

2023 END OF YEAR REPORT

STAND UP
NASHVILLE

CELEBRATING EVERY WIN



TENNESSEAN PEOPLE OF THE YEAR 2022

This year began on a celebratory high as we closed 2022 being named as [The Tennessean's People of the Year 2022](#). The statewide publication referred to honorees as, "the people who are helping Nashville thrive and prosper" with "the goal of creating inclusive prosperity for all." Yes, that's definitely us.

PROTECTING THE CBA, PUSHING THE CAC

Our Community Benefits Agreements set the standard for demanding community input for projects that include public funding. However, they are not without opposition - locally and by state legislation. Our CBAs are strategically researched and drafted to maximize public good by ensuring protection and progression for housing and economic development that serve working-class people and communities of Black and Brown residents.

We remain heavily involved in the Community Advisory Committee to hold Nashville Soccer Holdings accountable to the CBA. Congratulations "MCK" our deputy director who became the committee chairman!

MC3 AT MAPLEWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

Our partnership with Music City Construction Careers led to the launch of the MC3 Apprenticeship Readiness Program at Maplewood High School for the 2023-2024 school year. The inaugural class of 21 students is learning essential life and workforce skills including

financial literacy, workplace safety, and various trade careers. Successful completion of the readiness program will guarantee priority job and apprenticeship placement after graduation.

ORGANIZING OUR WAY TO SUCCESS

Organizing is the heartbeat of our mission. It is how we introduce, educate, and activate Nashvillians. We prioritized training and systems that positively transformed our organizing operations: building and retaining relationships, turnout and follow-up, demographic data, cost-effective and efficient software, and process improvement. One highlight of the year was establishing the volunteer development and recruitment team to support building a solid organizing and volunteer base.

#MUSICCITYNOTNOISYCITY

We hosted July actions to demand Metro Council and Bristol Motor Speedway pump the brakes on their rushed expansion plan for the Nashville Fairgrounds Speedway. The public pressure moved BMS to shift its plan into park a few days after our actions. This was a huge community win! We especially appreciate our coalition partners South Nashville Action People, Neighbors Opposing Track Expansion, Citizens Against Racetrack Expansion, The Equity Alliance, Fairgrounds Neighborhood Impact Advisory Committee, Fair Board members, and other neighborhood association leaders for standing with us.

KNOCK, KNOCK: IT'S THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING CRISIS

A lot can be said about the "it" city's affordable housing crisis. We set out to explore the ins and outs of affordable housing through our limited series, Home Is Where You Can Afford It: Nashville's Affordable Housing Crisis. It has moved the affordable housing conversation from being about "those people over there," and revealed just how close the crisis is to readers' front doors.

The powerful series has been well-received with engagement and responses that pushed the series beyond its planned 7-issue feature. [Read the series.](#)

KEEPING THE FAITH FOR HOUSING

Faith L. Walls is a BCLI graduate who is making a difference working with her local councilman on community initiatives, and within organizations locally and throughout the country advocating for people with disabilities and living in public housing. She has earned multiple educational degrees and has lived abroad, yet she lives in public housing.

We have a clear crisis and the onus is on the city's elected and appointed officials, departments, and the developers who are favored with perks and profits to the disservice of Nashville residents. People like Faith prove there's enough room for each of us to create and contribute to the change we want to see.

UNITING BCLI ALUMNI

The first Boards and Commissions Leadership Institute Alumni Network event was held in September for fellows from the 2021 and 2023 cohorts. The event created a space to foster deeper relationships and allow fellows to support one another in getting appointed. Lisa Hammonds was elected to the Health and Educational Facilities Board and Antone Christianson-Galina was elected to the Housing Trust Fund Commission by the Metro Council on November 21. Applications for the third BCLI cohort will open in late 2024.

CUTTING DOWN STATE OVERREACH

We are the anchor organization of We Decide Tennessee (check out the [new site!](#)), a statewide coalition of community organizations and local elected officials fighting against state interference in local decision-making. We use community education, strategic stakeholder engagement, and policy advocacy to empower local communities with the freedom to determine their own futures.

While State interference in Nashville is not new, it has escalated in recent years leading to legal battles, some which have been ruled in Nashville's favor. Every overreach is a threat to all residents, and an attack on the rights of voters and taxpayers.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2024

BEYOND NASHVILLE

While our work and mission are firmly planted in Nashville, we are impacted by the State's preemptive legislation and overreaching tactics. As a result, we're rethinking our state work, researching legalities, and in conversation with some of our coalition partners. Together, we can better align state work, coordinate strategies, and secure funding to scale up and build out.

THANK YOU & FAREWELL

In 2023, we also said goodbye to Delishia Porterfield, our Director of Leadership and Advocacy. We are so thankful for her incredible contributions and wish her godspeed in her new endeavors to build a city for all of us.

DONATE TO SUN

We're grateful for your support of another dynamic year of SUN advocating, amplifying, and activating Nashvillians to boldly stand up for equitable development, economic justice, and transparent policies. Although the fights are relentless, we refuse to back down because the issues are too great of a threat to the livelihoods of working-class people, and Black and Brown communities. Please join us in securing more power and championing more wins for the people of Nashville!

[DONATE HERE](#)



Read the full report here

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