



# ANNUAL REPORT

2023





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**04 Letter From Our CEO**

**08 Mission + Vision + Values**

**10 Executive Summary**

**11 2023 Highlights**

**14 Leading Indicators**

**16 Our Events**

**20 School Services**

School Services Data

District Partners

Systems Change Driver Strategies

Jegna Early Literacy

**32 Programs**

Place-Based (Power of Proximity)

KOO Labs

TFI Program

Workforce Development

KOO Media Academy

Music Studio

Fashion Design and Innovation Lab

Animation Production

Video Production

Event Production

**40 MEDIA / NARRATIVE CHANGE**

Music

Film & Animation

Video Series

Event Production

**46 KOO AND STAFF AWARDS**

**51 FINANCE DEPARTMENT**

**52 OUR PARTNERS**

**53 2024 VISION**

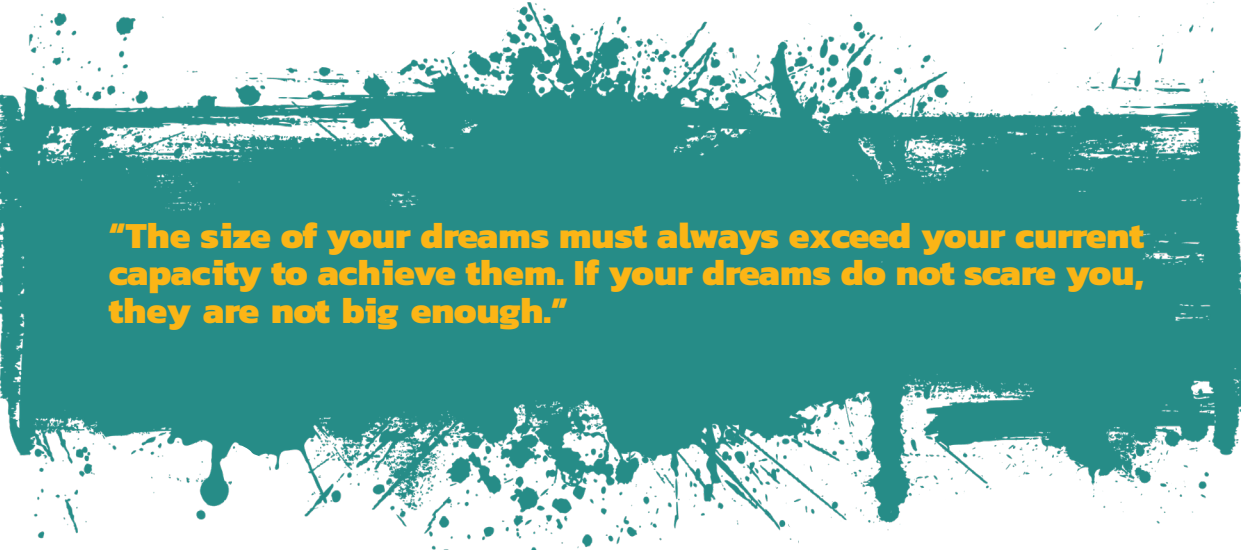


# LETTER FROM OUR CEO & FOUNDER

Dear Beloved Community,

As we embark on a new year, I am filled with an overwhelming sense of gratitude and reverence for the journey we have embarked upon together. In reflecting on the path we have traveled, I am reminded of the profound impact of love—the love that permeates every dimension of our work and shapes the very essence of our mission.

In the spirit of honoring the legacy of our forefathers and mothers, we embrace the transformative power of love—a love that liberates, uplifts, and empowers. Consequently we immerse ourselves into the dimensions of love, as articulated by the organization I founded, Kingmakers of Oakland, we witness the beauty, brilliance, and innate greatness that resides within each and every Black boy we serve.



**"The size of your dreams must always exceed your current capacity to achieve them. If your dreams do not scare you, they are not big enough."**

**EMBODYING INTEGRITY:** We understand that leading by example is not merely a concept—it is a lived experience. It is about embodying the values of Kings, showing up authentically, and demonstrating unwavering integrity in every interaction. Bobby Pope, SFUSD Program Manager, aptly states, "authenticity is the cornerstone of our work, and it is through our authenticity that we build trust and forge meaningful connections with our Kings."

**RECLAMATION OF BLACK CULTURE:** Through the

reclamation of Black culture, we empower our Kings to embrace their true identities, to celebrate their heritage, and to narrate their own stories. By teaching the origins of Black history and highlighting the contributions of the diaspora, we instill confidence, foster pride, and create space for our Kings to dream boldly and unapologetically.

**CONSISTENT THROUGH THE STORMS:** Love is not just about celebrating our Kings at their best—it is about standing by them through the storms, offering unwavering support, and demonstrating

unconditional love even in the face of adversity. It is about showing up, time and time again, and refusing to give up on our Kings, no matter the challenges they may face.

**UNAPOLOGETICALLY AUTHENTIC:** In creating a space where our Kings can show up as their authentic selves, we affirm their worth, their value, and their inherent dignity. We reject the notion of shrinking or conforming to societal expectations, and instead, we embrace and celebrate the fullness of who our Kings are, unapologetically and without reservation.

**CULTIVATING CREATORS & LEADERS:** We recognize that our Kings are not just recipients of love—they are creators and leaders in their own right. Through mentorship, advocacy, and exposure to new experiences, we equip our Kings with the tools and opportunities they need to unleash their potential, pursue their passions, and lead with purpose.

**ADVOCACY:** Love is not passive—it is an active force for change. We advocate for our Kings, both within the classroom and beyond, challenging systemic barriers and paving the way for a brighter

that is unmatched in its power. Through mentorship, brotherhood, and shared experiences, we affirm the importance of representation, connection, and support.

As we look towards the future, I am filled with hope and excitement for the extraordinary journey that lies ahead. Together, we are building a community collective—a multi-racial, intergenerational, cross-sector alliance that is committed to ensuring the success and well-being of our Kings. With each passing day, we are inching closer towards our vision of a thriving, vibrant future—a future where our Kings are empowered, uplifted, and celebrated for the beautiful, brilliant beings that they are.

In solidarity and love,

Chris "Baba C" Chatmon

Chris "Baba C" Chatmon

future. We speak out against injustice! We stand up for what is right! We amplify the voices of our Kings, ensuring that they are heard and valued.

**EXPOSURE:** By expanding the horizons of our Kings, we open doors to new possibilities and opportunities. Whether through travel, education, or networking experiences, we broaden their perspectives, ignite their curiosity, and inspire them to reach for the stars.

**ACTS OF SERVICE:** Love is not just a feeling—it is a commitment to lifting as we climb. We empower our Kings to become leaders and changemakers in their communities, instilling in them a sense of responsibility and a spirit of service that extends far beyond themselves.

**RESPECT:** Respect is the foundation upon which our relationships are built. We honor the dignity and worth of each and every King we serve, holding them to high standards while providing them with the support and encouragement they need to succeed.

**BROTHERHOOD:** In nurturing Black affinity spaces, we create a sense of belonging and camaraderie





TO BE KING IS NOT  
A PRIVILEGE BUT A  
RESPONSIBILITY.



# MISSION & VISION

**WE REIMAGINE SYSTEMS OF EDUCATION, CULTURE, AND WELLNESS WHILE DRIVING NARRATIVE CHANGE THAT CELEBRATES BLACK PEOPLE AND CULTURE, AND IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL AND LIFE OUTCOMES FOR BLACK BOYS AND MEN FROM PRE-K TO PHD.**

We believe in a world where all Black boys and men are seen as and see themselves as beautiful, brilliant, and possessing innate greatness as Kings. We believe in a world where society's systems, structures, and conditions enable all of us to reach our full potential.

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

### WE BELIEVE IN...

Being Rooted in Unconditional LOVE  
Historical Context Matters  
Radical Inclusion  
Process is the Product

### WHICH REQUIRES US TO...

Design at the Margins  
Start with Yourself  
Cede Power  
Make the Invisible VISIBLE  
Create a Conspiracy of Care  
Speak the Future; Design the Future

## CORE ASSUMPTIONS

We fundamentally believe that all Black boys are beautiful, brilliant and possess innate greatness.

Our educational system was not created to educate all children to equally high standards. The inherent racism in the system means the lived experiences and unique needs of Black boys are often ignored, hampering their ability to flourish.

Within this educational paradigm, the dominant policies, practices, and cultural representations -- ways of knowing and communicating what is "normal," "right," and "valued" -- advantage some groups of students and disadvantage others. It is a system founded on "inequity by design."

