



**Greater Washington
Urban League**

*Empowering Communities.
Changing Lives.*

ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTER

**PEPSICO FOUNDATION
BLACK RESTAURANT ACCELERATOR PROGRAM
(BRAP)**

ANNUAL REPORT for
OCTOBER 1, 2022 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

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Entrepreneurship Center	Program Description	Program Impact
<p>Greater Washington Urban League</p>	<p>In FY 2023 GWUL’s PepsiCo BRAP participants were supported through a service mix of intensive developmental cohorts, individual and group counseling, subject matter expert workshops and inclusion in special networking and customer acquisition events. These services were delivered through the GWUL Entrepreneurship Center’s “By Our Hands”: Elevating Food Culture (BOH) branded program. BOH is designed to elevate and preserve Black food culture in the Metropolitan Washington Area while also building a community grounded food service collaborative. Participants were comprised of start-ups, emerging/existing businesses, and well-established/legacy foodservice businesses.</p> <p>The By Our Hands cohort series gives participants an opportunity to first see that they are not by themselves but rather a part of a community. Watch our Impact Video HERE.</p> <p>GWUL’s absence of judgement and peer learning approach opens clients up to acquire and apply the information that comes through our cohort training sessions including:</p> <p>Barrier Discovery Analysis: Clients are often unable to address issues because they are unaware of what’s not working. Our hands on SWOT training gives businesses the</p>	<p><i>FY 2023 Highlights:</i></p> <p>BOH Food & Beverage Clients Counseled – 497 (Food service professionals in DC, MD & VA)</p> <p>Total Event and Counseling Hours – 7,486</p> <p>BRAP Grant Recipients</p> <p>FY21 Grantees - 9 FY 22 Grantees – 9 FY 23 Grantees - 8</p> <p><i>GWUL Value Add:</i></p> <p>Racial disparity stats point to a need to go beyond generalized business modeling and planning as a means to bring about equity and wellness. GWUL thus intentionally specializes and dives well below the surface in just a few industry sectors with an aim to have a multi-generational affect. Highlighting and preserving Black culture through the recovery or retention of Black owned food and beverage businesses is a key focus area. Likewise, our business development and acceleration models are rooted in historic and proven cooperative economic strategies. Iron sharpens Iron and sparks innovation and acceleration.</p> <p>In FY 2023 BOH powered by Pepsi/NUL we continued to assist businesses by expanding revenue streams for many clients who we guided to see the work of others as additive vs competitive or irrelevant. Collaboration is a learned competency but ultimately a necessary strategy for the survival of Black owned businesses.</p> <p>Two craft beer businesses strengthened themselves by collaborating instead of competing.</p>



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opportunity to apply a framework that makes clear where they are relative to where they aim to be. The process ignites new perspectives. All clients received a digital audit. This audit helped the client to see where they show up in their business category and where they need to adjust their communication to reach their ideal client, both on and offline. This new approach gave us a starting point to measure each business individually along with our other onboarding measurement tools.

The Recipe for Real Business:

Participants were able to gain a clear understanding of what they do best and focus their business model on that niche. This includes profiling their true customer and adjusting the pricing model to fit the economy and actual consumer demand.

Intro to HR & Staffing Procedures:

This year, clients had a difficult time finding and retaining staff.

Participants were taught how to leverage the DOEE supportive services learning how to properly hire, evaluate and terminate employees. Business owners were shown how to maximize usage of temporary agencies, online job boards and their websites to source quality candidates.

Be Found, Be Attractive Online!:

Using the digital audit, clients were better able to reach their ideal client. Businesses struggling with customer acquisition and retention were

The first Black Beer Festival and Block Party Experience – Soul Mega Fest (<https://www.soulmega.com/mega-fest-2023>). Urban Garden Beer shared the love by inviting Soul Mega to participate in the Hip Hop 50th Anniversary celebration of Vice President Kamala Harris (<https://www.billboard.com/music/music-news/vice-president-kamala-harris-hip-hop-50-event-recap-1235410063/>).

Our one-on-one counselling sessions are tailored to individualized needs. It is illustrative of our competence, care, and commitment. The trust it builds allows us to address the true nature of a business owners barriers including the psychological ones, home in on actual client profiles and demand trends not previously understood, humbly point to the absence of key business competencies, and helps clients pivot from founder dreams to multi-faceted and sustaining business models. GWUL has been particularly instrumental in driving restaurants and event caterers to 1) develop food delivery services and products for the grocery shelves; 2) adjust recipes and pricing in accordance with their true margins and 3) gain competence in employment management.

Lastly, GWUL leverages the multi-generational and deeply rooted relationships of its Entrepreneurship leaders and consultants to be an accelerant for its clients. We introduce businesses to revenue generating opportunities and subject matter professionals that would not otherwise be accessible.

