAG AUCTION

The Diva Bag Auction was the biggest fundraiser to date, encompassing handbag and item donations from small businesses, financial donations from partners, time and talent from celebrity ambassadors, and auction participation from the community. We spent months collecting bags and items to go in our Diva Bag packages. With a goal of collecting 25 bags, we ended up with 50! We had donors who supported our Recording Party, covering the cost of flights and hotel stay in California to pre-record the auction with celebrity guests. We had donors offer to match funds raised at the auction AND we had SO MANY celebrities who helped promote, support through donated items, and/or be in our Auction Video.

CELEBRITY SUPPORTERS


SMALL BUSINESS FUNDRASERS WHO SUPPORTED THE CAMPAIGN

Sun & Selene
Pop of Confetti
Kate Spade
Anine Bing
Crew Richmond

Designer handbags worth $33,000

$4,300 number of in kind donations to go in the bags

20 celebrity supporters who participated

$22,000 Raised

UPCOMING FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Legacy Art Installation
Imagine a 3 dimensional installation full of inspiration and encouragement—reasons why our work is important. We’re working with designer Jen Fell to create a fundraiser/art installation where supporters can purchase a flower and write their message on it as part of the installation.

You can help us by starting your own fundraiser on Facebook in honor of your Birthday! It’s easy to do and will help us get to our $1M goal so that we can renovate our building. Learn more here.
Girls For A Change programs focus on the development of Black girls as leaders and change makers across the Greater Richmond Metro Area. Co-designed with Black girls, our programs teach participants to understand the world they live in, to advocate for their rights, and to exercise agency over their lives through creative platforms.

We kicked off our Fall programs with a powerful, full day Black Girl Rally that brought multiple stakeholders in the community together for workshops and conversations. Our theme, Black Girls winning, focused on youth entrepreneurship and addressing the disparities, successes, and solutions for Black women-owned businesses. How do we come together to fill gaps, break down barriers, and support our future Black entrepreneurs? We problem solved with educators, girl centered programs, social workers, and Black girl champions and then we rallied with our girls, bringing in entrepreneurs and business professionals to share their secrets to success and engage in real-time problem-solving around barriers to success for female entrepreneurs.

Thomas Jefferson Girl Action Team
The Thomas Jefferson High School Girl Action Team explored how the fashion industry affects climate change with Tanita Gray of Last Report. After learning about sustainable shoe design and meeting other designers and fashionistas, they got to work creating their own sustainably made sneaker in partnership with COMUNITYmade. Their final design will be made professionally and sold, proceeds benefit GFAC.

Purchase before the sneakers sell out.

Orchard House – Developed a creative Zine tackling social issues
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts – Created a museum experience around how Black Girls Museum too
John Marshall High School – Developed digital assets to help increase Black representation in media and also created physical art expressions affirming the need for Black representation
Huguenot High School – Started the process of creating a wellness garden for their school
Thomas Dale High School – Wrote and recorded the “Black Girl Affirmation Song”
Salem Middle School – Wrote, directed, and performed a skit that expresses how rude and insensitive comments from teachers can have a negative effect on students.

Thank you, Safe Space Market for hosting a Back to School drive and donating school supplies to our girls.
We are so grateful for the small businesses who stepped up to hire an intern because they believe in the work of the program. Each year, we kick off the program with several weeks of specialized training sessions to prepare them for the workforce. Girls attended in-person and virtual classes where they learned valuable skills like coding, graphic design, and financial literacy. Shout out to Capital One, who tapped into their expert team to offer multiple classes this year to our participants.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Iyanna’s first experience with Girls For A Change was through Camp Diva Leadership Academy—which she found on her own researching things to do over the summer. She immediately loved the atmosphere and sisterhood we offered and has stayed the course with us ever since—taking advantage of every opportunity we offered her. Iyanna participated in all four years of our GAP program, was in our Immersion Lab, and participated in Girl Action Teams. She started at Sassy Jones as an intern in 9th grade and is now an employee supporting storytelling. In 10th grade, she interned with Emergent Social Solutions where she was coached to become our Brand Ambassador. In 11th grade, she interned with Winged Wellness, where she helped them develop a new product line specifically for hair health. It will be released in 2023. Finally, in 12th grade she interned with Afrikana Film Festival to further hone her love of film.

She has also traveled with us to Atlanta, New York, and California, and for the last two years was our official Brand Ambassador. She has put her heart and soul into GFAC and we wish her the best of luck as she attends Full Sail University to study filmmaking!