# CORE VALUES

## KING-CENTERED

Black boys will always be co-creators of this work; their voices are valued as much as those of the adults.

## LOVE

Our approach is first and foremost rooted in love. Love of self, community, culture, and much more.

## AFRICAN-CENTERED

Understanding and being connected to our history, community, humanity, and soul is key in shaping a positive Black identity, especially within an academic context.

## COLLECTIVE WILL

The cavalry isn't coming to save Black boys. As members and allies of the Black community, we have a responsibility to co-create change.

## PARTNERSHIP

This work doesn't scale or grow without partners, and we are committed to collaborating with our district, community, and organizational partners throughout every step of the journey.





# 2023 IMPACT & HIGHLIGHTS

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### TRANSFORMATION FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

**In the pages that follow, Kingmakers of Oakland is delighted to present our third Annual Report. This report provides an in-depth overview of our activities, achievements, and financial performance over the past year.**

Throughout 2023 we remained steadfast in our commitment to create the systems, structures, culture, and conditions that nurture the beauty, brilliance and innate greatness within Black boys, in collaboration with our partner communities.

Despite landscape changes in public K-12 education, the economy, and the national climate regarding efforts toward equity and inclusion, Kingmakers of Oakland has continued to say 'yes' where others say 'no'. As an organization anchored in and fueled by our values – King-centered, Partnership, Collective will, African-Centered, and Love – we have maintained an unwavering commitment to our ambitious goal of improving educational and life outcomes for Black youth. We are constantly leveraging our values, harnessing the impact of our innovative strategies, and forging powerful, proximate partnerships that make a difference for Black youth.

Our 2023 achievements are the manifestation of our values, the consistent dedication of our team, the generous support of our donors, and the resilience of our community partners. Together we achieved notable successes in student impact, educator leadership, financial stewardship, and organizational growth and development.

### SCHOOL SERVICES:

2023 was a tremendously impactful year for Kingmakers of Oakland. We delivered evidence-based support to more youth than ever before, serving individuals and communities through programs in Gwinnett County Public Schools, Seattle Unified School District, Oakland Unified School District, San Francisco Unified School District, Antioch Unified School District, Kingmakers Media Academy, the JEGNA Early Literacy Program, and The Fellowship Initiative. While the effects of the pandemic have disproportionately impacted youth of color, particularly Black youth, our programs have provided a vital range of academic, social-emotional, and culturally responsive support to Kings in school communities across our portfolio.

- 1,000+ Kings reached in school-day classes
- 100+ school and district leaders supported
- 5 partner districts
- 34 partner schools
- Black to School Night: 400+ family and community members reached across 4 districts
- Crowning Ceremonies: 520+ family and community members reached across 4 districts

### BLACK TEACHER RECRUITMENT, TRAINING & RETAINING

We reinforced our supports to recruit, train and retain Black male teachers by incorporating strategies and impacting policies that often inhibit community educators from the credential process. We provide technical assistance to districts, partnering with local colleges, teacher training and credential support, and facilitate Black male affinity groups that offer a safe space to networking, build and mentor teachers in their journey.

### DIRECT SERVICE PROGRAMS:

We delivered evidence-based college-going and workforce development direct-service programming to 145 youth in The Fellowship Initiative (TFI) and Kingmakers Media Academy (KMA).

- 70 TFI Students served in college-going program
- 75 KMA Students served in workforce development program



## KOO LABS DESIGN CENTER & PRODUCTION HOUSE:

It is not taken lightly that we were able to purchase an 8000 sq./ft. facility on the 7th Street corridor in West Oakland, which is a City of Oakland - Black Economic Zone. After purchasing the property in November 2022, this was our first year in operations.

The space was custom designed as a professional music studio with seven recording areas of various sizes. In our first buildout this year we added clothing manufacturing and television / podcast studios. Outside organizations have contracted us to provide professional clothing designs and video production services. We extended our workforce development program to KOO Labs to develop students' marketable skills in music and video production.

### KOO LABS SPACES

VIDEO PRODUCTION  
CLOTHING PRODUCTION  
MUSIC PRODUCTION

### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

VIDEO PRODUCTION  
MUSIC PRODUCTION

## EVENTS

We produced 22 events, partnered with organizations on 6 events, and presented at 18 events. Our Spring Symposium education leadership conference, our most impactful annual event, brings together over 250 educators, students and community members for our 3-in-1 conference event.

This year, Hiero Day was our largest partnership event, attracting over 8000 attendees for a block party music festival in front of Oakland City Hall. We promoted, co-produced and live-streamed the concert that included performers including the KOO Krew, Hieroglyphics, and Common.

Our CEO Chris Chatmon was commissioned to speak at over 15 national education conferences, including heavy hitters such as: AERA and CA Black Superintendents.

## LOOKING AHEAD

As we reflect on our achievements of 2023, we recognize the opportunity of the work ahead of us. In the coming year, our focus will remain on our work at KOO Labs Design Center and Production House, our School Service Delivery Team, TFI Oakland, Kingmakers Media Academy, Jegna Early Literacy Ambassadors Pilot Program, and our Narrative Change initiatives, as we continue to pursue our mission of centering Black males while serving all students and their communities.

Kingmakers of Oakland is grateful for the consistent and unwavering support that continues to fuel our growth and development as a young organization. None of our achievements would have been possible without the support of our donors, volunteers, strategic partners, and village of community stakeholders. We are deeply grateful for their unwavering commitment and generosity, which enable us to make transformational change in our communities.

While reflecting on the past year and looking forward to the future, we are inspired by the resilience, dedication, and spirit of collaboration that define Kingmakers of Oakland. We extend our sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed to our success and invite you to explore the full Annual Report for a more in-depth look at our organization's journey over 2023





# LEADING INDICATORS

## ★ CULTURAL & RACIAL IDENTITY

An awareness & appreciation of “who” & “whose” they are.

Kings with cultural and racial identity know they belong to a community rooted in African ancestral wisdom feel pride and love for their local and global community, and understand they have unlimited potential.

Black boys possess an awareness and appreciation of “who” and “whose” they are and belong to a community rooted in shared experience and African ancestral wisdom. Kings with cultural identity acknowledge elders and care for youth, have genuine self-expression, and feel pride and love for their community and across the African diaspora.

## ➔ COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

An understanding that “I am because we are.”

Kings who share collective responsibility: Recognize needs in their community, Engage in action to address those needs, Work toward building a future in which all Black people thrive.

Black boys recognize the idea that “I am because we are” and have the self-awareness and empathy to recognize needs in their community and take action to address them. Kings with collective responsibility are engaged young people who understand their history and are able to build a future where all Black people are thriving.

Our leading indicators first fostered self-resilience and self-efficacy, instilling a strong belief in students’ capabilities and the power to effect change within themselves. Second, we nurtured a sense of belonging, ensuring these Kings feel a deep connection and affinity with others in their shared spaces while also feeling welcomed, safe, and loved. Third, their racial identity was enhanced, enabling them to possess a keen awareness and appreciation of their origins, understanding “who” and “whose” they are, and connecting them to a community rich in shared experiences. Lastly, we promoted a sense of collective responsibility. This aspect taught Black boys the philosophy of “I am because we are,” encouraging them to develop self-awareness and empathy to recognize the needs within their community and take proactive steps to address them.

## SELF EFFICACY

A belief in themselves and their ability to enact change in themselves and their community.

Kings with self-efficacy: Speak with purpose, confidence, and conviction and share their truth freely and have the humility and empathy to recognize when they need help.

Black boys believe in themselves and their ability to enact change in themselves and their community.

Kings with self-efficacy are able to speak with purpose, confidence, and conviction; share their truth freely; and have the humility and empathy to recognize when they need help.

## ★ BELONGING

A sense of affinity for themselves and others in their shared space.

Kings with a sense of belonging feel: Seen, Safe, Understood, Self-Assured.

Black boys have a sense of affinity for themselves and others in their shared space while feeling welcome, safe, and loved. Kings with belonging feel seen, understood, and self-assured. They are their full selves with their head held high in all spaces of their life (e.g., school, community).





# EVENT TIMELINE

## 2023 IN REVIEW

### SPRING SYMPOSIUM

PEOPLE SERVED: 95

TOTAL PEOPLE PARTICIPATION HOURS: 1900 HOURS

**OUTCOMES:** Participants were able to center themselves in the work and in community with many others doing similar work, raising participants' awareness of the wealth of knowledge and networks available that we can build on to garner ongoing support and increase impact. Effective tools and strategies to improve the academic and life outcomes of Black boys were shared, and participants were given implementation steps for proven models to take back to the communities they serve. The event culminated with the Student Showcase featuring Kings presenting their learning projects to peers, parents, educators, and community members. In proudly demonstrating what they had learned, Kings offered impressive evidence of the social-emotional value and academic rigor of the program.

