



Annual Report 2022

The Book Works, creating programs, partnerships, information, and supports that prepare vulnerable youth and young adults for career pathways.

Emerging Workforce Initiative, Inc. dba The Book Works Project is a 501(c)3 Tax Exempt Organization, EIN 27-1301274.



Our Work

In Louisville, approximately 20,000 youth and young adults are neither in school nor working. For many, their goal of graduating high school or living economically independent has been difficult, delayed, or diverted altogether. The Book Works advocates for equitable access to education and employment for youth and young adults who are or at-risk of becoming disconnected from school and work. The Book Works achieves our mission through three primary strategies:

1. **Research** that identifies and amplifies the reasons young people disconnect in our community;
2. **Programs** that assist young people to succeed in school and work;
3. **Partnerships** that create new opportunities for high school age learners.

We serve high school age youth and young adults (approximately 14 to 21 years) who struggle to attend school, have dropped out, or have been suspended. Each young person experiences one or more significant barriers to success in school: early or consistent exposure to violence or serious trauma, involvement in the child welfare or justice systems, recent immigration to our community, family economic hardship or homelessness, or marginalization by policies and practices that discriminate against them because of their race, language or citizen status, gender or gender identity, or orientation.

Our Leadership

John Langford, USI Insurance (Board Chair)
Anastasia Chapman, Business Consultant (Board Vice-Chair)
Melissa “Mel” Banks, State Capacity Building Center (Board Secretary)
Dan Heekin, KPMG LLP (Board Treasurer)
Heather Dearing, Kentucky Lt. Governor Office
Roan Head, Opportunity Youth Congressional Liaison
Judi Vanderhaar, PhD., Kentucky Department of Education
Kahlia Evans, MSD
Michael Russman, U.S. Bank
Elizabeth Senn-Alvey, Executive Director

Our Projects

Education Advocacy Training prepares near peers and adults to support the education goals of high school age young people (14 to 21 years). Advocates learn the education rights of learners, how to navigate systems, and how to connect learners with school and community-based services. Through their collective efforts, Education Advocates shift the systems toward equitable access for each young person in the community. In the last 12 months, we have updated our comprehensive set of training materials, online resources, and tools for advocates with educators and young people who experienced education disruption.

- **Impact:** More than 200 people have taken part in training including forty assisting with the pilot program and 125 participating in a day long education advocacy conference.

Education Advocate Fellowship program equips college students to assist youth and young adults experiencing educational disruption to reconnect with the school options and academic supports. Fellows learn how to navigate education systems, teach self-advocacy skills, and make education equitably accessible in this two semester, paid fellowship.

- **Impact:** We have five part-time fellows currently working with twenty high school age youth.

Education Re-engagement Network: With nonprofit partners and leaders in education and local workforce development, we are implementing a network of support for youth and young adults who have not graduated and are behind in credits. Collaboratively, we are developing processes to reconnect young people who have left school before graduation; building linkages between Louisville's re-engagement sites that provide academic, employment, and other support for high school age youth and young adults; and establishing a system for tracking our collective efforts to identify gaps in services. Through this collaboration, we hope to build on our success of bringing new financial support to our organization and to our partner organizations.

- **Impact:** In the last year, we have created a re-engagement strategy for our community that includes a partnership agreement template and data sharing tool.

Employment Reengagement Programs: The Book Works uses a project-based learning model to provide an opportunity for marginalized youth and young adults to reconnect with school and work. While employed at The Book Works, team members develop workplace skills while implementing a book or literacy related project that impacts the community. Projects in 2022:

- **Social Justice Books:** Through research and surveys, the team identified more than 100 books to purchase and give away on topics addressing racial and social justices, environmental protection, and the experiences of immigrants and LGBTQ individuals. The team is currently developing program guides for using these books in afterschool and other programs throughout the community.
- **Community Center Shelves and Books:** A team of youth constructed eight wooden bookcases for Louisville Metro Community Centers and stocked them with new or good condition used books for neighbors using the centers.
- **Books for Foster Families and Foster Care Facilities:** The team of participants will purchase and ship up to 50 book bundles of 3 to 6 books to families and organizations serving children and youth in foster care.
- **Impact:** For the more than 20 young people we worked with in 2022, approximately three of four left with housing and services in place, and have made progress toward their education goals. At least 80% complete training with a job earning family sustaining wages.

Highlights



2022 was a transformational year for The Book Works. A sample of our work, accomplished with generous community partners and supporters:

- Hired a team of five "near peer" education advocates to work with high school age learners, conduct education advocacy training, reach out to youth needing support to re-enroll in school, and develop "how-to" resources for learners and families.
- Hosted a community-wide convening on education disengagement attended by more than 125 including school board members, local and state education leaders, and community partners. Event presenters included youth who had experienced education disruptions, researchers on the causes of disengagement, and programs using best practices to serve high school age youth.
- Convened a group of organizational and administrative leaders on the education needs of youth in foster care. Together, we successfully advocated for a state-level policy change that addressed the number of youth being exited from care just prior to turning 18.
- Established a summer employment program to train youth in workplace skills while working on a social justice community project.
- Gave away thousands of books to people and organizations assisting youth in foster care, struggling readers, and neighbors in disenfranchised parts of our city.
- Moved our office into the Lou Metro Community Center in the Beechmont Neighborhood.