GWUL has found that many of our caterers have problems accessing shared kitchen spaces. We have met that need by assisting them with access to affordable shared kitchen spaces throughout the DMV. This gave them the ability to legally



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shown how to 1) capture client data enabling recurring communication; 2) amplify their online presence via building quality website and SEO strategies and 3) establish a cohesive linkage and brand recognition across all digital assets.

Winning Your Shelf Space Across

Diverse Supply Chains: Participants learn how to properly pitch, package, price and supply their products to retail stores. GWUL client's products can be found in national retail chains such as Kroger, Whole Foods, Giant, and Costco.

In addition to our training modules our food service businesses were influenced to partake in the GWUL Black Brilliance Marketplace (BBM), joint marketing food campaigns (i.e. DMV Black Restaurant Week and Shop Local) and city led initiatives (i.e. Art All Night and local farmers markets) to acquire new customers and regain prior customers. Similarly, GWUL facilitated cross selling strategies amplifying customer traffic and sales. Additionally, we encourage our food businesses to establish partnerships and joint ventures. We have also created Black Brilliance Marketplace directory featuring our food and beverage clients that we share throughout the agency, with board members and the community.

provide meal plans to clients as well as positioning their products onto grocery store shelves (i.e. Hiatus Cheesecake

[\(https://hiatuscheesecake.com/\)](https://hiatuscheesecake.com/) Helping our businesses with these hurdles and back office support allows them to be competitive and successful which is the ultimate goal. **Watch our BRAP Awards Ceremony Video [HERE](#)**

**GWUL PEPSICO BRAP
Grant Recipients –
Fiscal Year 2021-2023**

BRAP FY 21 Grant Recipients
Chefs of the Streets / David Watson, Shamara Watson (Catering & Events)
Culture Coffee Too / Veronica Cooper (Coffee Shop)
Magnolia Blossoms Catering and Events / Maggy Lewis (Catering & Events)
MiMi's Ethiopian BBQ / Hikmah Tasew (Restaurant)



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	<p>Mr. Braxton Bar & Kitchen / Booker Parchment <i>(Restaurant/Bar/Lounge)</i> Open Crumb / Peter Opore <i>(Take-out and Catering)</i> Road Map to Holistic Health / Dr. Ruby Lathon <i>(Health and Wellness Food)</i> RockSolid Creative Food Group / Chef Rock Harper <i>(Restaurant & Caterer)</i> Takoma Station Tavern / David Boyd, Michael Boyd, Melvin Floreza <i>(Restaurant/Bar/Lounge)</i></p> <p>BRAP FY 22 Applicants Ama's Catering Experience / Ama Hammah <i>(Catering)</i> DC Conscious Café / Ahamadou Diop <i>(Restaurant & Bar)</i> District Chop Bar / Margaret Kamara <i>(Catering)</i> Feast in a Basket / Leah Todd <i>(Catering)</i> Garden Brewing LLC / Eamoni Collier <i>(Beer/Craft Beer/Production & Distribution)</i> LuvPlates Soul & Grill / Jamar Johnson <i>(Restaurant/Take-out & Food Truck)</i> Mix and Mingle Coffee Lounge / T. Pendergast, S. Jordan, C. Moore <i>(Restaurant/ Coffee Lounge)</i> Soul Mega / Elliott Johnson, Jahi Wartts <i>(Beer/Craft Beer/Production & Distribution)</i> The Fresh Food Factory Market / Amanda Stephenson <i>(Retail/Food/Business Services)</i></p> <p>BRAP FY 22 Applicants Corner Water / Ronnie Webb <i>(Alkaline Water Production and Distribution)</i> Chef Girl "R" CHI / Chekesha Rashad <i>(Catering)</i> Hiatus Cheesecake / Matthew Featherstone (Cheesecake) Reese's Catering Services / Maurice Dixon <i>(Catering)</i> SouthEast Restaurant Group, dba DCity Smokehouse / Melvin Hines <i>(BBQ Restaurant)</i> Union Chefs Club @ Roosevelt High School / James Wiggins <i>(Catering)</i> Vickey's Trinidad and Tobago Kitchen / Michelle Phipps-Evans <i>(Catering)</i></p>
<p>Chef Girl "R" CHI FY 23 BRAP Grantee</p>	<p>GWUL Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scale business to the next level. • Increase existing client • Expand the sale of prepackaged food products • Build out website and marketing program <p>Outcome:</p> <p>GWUL was able to assist with connecting to a Marketing professional who assisted with finding the right marketing tools to market products and better serve clients.</p>



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**Union Chefs Club @
Roosevelt High School
FY23 BRAP Grantee**

GWUL Impact:

- Build out the Ithra Cafe and kitchen to enable students to take on more clients and catering projects to expand reach into community.
- Launch socio-emotional wellness meal program for teachers and administrators to provide five nutritionally balanced meals per week to subscribing educators throughout the District of Columbia.

Outcome:

Union Chefs has solidified licensing, increased marketing presence and won a gold medal at the National Restaurant Association Youth Cook-off Competition.