Our annual Spring Symposium is a 3-day education leadership conference bringing together leaders from numerous organizations and areas of focus to share and discuss best practices and lessons learned in our endeavors to improve the academic and life outcomes for Black boys. In March 2023, over 220 students, educators, and community leaders engaged in an amazing learning experience, sharing their perspectives in an intergenerational setting at the Oakland Marriott Ballroom. The event included our annual Student Showcase, which convened over 150 attendees, featuring elementary, middle, and high school Kings who delivered impressive public presentations of the knowledge they had gained during the school year. Another 90-plus participants enjoyed The Griots of Oakland book's 10-year anniversary and multimedia installation.

The dynamic conference provided educators an opportunity to hear from the students they are serving – their thoughts, mindsets, and suggestions about ways public education systems can be more effective and impactful. Our opportunity-age Kings (16-24) led breakout sessions focusing on our six Systems Change Drivers: Youth Voice & Leadership, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and Curriculum; Black Teacher Recruitment, Training and Retention; Family and Community Engagement; Narrative Change; and Policy. Keynote speaker Dr. David Johns graced the stage to share over 20 years of policy-level experience and insights, including leading the "My Brother's Keeper" initiative established by President Obama.

#### MARCH 2023

Q2 Quarterly Staff Retreats  
Spring Symposium 2023  
"Griots of Oakland" Anniversary  
Student Showcase Exhibition

#### JUNE 2023

TFI Crowning Ceremony & Scholarship  
June Staff Retreat

### YOUTH EVENTS

#### Student Showcase - March 25, 2023

# People served: 205

# Total people participation hours: 512 hours

**OUTCOMES:** Create an inspiring platform where students can proudly present their innovative projects to the entire community. Students from over 40 partner schools and organizations present engaging content and answer questions from community members to gain confidence and get feedback on what they have learned over the year.

#### Kings In the Making - October 21, 2023

# People served: 165

# Total people participation hours: 990 hours

**OUTCOMES:** This Youth Wellness Conference is a welcoming and secure environment where Black and Brown boys learn, connect, and celebrate their culture over 6 hours of 45-minute workshops. This annual, free community event began with a circle of introductions and libations fostering intergenerational connections and the spirit of lineage. The community-building ritual set the stage for a dynamic range of workshops delving into topics such as health, hip-hop, art, mindfulness, social media responsibility, career planning, financial planning, fitness, science, and literacy.

In addition to the enriching workshops, the event featured an invigorating yoga session promoting wellness and mindfulness, centering minds and bodies for the journey of learning and empowerment.

#### Monthly Open MIC Series - October, November, December

# People served: 105

# Total people participation hours: 262 hours

**OUTCOMES:** To drive Youth Voice and Leadership activities we offer a monthly Open Mic that provides youth with a venue to uplift their voice while getting support from their peers

#### OCTOBER 2023

Kings in the Making

#### JANUARY 2023

Q2 Quarterly Staff Retreats

#### MAY 2023

Crowning Ceremony  
(Oakland, Antioch, San Francisco, Seattle)

#### SEPTEMBER 2023

Hiero Day Weekend Music Festival  
Hiero Day KOO Fashion Show  
Italy NYU Executive Leadership

#### DECEMBER 2023

Afro Comic-Con  
Q4 Quarterly Staff Retreats



## KOO COMMUNITY EVENTS

(Griots 10-year Anniversary, Hiero Day Fashion Show, Hiero Day Music Festival)

### Griots of Oakland 10-year Anniversary - March 24, 2023

# People served: 160

# Total people participation hours: 240

**OUTCOMES:** We celebrated our first Griot of Oakland book bringing back 4 of the original Griots who were trained and interviewed over 100 Black males across Oakland in 2012. It was an amazing reunion that showed the incredible impact we made in their lives.

March 2023 marked the 10th anniversary of the original "Griots of Oakland" publication. Over 160 people attended our The "Griots of Oakland" 10-year anniversary celebration, including the original curator and founder of Story For All, Angela Zusman, Oakland Mayor, and some of the students who conducted the oral history interviews for the original "Griots of Oakland" publication.

To further celebrate the anniversary, in the Fall of 2023, KOO staff members again collaborated with Story for All, training 8 McClymonds High School students to conduct oral history interviews for the book's next edition, Griots of Oakland 2024, which will feature a multimedia format allowing readers to access videos embedded in images throughout the book. Students participating in the program attended our KOO Media Academy (KMA) to learn video production skills, and interviewed over 100 Black males across Oakland, inquiring about what it means to be a Black male and what they are doing with the opportunity.

The "Griots of Oakland 2024" is scheduled for publication in the spring. The book and multimedia art installation highlights the diversity, beauty, brilliance and innate greatness of being a Black man while at the same time acknowledging the real struggle posed by institutional racism and other oppressive systems.

### Hiero Day Fashion Show - September 1, 2023

# People served: 95

# Total people participation hours: 240

**OUTCOMES:** We hosted the Hiero Day Fashion Show with a partnership with Hip Hop TV. Eight local fashion design houses strutted their designs on the runway with KOO Labs Design Center and Production House as the backdrop. With a dj setting the mood for the models to show case the local brands the audience was treated to afro-centered styles that can be worn for a variety of occasions.

### Hiero Day Weekend- September 4, 2023

# People served: 8000

# Total people participation hours: 20,000

**OUTCOMES:** Creating a safe space to celebrate the spirit of Oakland with community partners featuring local and national artists and musicians, including KOO Crew, Hieroglyphics, and Common.

Hiero Day is an annual celebration of the legendary Oakland Hip Hop group Hieroglyphics and their timeless hit - "93 'Til Infinity," which led to the designation of 9/3 (September 3rd) as Hiero Day. In 2023, Kingmakers of Oakland collaborated in the design and production of the Hiero Day Weekend Music Festival, with KOO staff and Kings contributing their skills in event management, sound, photography, and interviews, all to commemorate 50 years of Hip-Hop, 30 years for Hieroglyphics in the industry, and the 13th Hiero Day.

In support of KOO's developing music label and original music, the Hieroglyphics Crew shared their expertise as local mentors in the music game through interviews with KOO student participants. Kingmakers music artists, the KOO Krew, gave a dynamic performance on the main stage in front of Oakland City Hall, sharing the stage with Hip Hop icon, Common. The event showcased a plethora of other talented artists and a variety of the best local food and crafts in the Bay Area, with our young Kings contributing to every aspect of the event.





# SCHOOL SERVICES

OAKLAND, ANTIOCH, SEATTLE  
SAN FRANCISCO, & GWINNETT

**In 2022-23 school year we served Kings in schools through five District Partnerships: Antioch Unified School District (CA), Gwinnett County Unified Schools (GA), Oakland Unified School District (CA), San Francisco Unified School District (CA), and Seattle Unified Public Schools (WA).**



Our District Partners received a variety of services, including: 1-on-1 leadership coaching; listening campaign implementation; monthly facilitator Professional Learning Community (PLC) training; quarterly Learning Collaborative sessions; Affinity Group team-builders; KOO Crowns Curriculum; Family and Community Engagement (FACE) events; Black Teacher Recruitment, Training, and Retaining pipelines; Narrative Change asset-based media products; and policy strategies.

We were fortunate to continue the rich partnership we've built with Oakland, Antioch, Seattle and San Francisco. Our support and collaboration with these four school districts continued to deepen. Throughout the 2023 spring semester we continued to provide 1-on-1 coaching, hosted monthly PLCs, and convened our quarterly Learning Collaborative with teams from all four school districts. The feedback from the coaching, PLCs, and learning Collaborative was consistently positive with the exception of many participants wanting more time with the Kingmakers staff.

During the 2023 spring semester, we added a new district partnership with Gwinnett Public Schools. We planned to have started there in the fall of 2022, but bureaucratic obstacles caused delays. Over the spring semester we convened two MIC (multi-racial, intergenerational, cross-sectional) Teams. Each MIC Team united eight different schools in their feeder pattern. We started the Phase 0 groundwork with Listening Campaigns that center Kings while uplifting the voice of all MIC teammates. After two months of the Listening Campaign the MIC Teams shared what they learned about the lived reality of Black boys in their schools and in their communities.