Jessica kicked off her beginnings with GFAC in Camp Diva Leadership Academy and has been growing with us ever since. She joined as a rising 9th grader and has stayed the course, completing four years in GAP and earning a GAP scholarship to her chosen university: Virginia State. Throughout her time in the program, she has interned with VCU School of Education, Hope Professional Financial Services, and Black & Creme Boutique. We are so proud of Jessica’s accomplishments in and outside the GAP!

This year we had 15 girls complete the program, with two girls graduating after completing four years! This is the first time since the program launched that we have had participants complete four years.

Iyanna Hardin

Jessica Saunders

“During my time in the program, I have learned Microsoft skills, coding skills, and networking skills. I have grown while in Girls For A Change and feel like it prepared me for the business world. I can apply these while in college because I will be networking with other people while getting my name out there.”

“My time in the Girl Ambassador Program was such a beneficial learning experience. I learned a number of valuable skills and was able to apply them in internships and in my everyday life. In my eyes this program put me ahead of the curve. Each year I was placed in a new internship experience where I’ve had the opportunity to work in fashion/beauty, social media and communications, wellness, app development, and film. GAP has opened my mind to endless career opportunities. Lastly, GAP has given me a professional network that I can continue to connect with throughout my career.”

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This year, we relaunched our Immersion Lab program with a focus on entrepreneurship. Immersion Lab participants had the option of drop-in classes and workshop series to continue building and growing, or they could apply to the Budding Black Girl Incubator, where they went through 8 weeks of immersive entrepreneurship training specifically for retail businesses. Girls in our very first cohort worked on product development and joined us at Market Day for the full market selling experience.

Girls in our Summer Series cohort worked on their businesses with the help of mentors and then competed in a pitch competition hosted by Capital One where they had the opportunity to win seed money. Three of our Summer Series participants won the competition, earning $1,250 in seed money toward business development.

Girls Who Code participants explored the theme, “Play for Impact,” to code a project using Scratch in partnership with Facebook’s Engineer for the Week program (EFTW). EFTW introduces learners to the power of STEM and provides a pathway to build engineering solutions that create real impact in our communities. The girls explored the world of engineering, discovered game design principles and learned block-based programming to design their own Game with Purpose to address a topic that matters to them, and create a positive change in the world.

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The Spring 2022 Girls Who Code cohort played the role of music video director by using basic coding language in the Scratch platform to create their own music video for change project.

Our Girls Who Code instructor, Akela Silkman, has been a wonderful community partner over the years. She is so passionate about teaching coding and getting girls excited about technology.
SPECIAL EVENTS & PROGRAMS

OWN YOUR BEAUTY FASHION SHOW

We partnered with Richmond based fashionista, Janie Medley of Medley Style, to help GFAC participants learn how to “own” their style and experience while also seeing a professional fashion show to inspire their Back to School looks. The event aimed to inspire girls to see themselves as beautiful, regardless of hair texture, skin tone, facial features, or anything else that doesn’t fit mass-marketed standards of beauty. In addition to the fashion show, Medley offered styling and beauty workshops for participants to discover and take control of their own, personal style.

FUNCTIONAL CERAMICS

We partnered with Open Space Education to get girls outside and connected to nature. Participants learned to start, grow, and nurture seedlings at Fonticello Food Forest. They also created ceramic planters for themselves and community members while becoming versed in resourcefulness, food justice, and cultivation of plants. The program brought in instructors from the food justice community, including folks from Happily Natural Day and the Earth Folk Collective.

CALIFORNIA DREAMING

Our Spring Break was action packed! We took six girls with us to California to play a role in the Recording Party ahead of the Diva Bag Auction AND network with the incredible supporters who have uplifted us in the process. We are so grateful to everyone who offered space, workshops, fundraisers, time, and tours to us in San Francisco and Los Angeles and to all who made donations to help cover our girls’ expenses.

OWN YOUR BEAUTY FASHION SHOW

“I HOPE GIRLS FEEL CONFIDENT AND AUTHENTIC AND KNOW THAT STYLE STARTS FROM WITHIN!”

–JANIE MEDLEY

FUNCTIONAL CERAMICS

CALIFORNIA DREAMING

FUNCTIONAL CERAMICS

OWN YOUR BEAUTY FASHION SHOW

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This year at Camp Diva Leadership Academy, we celebrated a few important firsts in the program and in the organization as a whole. We celebrated the completion of the first Mission In Bloom group, a special Camp Diva curriculum to help prepare rising 9th graders for the transition to high school. This is our first group of girls to go through the curriculum to better prepare them for their next step on the path to womanhood.