Strategic Goals

Goal 1: Increase the number of high school age learners experiencing educational disruptions who are supported or reconnected with a path to graduation.

Strategies:

- Deliver high school re-engagement services.
- Implement a comprehensive outreach and communications plan.
- Track organizational impact and continually improve.

Goal 2: Reduce educational disruptions in child serving systems.

Strategies:

- Establish and expand partnerships.
- Identify and analyze data and research to understand the scale and root cause of the issues and highlight the urgency for change.
- Expand community capacity to assist high school learners to graduate and advocate for changes to make education more equitably accessible.

Goal 3: Increase and strengthen organizational sustainability.

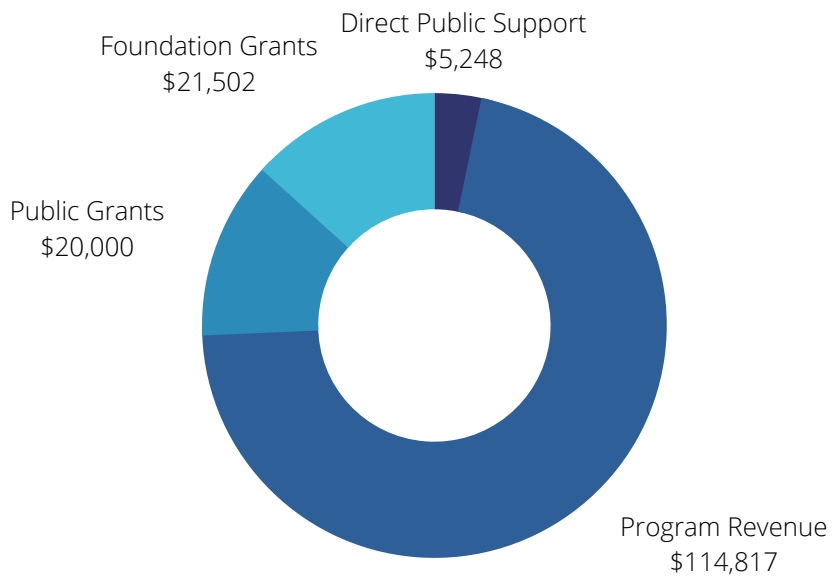
Strategies:

- Grow fiscal oversight and control.
- Grow revenue.

2022 Revenue

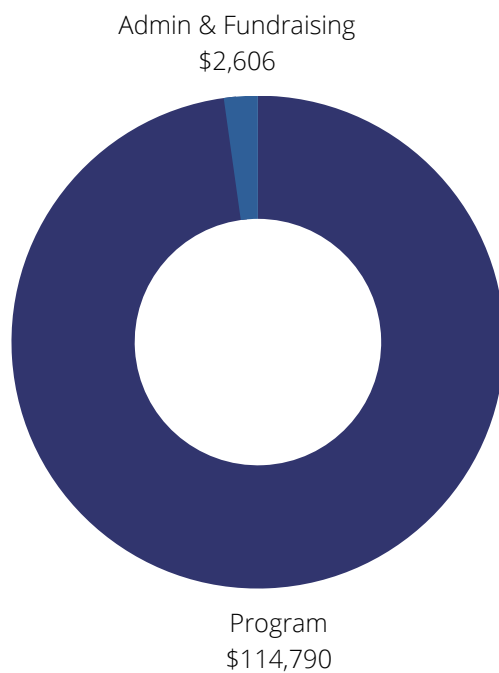
Total Revenue: \$ 161,567

Total Net Assets: \$90,194



2022 Expenses

Total Expenses: \$117,396.19





Our Supporters

Employers, local businesses, educators and literacy advocates, community service providers, generous donors and grantors, mentors, and volunteers make this work possible.

We thank the many donors and sponsors who support The Book Works:

- U.S. Bank Foundation
- Metro United Way
- Aetna SKY
- Louisville Metro Government
- Old National Bank
- Bluegrass Book Hunters
- Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels

We acknowledge the community partners that collaborate with The Book Works:

- YMCA Safe Place
- South Louisville Community Ministries
- Coalition Supporting Young Adults
- Goodwill - The Spot
- YouthBuild Louisville
- JCPS Adult Education
- SummerWorks
- Louisville Metro Parks and Rec
- Louisville Free Public Library
- Louisville Metro YES!
- Metro United Way
- Catholic Charities Refugee Services