## Antioch Unified:

We have served schools in the Antioch Unified School District since they joined our Learning Collaborative in 2018. This year, Antioch capitalized on KOO media services to create videos that showcased the impact of Kingmakers programs, raising awareness about our classes in an effort to expand KOO programs to additional schools in the district. Antioch students and their facilitator, Mr. Hoeschen, demonstrated their impressive skills and talents at the 2023 Student Showcase, and shared cultural and academic pride in front of 135 family and community members at their Black to School Night and Crowning Ceremonies.

## Gwinnett County:

We started a new partnership with Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) in January 2023 after implementing a 4-month Listening Campaign centering Black boys in 9th grade, as well as their teachers, administrators and coaches. The process allowed us to produce a 10-part Portraits of a King + (POAK) video series, with generous funding by the NBA Foundation. The POAK+ videos empower students by giving them the opportunity to be seen and see themselves at the center of their learning experience. The POAK+ student stories were also utilized as data, providing guidance toward solutions to serve our Black boys. Throughout the series, we acknowledged the teachers, principals, coaches, counselors, family members and peers who provide the support systems necessary to persist and thrive.

After engaging district, school, and classroom leaders, we created two Multi-Racial, Intergenerational, Cross-sectional (MIC) Teams tasked with identifying and implementing district goals to support Black boys. We designed and implemented an 8-month Liberatory Design process for the MIC Teams, each of which included members

from 16 feeder schools. The MIC teams engaged in liberatory design sessions throughout the school year to learn and process information, build strong teams and agency, and develop, plan, and implement school and district goals.

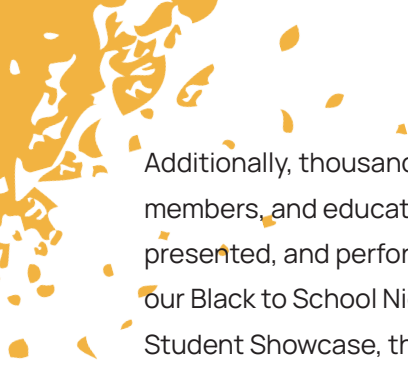
Recently, Critical Race Theory (CRT) has been weaponized and misrepresented throughout the country as an attempt to punish white America for its past transgressions. Unfortunately, the state of Georgia passed bills that prohibit any instruction asserting that the United States is "fundamentally racist" or that individuals "should feel anguish, guilt or any other form of discomfort or stress" because of their race. Therefore, even though the KOO curriculum was created to honor African History and our diasporic leaders and their legacy, those lessons are being banned by government policies. This impacted our opportunity to serve Gwinnett County and their students, families and educators. Other states, especially in the South, are following suit to oppose sharing our United States history and herstory. It's critical we learn from our past so we do not repeat destructive practices.

## Oakland Unified School District

We were born out of Oakland Unified School District (OUSD). Kingmakers CEO and founder, Chris Chatmon, established the first African American Male Achievement department in 2010, which became the Office of Equity in 2016 – the first in US public school systems.

In 2023, 15 KOO facilitators served over 250 OUSD students across 18 schools in our school-day Manhood Development classes, which equips 3rd through 12th grade Black boys with a sense of belonging, cultural and racial identity, self-efficacy, and ownership in collective responsibility.





Additionally, thousands of OUSD students, family members, and educators attended, facilitated, presented, and performed in KOO events such as our Black to School Night, Crowning Ceremonies, Student Showcase, the Kings in The Making youth wellness conference, our monthly Open Mic Series, Kingmakers Music concerts, the Hiero Day Music Festival and the Hiero Day Fashion Show.

Our OUSD students are given free access to our community events, and now, the opportunity to participate in programming offered at KOO Labs Design Center and Production House. In 2023, KOO served 43 opportunity- age (ages 14-24) Black boys across Oakland in our KOO Media Academy, training them on media production and music production skills.

**San Francisco Unified School District**

In 2023, we built a stronger foundation with San Francisco Unified, serving over 500 students across 12 schools. Under the leadership of SFUSD’s Leticia Erving, Bobby Pope, Glen Bell, and others, we provided more robust support, opening pathways to leadership during KOO coaching sessions. To highlight the impactful work of the AAALI (African American Achievement & Leadership Initiative) and MCI (Mastering Cultural Identity) initiatives that prepare Black students in 3rd through 12th grades for college readiness. KOO created a POAK video (<https://youtu.be/OrcHCr1e3TA>)

A recent report from Stanford education researcher Tom Dee shows the impact that AAALI is having on its Black male students compared to other Black males who are not participating in the MCI (Mastering Cultural Identity) classes. Partnering with City College of San Francisco, San Francisco State University and SFUSD.

Through our Black Teacher Recruitment, Training and Retaining (BTRTR) work with Dr. KO Wilson and partnerships with City College of San Francisco (CCSF), San Francisco State, and SFUSD, Kingmakers designed and implemented a new SFUSD teacher pipeline to engage and connect with prospective teachers and to support new teachers early in their journey and beyond. We gained significant traction, enrolling seven Black males in the City College of San Francisco (CCSF) teacher pipeline. CCSF Director Tracy Burt mentioned, "this is the largest number of Black males in our teacher pipeline ever. We are ecstatic to have this partnership with Kingmakers and SFUSD, and appreciate the work of Dr. Wilson."

Under the leadership of Dr. Wilson, we created 10 strategic partnerships for SFUSD to accelerate their recruitment and retention work: Urban Education Academy, National Grow Your Own, Skyline College, Laney College, Merritt College, Thurgood Marshall College Fund - National Black Talent Bank, U.C. Berkeley, Generation Thrive, Blackfulness, and the Black Teacher Project.

**Seattle Unified School District**

With the leadership of Dr. Mia Williams, Will King, and others, Kingmakers of Seattle has perfectly modeled a culture of team-building and sharing best practices to create and build a district-wide department that addresses and improves the academic and life outcomes for Black boys across the entire city.

Taking advantage of our regular leadership coaching, monthly PLCs, and quarterly classroom observations, Seattle has become a flagship district partner, implementing our Systems Change Drivers while instilling the core values of our work.

In 2023, KOO served 425 students across 15 schools in Seattle, and partnered in producing Black to

School Nights, Crowning Ceremonies, and Student Showcases. Seattle students and team members join our annual Spring Symposium every year, reinforcing their tools, practices, and team-building through traveling together.

Seattle Unified School District has become an award-winning department recognized by local leaders including the Seattle Seahawks and the National Football League as a model of best practices and a shining star in the educational landscape.

**Professional Learning Community for Facilitators**

We offer all district partner facilitators to join us virtually for our monthly Professional Learning Community (PLC) sessions. This is an opportunity for facilitators to share challenges and best practices while learning from others, strengthening the teaching acumen of all participants. KOO staff members continually survey our district partner

facilitators to gain insights and feedback, which we then apply to our PLCs to increase the impact of our services and curriculum .

The feedback we received from the coaching, PLCs, and learning collaborative was consistently positive, with many participants requesting additional time with the Kingmakers staff. In 2023 we served 35 Facilitators. The PLC Facilitator surveys showed a 87.5% overall satisfaction rating with a 94% rating for relevance from facilitators on teaching the KOO Crowns Curriculum.

Facilitators reported the most desired topic covered in the PLCs is African History. The facilitators highlighted opening rituals, such as libation ceremonies and meditation, support student social-emotional well-being. Facilitators also appreciated Crowns Curriculum being revised in real time with facilitator and student feedback.

**District Partner - Student Data**

- 97% of elementary and 90% of middle and high school-aged youth we served reported experiencing a sense of belonging in our programs
- 97% of elementary and 95% middle and high school-aged youth we served reported increased self-efficacy
- 100% of elementary and 93% of middle and high school-aged youth we served reported increased positive racial identity development
- 86% of elementary and 89% of middle and high school-aged youth we served reported increased collective responsibility

<b># SCHOOL SERVICES DISTRICT PARTNERSHIPS</b>	
SY 2022-23: 5	SY 2023-24:2
<b># MDP SCHOOLS/SITES</b>	
SY 2022-23: 33	SY 2023-24:19
<b># MDP CLASSROOMS</b>	
SY 2022-23: 33	SY 2023-24: 19
<b>KINGS (STUDENTS)</b>	
<b># MDP KINGS</b>	
SY 2022-23: 835	SY 2023-24: 570
<b>TOTAL KINGS INSTRUCTION HOURS</b>	
SY 2022-23: 225K	SY 2023-24:154K



# KOO CROWNS CURRICULUM

**This school year we revised our year-long school day curriculum, now called the KOO Crowns Curriculum, launched in August 2023. While our courses are currently offered as electives, we are working with California State Universities to have our Crowns Curriculum accredited for ELA or Social Studies credit, fulfilling an A-G course requirement.**

The course curriculum provides differentiated, age-appropriate content for elementary, middle, and high school students, and is sequenced so that students can be enrolled for consecutive years and build on the concepts and skills learned previously. Materials designed for elementary schools are accessible to students reading at the 3rd through 5th grade level. Currently, secondary student materials (grades 6th-8th and 9th-12th) are not differentiated by grade-level, due to mixed-grade enrollment.