We also celebrated the return of many GFAC alum as Camp Diva Counselors—four out of six of them were past participants. This marks the first time that has happened in our organization and is a huge signifier that we are doing something right. We always ask participants to stay in it with us from program to program and even after they leave Girls For A Change. It’s a powerful testament to watch these girls become women and then come back to lift up the younger generation.

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Taking the next step
Asani Ka-Re and Nadia Fraser have been in Camp Diva since elementary school. After experiencing Market Day year after year, learning more and more about being a retail business owner, these two joined our Immersion Lab to officially launch businesses of their own. They both won seed money and are ready to continue their journey into entrepreneurship. That’s the power of staying in it. This year was also their last year as Camp Diva participants and now, as rising 9th graders, they will be joining our Communications Team as Peer Advisors!

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“Kalia is a camper I could always count on! Her calm and easy-going energy made every day easier. Without asking, she was willing and able to lend a helpful hand when I needed it.”

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How market day teaches financial literacy to these kid entrepreneurs

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PRESS SPOTLIGHT:
PwC Charitable Foundation
Supported our Operating Funds with $250K

The Reis Foundation
Supported our building campaign with $100K

The Mary Morton Parsons Foundation
Generously offered to match funds up to the first $50K raised

Pearl Milling Company
Supported our Girl Ambassador Program with a $50K grant

The Community Foundation
Supported our Immersion Lab Program with $25K

Capital One
Supported Camp Diva Leadership Academy and the Closing Ceremony with funds
Supported our Immersion Lab by hosting a pitch competition and offering seed money
Supported the Girl Ambassador Program with various workshops lead by their team

NextUp
Supported Camp Diva Leadership Academy and Girl Action Team

Martin Agency
Designed our Camp Diva Leadership boxes
Crew Cares
Fundraised for the building campaign and is sponsoring our complete kitchen renovation for the new building

Devon White, GFAC Tech Support
Devon has been with Girls For A Change since 2020 and ensures that our tech is always up and running. He’s our go-to guy for checking in and out equipment, offering staff technical support, and ensuring our equipment is in good working order.

David Joseph Craig has supported us as a volunteer in multiple ways this year. He helped coordinate our Recording Party in California, taught the girls about pottery at his favorite studio in Los Angeles, and has supported fundraising efforts. We appreciate his dedication and continued partnership!

Thank you to our volunteers, who help ensure our building stays organized, our garden is bountiful, and our girls have what they need to succeed!

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Garden volunteering
Volunteer as a STEM educator for our programs
Mentor girls as a college student
Offering entrepreneurship mentoring to Immersion Lab participants
Season building beautification

You can always check our calendar on the GFAC website or head to handsonrva.org and search Girls For A Change to find volunteer opportunities.

WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT US

Donate
Volunteer through HandsOn Greater Richmond
Include us in your corporate engagement or social responsibility campaigns
Support our organization when you shop on Amazon Smile at smile.amazon.com
Host an event
Hire a Girl Ambassador Participant
Spread the word about our programs
Follow us on social media

Become a Board and/or Committee Member!
We’re recruiting new board members and also members to fill our committees as volunteers. Our committees include:
- Governance Committee
- Executive Committee
- Mission and Vision Committee
- Outreach & Development Committee
- Building & Property Committee

Thank you for your support!
As usual, we closed out our 2022 summer programs with a joyful, cultural Closing Ceremony Celebration where we honored Camp Diva and Girl Ambassador participants.

The Annual Celebration of our Winter and Spring Programs! The 2022 Black Girl Showcase was held at VMFA where our Girl Action Teams and Girls Who Code presented their final projects.

Thank you to the Paul C. Joyner Foundation for donating bookbags to our participants as they get ready for school!

Income (July 2021–June 2022)

- Camp Diva Leadership Academy: 24,281.00
- Discounts/Refunds Given: 343.38
- Donations: 84,063.17
- Grant Funding: 596,135.95
- Humanitru Alpine Income: 339,912.87
- Total – Revenue: $1,044,736.37

Expenses (July 2021–June 2022)

- Total – Costs of Services: 521,666.34
- Total – Fundraising Expenses: 163,045.93
- Total – General & Administrative Expenses: 290,988.31
- Total – Other Expenses: 29,478.85
- Total – Expenses: $1,005,179.22
Get excited GFAC girls and parents! We’re bringing some opportunities and experiences we had to cut back during the pandemic. We’re excited to announce that in 2023, the following GFAC programs/experiences will resume:

- Road Trippin’—look for more road trips and travel
- Creative Industry Camp
- After School Specialty Programs

Follow us for more
@girlsforachange

Sign up for our newsletter
girlsforachange.org