However, we are designing course levels so that middle and high school students can be enrolled in the Crowns Curriculum for multiple years, building on their learning through successive years.

At KOO, we know that music, film, and art touches our emotions, heart, and soul, then seeps into our mind. That's why our curriculum includes original music, films, and videos produced by KOO. These dynamic multimedia lessons enrich the learner experience, increasing students' engagement with and comprehension of the content.

By eliciting feedback from our district partners (students, facilitators, administrators) we are able to make real-time upgrades to the unit lessons, create new unit lessons, and revise older ones. We continually incorporate "feedback from the field" to improve our unit lessons and their impact.



# BLACK TEACHER RECRUITMENT TRAINING+RETENTION

**In 2023, we reinforced our partnership with SFUSD, assisting them in increasing the pool of Black male teachers and providing strategies to increase the retention of current Black male educators in the district. Some of the services we provided:**

- Facilitated 4 Black Male Affinity Groups with SFUSD Black male educators and principals (130+ attendees)
- Provided 200+ hours of strategic advisory and technical assistance to SFSU, CCSF, UW and SFUSD (program design, recruiting/retention strategy, targeted class placement, dual advising, navigational support)
- Developed the SFUSD Educators Rising Program
- Facilitated 2 teacher pathway/apprenticeship partnerships for SFUSD (City College of San Francisco and San Francisco State University)
- Brokered 10 strategic partnerships for SFUSD to accelerate their recruitment and retention work (Urban Education Academy, National Grow Your Own, Skyline College, Laney College, Merritt College, Thurgood Marshall College Fund - National Black Talent Bank, U.C. Berkeley, Generation Thrive, Blackfulness, Black Teacher Project)
- Convened 3 targeted recruitment events for SFUSD (50+ attendees)
- Placed (9) Black male candidates into teacher apprenticeships/alternative pathway programs between CCSF and SFSU.



# FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (FACE)

## FACE - DISTRICT SERVICES

In 2023 KOO supported our four main District Partners by co-producing events to spotlight teaching and learning success, while also engaging families and community members. We produced three main events with Antioch, Oakland, San Francisco and Seattle - Black to School Nights, Crowning Ceremonies, and a Student Showcase. In OUSD and SFUSD we also directed lunchtime kick-offs to build school culture and encourage youth voice and leadership through Open Mic spoken word sessions. These events were a big hit with students, and offered KOO staff an opportunity to engage, build relationships, and introduce students to other resources. In Oakland we also partnered directly with McClymonds High School to produce a Black History Month celebration, and the book, Griots of Oakland, which compiles oral histories into chapters that focus on KOO's leading indicators.

## BLACK TO SCHOOL NIGHTS

"Black to School Night" is a kick-off to the school year, when school staff can inform parents about the services and supports offered to their children and family. This annual KOO-sponsored event serves our goal of sharing all resources and opportunities with students, families and educators to ensure a healthy year of academic and social-emotional growth. In 2023, each of the Black to School Nights averaged 130 participants, including students, family, educators and community members, as well as other Community Based Organizations that provide resources to families and educators. Some partners include Equal Opportunity Schools, National Equity Project, Alameda County Health Services, and local community colleges.

## CROWNING CEREMONIES

KOO Crowning Ceremonies are co-branded events with District Partners to highlight the successes of the school year and acknowledge the accomplishments of both students and educators. These events honor and uplift a year of challenges and successes, culminating in a crowning ceremony in which each King is crowned with a Kingmakers hat to celebrate their passing to the next level. The event includes a drumming and libation ceremony, presentations, performances, food, drinks, and a discussion about the importance of cultural identity.



At each of our events, students were met with the visible pride of parents. The presence of family members and community supporters added to the significance, creating a supportive and celebratory atmosphere that acknowledged the hard work and dedication of all involved.

## STUDENT SHOWCASE

Each spring, the Student Showcase provides a dedicated space for our Kings to demonstrate their grasp and interpretation of the KOO Crowns Curriculum in a student-led event fostering an environment of learning, sharing, and cultural pride. The 2023 Student Showcase brought together 24 student teams presenting from KOO Programs (TFI and KMA) and our four main Partner Districts: Antioch, Oakland, San Francisco, and Seattle. A diverse group of over 250 family members, educators, CBOs, community members, and collaborative partners were treated to a day of culture and achievement.

The event not only featured student project presentations, it was a spiritual endeavor uplifting all our grandeur as talented melanated people who invest in youth and organize to build strong communities. We were inspired with performances, singing and poetry that provided for self-expression and communication in a supportive community setting. The Showcase crescendoed with the Samba Funk group weaving in elements of African culture through drumming, dance and costumes.

## LUNCHTIME JUMP OFFS

The Lunchtime Jump Offs took place on elementary and high school campuses throughout the school year, bringing organized games, jump rope and dance exhibitions, and music and entertainment to the students. Beyond the fun and engagement, these sessions served as an opportunity to introduce KOO programs to students and to encourage youth during their school day. This initiative was crucial in promoting the programs, uplifting the students, and enhancing their school experience through enjoyable and motivational activities.

## BLACK STAR RISING AT MCCLYMONDS HIGH SCHOOL

McClymonds High School's 'Blk Star Rising' program was a resounding success, largely due to a strategic partnership with two notable organizations, the Hidden Genius Project and the Student Program for Athletic and Academic Transitioning (SPAAT). This collaboration led to a two-day celebration dedicated to Black History, providing a rich educational and cultural experience. The program offered an engaging learning environment where youth could delve into historical and cultural studies with the guidance from community partners and mentors. This collaborative effort resulted in an enriching and enlightening experience for the students, elevating their understanding and appreciation of Black history.



# TFI PROGRAM

**Nationally in 2021, only 46% of high school graduates from high-need schools directly enrolled in college, versus 72% of graduates from wealthier high schools. Nationally in 2022, undergraduate enrollment declined 4.2%.**

## IN CONTRAST, THE KINGMAKERS' TFI-OAKLAND FIRST GRADUATING CLASS (2023) ACHIEVED:

100% graduated from high school on time

100% were accepted into college

94% enrolled into college for SY 23-24

77% reported feeling prepared and confident in their ability to succeed in postsecondary education

100% reported a strong sense of belonging in the program

65% were paired with a mentor

100% enrolled in college received Jean Yonemura Wing Scholarship

### TFI (THE FELLOWSHIP INITIATIVE)

# Program Participants: **SY 2022-23: 38** **SY 2023-24: 30**

# Total Students Participation Hours: **SY 2022-23: 4,560 hours** **SY 2023-24: 3,600 hours**

KOO is the lead agency in the Bay Area for The Fellowship Initiative (TFI), a JP Morgan Chase college-readiness and financial literacy program. The three-year program spanning 10th grade to senior year addresses three primary college readiness issues often faced by Black and Latino youth: (1) access to rigorous college preparatory courses, (2) access to experienced teachers who have high levels of cultural competencies when working with boys/ men of color, and (3) access to consistent guidance counseling to continually track students' academic performance and college application process.

In June 2023, our first graduating cohort of 32 Kings completed the program. One hundred percent of Cohort 1 Kings graduated from high school on-time and were accepted to more than 80 postsecondary institutions (majority 4-year colleges). 100% of students were also A-G eligible, which means they are eligible to apply to University of California and California State Universities.

**100%  
GRADUATED  
FROM HIGH  
SCHOOL ON  
TIME**

Our TFI cohort meets 3 Saturdays a month. Each Saturday session, Kings have one-to-one meetings with both the Academic Advisor and Emotional Wellness Coordinator, and are provided English and math support classes to build foundational academic skills. Kings also engage in character, values, and leadership development workshops, college and career access activities and games, and receive in-person, one-on-one tutoring in partnership with Zion Learning and Oakstop.

### ADDITIONALLY, THE TFI COHORT PARTICIPATED IN:

Workshops with community partners and organizations including Edutainment 4 Equity, BlackFULLness, Namaste Ready, B is for Black Wealth, and BUILD.

The day-long youth conference, "Kings in the Making," at Oakland High and Castlemont High School sponsored by KOO.

The Life is Living Festival at Little Bobby Hutton Park in West Oakland celebrating Black business, culture, and health. A Golden State Warriors shooting clinic at the practice facility in downtown Oakland.

An overnight orientation retreat in the Marin Headlands old Army base.

This year, TFI-Oakland was also the host for the TFI National Convening of Implementation Partners, a 3-day convening in downtown Oakland bringing together the network of program leaders from the 7 cities with TFI programs nationally.

After recognizing the need to expand our culturally responsive content to include more representation of the Latino culture - from events and activities to programming (e.g., mentors, guest speakers) - KOO hired a Spanish speaker and translator onto our team to better ensure that families who speak Spanish feel welcomed and included in the KOO community.





THE MEASURE OF  
A MAN IS WHAT HE  
DOES WITH POWER







# PLACE-BASED POWER OF PROXIMITY

**As Black civil rights lawyer Bryan Stevenson's grandmother told him when he was young, "You can't understand most of the important things from a distance. . . . You have to get close."**

In the intricate tapestry of American society, the zip code one is born into can too often dictate the course of their life. Yet, we believe fervently that where you start should never determine where you end up. It's with this conviction that we at Kingmakers of Oakland embrace the power of proximity in our mission to uplift and empower Black boys and their families.

At KOO, we recognize that systemic barriers such as failing schools, limited access to opportunities, and entrenched narratives can stifle the potential of our youth. But we refuse to accept this as fate. Instead, we choose to confront these challenges head-on through radical, comprehensive, and transformative place-based supports rooted in the power of community.

Our approach is simple yet profound: we build partnerships and collaborations that harness the collective strengths of the people, government, community, and non-profit sectors. By aligning resources and supports, we create cradle-to-career pathways that empower more young people to realize their full potential. Through community-led, data-driven models, we pave the way for systemic change that uplifts Black youth and families living in underserved communities.

But our work extends beyond mere coordination. We believe in the power of proximity, keeping youth close to their support systems and rooted in their communities. This paradigm shift, from focusing solely on schools to embracing a Community School, Collective Impact approach, ensures that our youth remain connected to their families, their cultures, and their communities. It's a holistic approach that honors the beauty, brilliance, and innate greatness of Black children, families, and communities.

By aligning an extraordinary collective of multiracial, intergenerational, and cross-sector allies, we provide Black boys with access to a myriad of resources: from education and career opportunities, to mental health support and mentorship. It's about nurturing healing and growth throughout their lifetime, ensuring that no child is left behind simply because of where they live.

As we embark on this journey, we invite you to join us. Together, we can break down barriers, rewrite narratives, and create a future where every child, regardless of their zip code, has the opportunity to thrive.

# KOO LABS DESIGN CENTER + PRODUCTION HOUSE

**KOO Labs Design Center and Production House (KOO Labs) stands as a cornerstone of Oakland's community empowerment, transcending the boundaries of traditional education.**

Our visionary center is dedicated to enriching the lives of students and young adults by furnishing them with invaluable skills that can be utilized across diverse industries. At KOO Labs, we are the artisans of opportunity, shaping the leaders of tomorrow.

The heart of our mission lies in nurturing a spirit of creativity and innovation. KOO Labs serves as a cradle for youth-generated media, where fresh ideas are cultivated and brought to life. Beyond being a hub of creativity, it is a sanctuary for exploration, dialogue, and enterprise, uniting the community in a common purpose.

In early Spring 2023, KOO added to our staff a new facility Director responsible for managing all aspects of KOO Labs' facility operations including planning and budget management, and maintenance. We also procured the services of an Architect/ Engineering (A/E) team to assist in developing a new vision for the facility in alignment with the future needs of our first place-based facility. Our conceptual plans have been submitted to the City of Oakland Planning department for approval.

See link for 7th St elevation, Rendering elevation & Ground Floor Plan.







# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**THROUGH OUR MEDIA ACADEMY, WE HAVE PROVIDED TRAINING AND MENTORSHIP TO OPPORTUNITY-AGE YOUTH, AGES 14-24, EMPOWERING THEM WITH CAREER SKILLS TO EARN WAGES AND CONTRACTS IN FIELDS SUCH AS MEDIA SERVICES, MUSIC PRODUCTION, VIDEO PRODUCTION, CONTENT DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT, AND CLOTHING MANUFACTURING.**

The results of our workforce development efforts are evident in the success stories of the individuals we have served. Many of our program participants have gone on to secure employment opportunities, freelance contracts, and entrepreneurial ventures in the media and creative sectors. By providing hands-on training, access to industry professionals, and opportunities for real-world experience, we have helped bridge the gap between talent and opportunity for Black males seeking to enter these competitive fields.

Moreover, our impact extends beyond individual success stories to broader economic empowerment within Black communities. By equipping Black males with the skills and resources to pursue careers in media and creative industries, we are contributing to the growth of a more diverse and inclusive workforce. As these individuals thrive professionally, they become role models and sources of inspiration for future generations, further fueling the cycle of empowerment and economic advancement.

Our workforce development efforts have been instrumental in empowering Black males to pursue meaningful careers and entrepreneurial opportunities in media and creative industries. Through the Media Academy, we continue to invest in the next generation of talent, providing them with the tools and support needed to succeed in an ever-evolving landscape. We are proud of the impact we have made and remain committed to fostering pathways to success for Black males in these dynamic and influential sectors.





# KOO MEDIA ACADEMY

# Program Participants: SY 2022-23: 33 SY 2023-24: 45

# Total hours of KMA programming provided: SY 2022-23: 1300

**OUTCOMES:** KMA students acquire video production (audio, lighting, camera, editing), music production (beatmaking, song writing, editing), and leadership skills by building confidence in these media fields.

**McClymonds High School - Video Production and Photography**

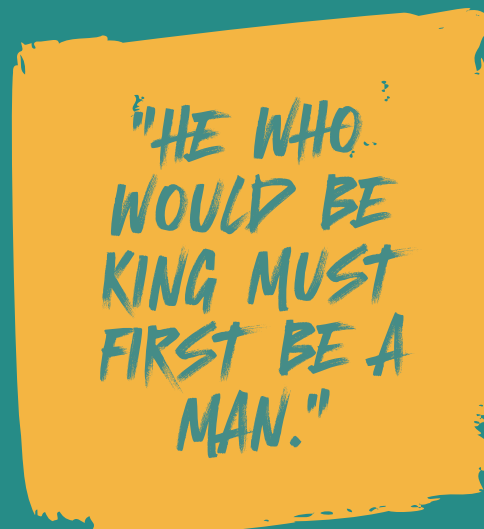
**Oakland Tech - Beatmaking and Music Production**

**KOO Labs Design Center & Production House - Beatmaking, Music Production & Video Production**

KOO Media Academy gives students the opportunity to learn the art of storytelling, music production, cinematography, editing, photography and digital media production. Our media academy also emphasizes the art of conducting interviews. Students learn the art of crafting insightful and thought-provoking questions that enable them to capture compelling stories. They also become proficient in managing and manipulating lighting to create impactful visual representations. Another crucial component of media production is sound and music. Students gain an understanding of recording techniques, audio mixing, and the selection of appropriate music tracks. Our students are fully equipped with transferable skill sets that are essential for success in the media industry. Our program encourages young black boys to explore their cultural identity through the creative arts. By showcasing positive representations of their heritage, they develop a stronger connection to their roots and a sense of belonging.

This allows our black boys to challenge stereotypes and promote a more accurate and diverse portrayal of their community. The KOO Media Academy serves 30 to 40 African American males in Oakland. We create a nurturing environment for African American students, where they can flourish and reach their full potential. Students are encouraged to express their creativity and explore different facets of media production. The program fosters a sense of belonging and offers a safe space for students to learn and grow. Our Program acts as a second home for African American students from the Oakland community. Student-centered spaces are designed to facilitate creativity and collaboration.

The Media Academy Program emphasizes the importance of building strong relationships among students and mentors. Mentors provide guidance and support as students navigate the media industry along with real life experiences. We instill confidence in young black boys, empowering them to believe in themselves and their abilities. By engaging in creative projects, such as video production and storytelling, they gain a sense of pride and accomplishment. This newfound confidence spills over into other aspects of their lives, leading to improved social interactions and communication skills.



# MUSIC STUDIO & PRODUCTION

Programming for the KOO Music Labs will include:

- Curriculum development to teach youth the intricacies of audio and music recording. There is a full professional studio for full album production from inception to completion, suitable for uploads to streaming platforms.
- Mentorship opportunities from established artists and professionals for those interested.
- Lessons and workshops on the business development backend of the industry, including panel discussions and seminars.

We have embarked on adapting the existing music infrastructure and enhance further the rest of the vacant Studio space with modern state of the art musical and audio equipment. The space will also be available for hourly rentals for various artists and musicians. Our services will include recording, mixing and mastering, educational workshops and sound engineering classes.

# FASHION DESIGN & INNOVATION LAB

We are thrilled to introduce the KOO Fashion Innovation Lab, a groundbreaking initiative aimed at empowering Black youth in Oakland and surrounding areas to explore their creativity, develop entrepreneurial skills, and pursue careers in the fashion industry. Serving as a platform for job training and education, our Fashion Innovation Lab provides a unique opportunity for youth to immerse themselves in the realms of design thinking, entrepreneurship, and the arts of screen printing and embroidery.

At the heart of our Fashion Innovation Lab is a commitment to fostering the next generation of creative entrepreneurs and artists who will shape the future of fashion. Through hands-on workshops, mentorship programs, and collaborative projects, we provide aspiring fashion designers and artisans with the tools, resources, and support needed to turn their ideas into reality.

One of the unique features of the KOO Fashion Innovation Lab is our clothing design and manufacturing house, where we have designed and built a state-of-the-art facility capable of producing high-quality design and clothing for local organizations and businesses. From concept to creation, our team works closely with clients to bring their vision to life, while providing valuable training and employment opportunities for youth in our community.

As we continue to expand our reach and impact, we are excited about the potential of the KOO Fashion Innovation Lab to serve as a catalyst for positive change in Oakland's fashion landscape. By nurturing talent, fostering creativity, and promoting economic empowerment, we are not only creating pathways to success for our youth but also building a more vibrant and inclusive fashion industry for generations to come. Designer Senay Akebulan is our lead designer and instructor, and the owner of Futurisme, his design house.





# EVENT PRODUCTION

## ELEVATING EVENT PRODUCTION + FILMING CAPABILITIES

**Over the past year, we have made significant strides in enhancing our event production and filming services, elevating the quality and impact of our engagements. Central to this achievement has been the formation of a formidable team of Black male media professionals dedicated to promoting, producing, and recording live events, conferences, workshops, and training sessions.**

Our team's expertise spans the spectrum of multimedia production, enabling us to create marketing graphics, promotional videos, and web landing pages that effectively communicate the essence and significance of each event. Moreover, we have invested in state-of-the-art equipment and technology, allowing us to film events with multiple cameras for live streaming, and to produce high-quality recordings.

Throughout the year, we have had the privilege of collaborating on a diverse range of events, including the Spring Symposium, The Griots of Oakland 10th Anniversary, the Student Showcase, Hiero Day Weekend Music Festival, Kings in the Making youth conference, and Kingmakers Music concert performances. Each event presented unique opportunities to showcase the talents and achievements of our community, and our team rose to the occasion, delivering seamless and impactful productions.

Looking ahead, we are committed to continuing our efforts to raise the bar in event production and filming, ensuring that every engagement is a testament to the excellence and professionalism of our team. By leveraging our collective expertise and passion for storytelling, we aim to create memorable and transformative experiences that inspire, educate, and empower our audience.



# KINGMAKERS MUSIC

**In the fall of 2023, we took a bold step into the realm of music with the inception of the Kingmakers Music label, recognizing the profound impact of music as a universal language that resonates deeply within the human spirit. With a vision to connect hearts through the rhythm of beats and minds accompanying compelling visual storylines, we established Kingmakers Music as a platform to publish, distribute, and nurture high-quality music.**

Throughout the year, we dedicated ourselves to the production and release of our latest studio album, "Royalty," a testament to our commitment to excellence and innovation in music creation. We also were in the studio curating the next two albums, "Black Love" and "Black Healing," which are due to be released in 2024.

In October, we unveiled the new KingmakersMusic.com website, serving as a hub for our musical endeavors and showcasing our Electronic Press Kit (EPK), offering valuable insights into our talented roster of artists, affectionately known as the KOO Krew, which includes 42K Lil, Amari, SinQ, and Zo1.

Furthermore, we are honored to have collaborated with top Bay Area artists, fostering a spirit of creativity and collaboration that defines the essence of Kingmakers Music. As we continue to chart new musical territories and provide opportunities for artists to thrive and grow, we remain steadfast in our commitment to creating unforgettable musical experiences that resonate with audiences worldwide.

**"Until the lion tells the story, the hunter will always be the hero."  
African proverb.**

## MEDIA NARRATIVE CHANGE

**Whoever controls the narrative has the power. At KOO Labs, we provide asset-based alternatives that promote health and wellness habits enhancing the ability to thrive and activating a growth mindset.**

We incorporate music, film, poetry, art, and fashion to tell stories of our culture and the exceptional talents and genius that is threaded in our African American DNA. We do not create music and film for entertainment, but for thought-provoking stories that showcase the beauty, brilliance and innate greatness of Black males. These are movement-advancing productions to build collective will and activate advocacy.





A KING SHOULD BE A LEADER  
WITH THE HEART OF A SERVANT

KINGMAKERS  
OAKLAND  
HEALTH  
is



WALK

KINGMAKERS  
OAKLAND  
HEALTH  
is



WALK

KINGMAKER  
OAKLAND  
HEALTH  
is



WALK

your

WALK

Kingmakers of Oakland is a community-driven event or program. You enter an area where photography, audio, video recording may occur and news media may be present. Kingmakers of Oakland does not have a policy on whether or not you will be photographed or video/audio recorded. All things taken of you during the event for any purpose at the sole discretion of Kingmakers of Oakland.

If you do not wish to appear in photographs or be recorded, contact an event administrator or the media team.



# VIDEO SERIES & SHOWS

**Portraits of a King (POAK) is a video series that highlights the beauty, brilliance and innate greatness of our Kings. Through POAK, we delve deep into the lives of Black boys, uncovering the stories of the people who support and uplift them on their journey to success. These stories not only highlight the humanity and spirit of young Black boys but also serve as a means to connect with audiences on a higher level, fostering empathy and understanding.**

Our profiles not only build the confidence of the subjects but also serve as inspiration for other young Black boys, showing them the power and potential that lies within each of them. By shining a spotlight on their achievements, struggles, and triumphs, we aim to uplift and empower the next generation of leaders and change-makers.

As we continue to produce the POAK video series, we remain committed to amplifying the voices and stories of Black boys, celebrating their resilience, creativity, and strength. Through these profiles, we hope to inspire positive change and create a more inclusive and equitable society where every Black boy can thrive and fulfill his potential.

## POAK+ LEARNING DIFFERENCES

In our ongoing commitment to celebrate and empower Black male students, we are thrilled to introduce POAK+ (Portraits of a King+), a new video series that highlights the superpowers of Black male students who have been labeled with learning differences.

POAK+ goes beyond conventional narratives, showcasing the unique strengths, talents, and abilities of these exceptional individuals. Through intimate profiles, we celebrate their resilience, creativity, and perseverance in the face of challenges, while challenging stereotypes and misconceptions surrounding learning differences.

By spotlighting the superpowers of these remarkable students, POAK+ aims to inspire and empower others who may be navigating similar experiences. Through stories of triumph and perseverance, we hope to foster a greater sense of understanding, empathy, and inclusion within our community and beyond.

As we continue to produce the POAK+ video series, we remain committed to amplifying the voices and stories of Black male students with learning differences, celebrating their diversity and potential. Through these profiles, we aim to redefine notions of success and unlock the full potential of every student, regardless of their learning journey.

## SHOW PRODUCTION & PODCASTING

We have been working behind the scenes to produce Breaking Bread, Kingmakers Music and KOO on Location shows in 2024. Breaking Bread will come back after a year on the shelf, with increased focus on education and leadership best practices, offering information that educators and community leaders can utilize to magnify their career impact.

A KING'S TRUE  
POWER IS HIS  
CAPACITY TO  
INSPIRE.



# KOO & STAFF AWARDS

**JEFFERSON LUMINARY AWARD - OCTOBER 2023**

**AFROCOMICOM INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL - DECEMBER 2023**

**"I'M A KING" ANIMATED MUSIC VIDEO - STUDENT CHOICE AWARD**

**"GLISTEN" ANIMATED MUSIC VIDEO - PEOPLE CHOICE AWARD**

**11TH TEACHER EDUCATION AND INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH (TEIR) IN  
NAMIBIA**

**TEACH THE BAY CONFERENCE**

**DR. KO WILSON - 2023 DISTINGUISHED PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR MONTAR  
AWARD - UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON SEATTLE**

**DR. KO WILSON - PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR STANDARDS BOARD (PESB)  
POLICY FELLOW - WASHINGTON STATE**

**KOO STAFF WERE SELECTED FOR THESE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
NETWORKS:**

**CORO FELLOWSHIP**

**BME COMMUNITY**

**REBEL LEADER COHORT**

**ASHE FELLOWSHIP**

**LUMINARY MANAGER TRAINING**



## FILM & ANIMATION

**In 2023, we forged a dynamic partnership with Black Native, a prominent animation production house based in South Africa, marking a significant milestone in our creative endeavors. Together, we embarked on a journey that resulted in the production of four captivating music animation videos, each a testament to our shared commitment to innovation and storytelling.**

The fruits of our collaboration were celebrated in December 2023 at the prestigious AfroComiccon, where our animated films "Glisten" and "I'm a King," part of the Kingmakers of Oakland series, received accolades, affirming the resonance of our storytelling on a global stage.

Looking ahead, we are excited to announce the development of a 15-episode animated series, "I'm a King." The animation series will delve into the formative years of the three young Kings from Oakland. The series aims to share the life stories and experiences that some of our youth go through while incorporating music, animation and comedy. As we strive to secure funding for this ambitious project in 2024, we remain committed to pushing boundaries and creating content that resonates with audiences worldwide.

Through the power of film and animation, we are able to reach and impact viewers in profound ways, inspiring them to see themselves and their communities in a new light. As we continue to harness the transformative power of storytelling, we are committed to amplifying the voices and stories of the Black community, celebrating our collective resilience, creativity, and strength.



KINGS ARE NOT BORN.  
KINGS ARE MADE.



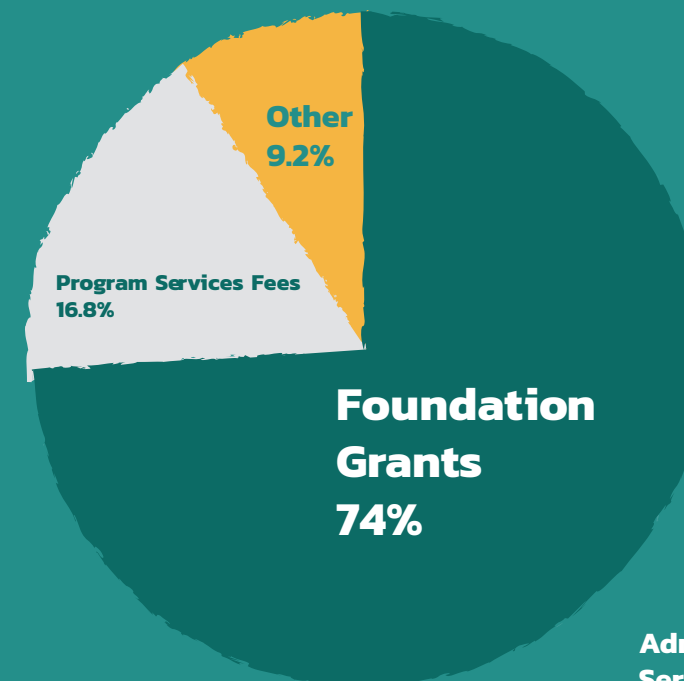


# FINANCIAL DEPARTMENT

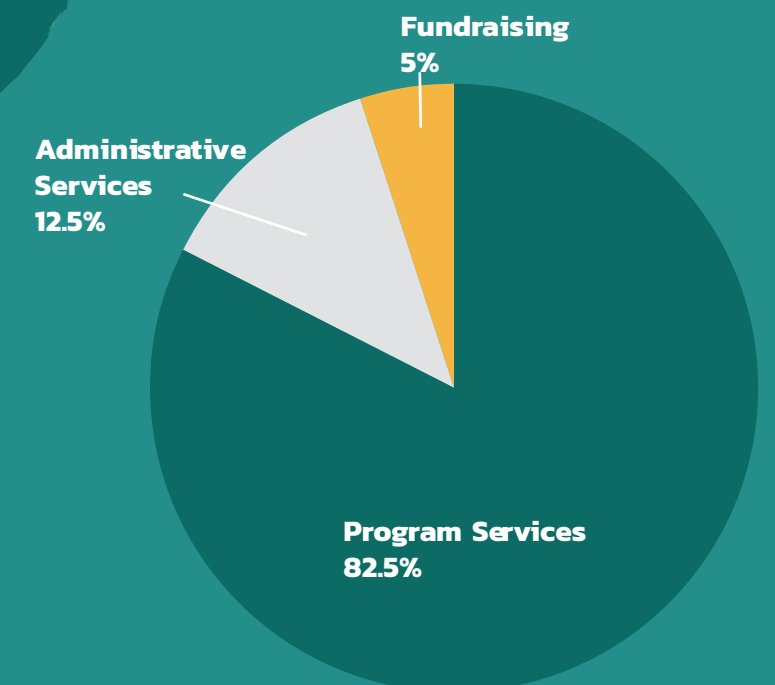
## DATE & IMPACT

\*FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023

### REVENUE SOURCES



### FUNCTIONAL ALLOCATIONS





# OUR PARTNERS

## DISTRICTS:

Puget Sound Educational Services District

San Francisco Unified School District

Seattle Public Schools

Oakland Unified School District

Gwinnett County Public Schools

## COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS:

510Media

Akira's Book Club / Wordsmith Jr.

BELE Network

Blackfullness

Black Teacher Project

CASEL

COSEBOC

Donors Choose

Edutainment for Equity

Equal Opportunity Skills

GH Tech Inc.

I Love Being Black

Kapor Center

History In The Making

Reverence

National Equity Project

Up2Code

Urban Ed

## FUNDING PARTNERS:

Ballmer Group

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Chan Zuckerberg Initiative

Comcast NBC Universal

Crankstart Foundation

East Bay Community Foundation

Gilead Foundation

ICONIQ Capital

JP Morgan Chase

New Profit, Inc.

Oak Foundation

Oakland Fund for Children & Youth

Salesforce Foundation

Satterberg Foundation

Warriors Community Foundation

1954 Project

Alaska Airlines

The California Endowment

Kaiser Foundation

Kapor Center

The Marin Community Foundation

PepsiCo, Inc.

Walter & Elise Haas, Jr. Foundation

# 2024 PLANNING & VISION *LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024*

**As we reflect on our journey and accomplishments thus far, we are excited to announce our plans for the upcoming year, 2024. Building on our foundation of supporting the academic achievement of Black boys, we are committed to expanding our reach and impact, both locally and nationally.**

In 2020, we began our transition away from the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) to focus on supporting other districts across the nation in developing internal departments dedicated to the academic success of Black boys. This strategic shift allowed us to broaden our scope and leverage our expertise to empower Black boys beyond the confines of a single school district.

In 2022, we took a significant step forward by purchasing the KOO Labs Design Center and Production House, establishing a place-based youth development center to serve Black boys, families, and educators outside of traditional school settings. This acquisition enabled us to provide a holistic approach to youth development, offering opportunities for creative expression, skill-building, and community engagement.

Looking ahead to 2024, our vision is to renovate KOO Labs into a state-of-the-art facility that will serve as a hub for creativity, innovation, and learning. We plan to enhance our design center to offer comprehensive training in music production, video production, animation production, clothing production, and fashion design. By providing access to cutting-edge technology and expert instruction, we aim to empower Black youth to explore their passions and develop valuable skills for the future.

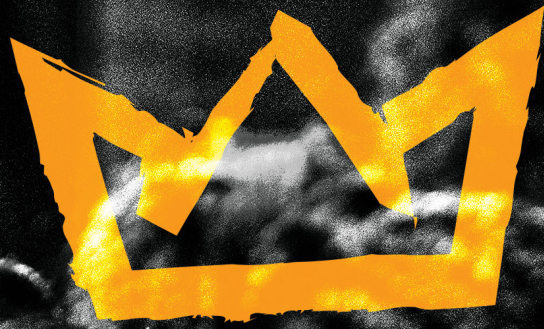
Additionally, we remain committed to our mission of holistic youth development by continuing to research and identify a camp location in the Sonoma or Mendocino area of Northern California. This retreat and wellness center in nature will provide a sanctuary for youth to engage in education, training, and wellness practices, fostering personal growth, resilience, and connection to the natural world.

As we embark on this exciting journey into 2024, we are grateful for the continued support of our community and partners. Together, we will work tirelessly to create opportunities and spaces where Black boys can thrive, succeed, and fulfill their potential.

**THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS, SPONSORS, AND FUNDERS OVER THE YEARS!**







# ANNUAL REPORT

2023

