

Erie's

BLACK WALL STREET



2023

ANNUAL REPORT

THE WORK OF CHANGE

“I AM NO LONGER ACCEPTING THE THINGS I CANNOT CHANGE. I AM CHANGING THE THINGS I CANNOT ACCEPT.”
— ANGELA Y. DAVIS



Spring Show Acquisitions 1924 - 2023

INSIDE OUR YEAR-END ISSUE:

- PATHWAY TO HOME OWNERSHIP
- FINANCIAL LITERACY
- ENTREPRENEURIAL SUPPORT
- PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS
- FUNDING SOURCES

A Memorable Year

Erie's Black Wall Street had a transformative year, one marked by the relentless dedication of our community. From hard work and creativity to fostering partnerships and collaboration, we've seen awards, growth, and meaningful change. Together, we've invested over \$133,000* in the Black community, channeling this support into impactful programming, entrepreneurial initiatives, and community building. This is more than a recap; it's a testament to the power of unity and commitment in driving positive change within our vibrant community. As we look back at the strides we've made, we stand ready for the journey ahead, knowing that with continued collaboration, there's no limit to what we can achieve together.

-KYRA TAYLOR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*this includes over \$80,500 in unpaid worked hours by staff



**PATHWAY TO
HOMEOWNERSHIP**

Robert & Monique Daniels, 2023 Winners

PATHWAY TO HOME OWNERSHIP

"HOME OWNERSHIP IS THE CORNERSTONE OF A STRONG COMMUNITY."

~ Rick Renzi

A common understanding is that a community is made up of the people who live within it & while that is true, there are a great many other factors that must exist in order for the community to provide the support that it necessary for the people to grow, to thrive to live freely & safely - to call it home. The foundation is a place to call ones own. Purchasing a home does not make the owner better than a person who rents. There is no moral imperative to owning a home, however, what we at EBWS know is that historically, & written into the policies that govern us, are barriers that have prevented Black citizens from achieving this goal & it shows in the numbers.

In the city of Erie in 2020, the year that EBWS was founded as a non-profit, the homeownership rate for Black citizens was 1.9% & was the impetus for the creation of the program. We understand that that number reflects problems in all of the systems that create home owners, from credit ratings, to mortgage lending, to redlining, to over policing, to stereotyping - these systems are largely hidden to the average person.

Our goal was then, & remains, to work to influence systems to make long lasting change, first in families, & then in the communities in which we live, so that we can help begin to reverse the many ways that Black people have been left out of this crucial part of life. When we are locked out of the process before we even get started, we do not have a choice. We at EBWS work to understand, educate & then change these systems.

Pathway is a program, held on four consecutive Saturdays. Participants engage with experts who provide information about personal credit, mortgage lending and the home buying process. The information is provided with a healthy dose of information about the ways in which history, race and culture in U.S. society has affected the home buying process for Black people. At the end of the four weeks, winners are randomly selected to receive funds towards the down payment for a house.

In 2023 our winners were Ms. Elise Michaux, Ms. Lateisha Warner & Ms. Monique Daniels. We continue to congratulate them and are excited to see them free, safe and home.

"THAT IS THE HEART & SOUL OF THE AMERICAN DREAM, HOMEOWNERSHIP, BEING ABLE TO BUY A HOUSE AND START YOUR FAMILY."

~WENDELL PIERCE

2023 Pathway to Home Ownership Numbers

70 Number of Program Registrants

3 Program Winners totaling

\$21,000 given towards purchases

\$272,500 Average cost of winners' homes



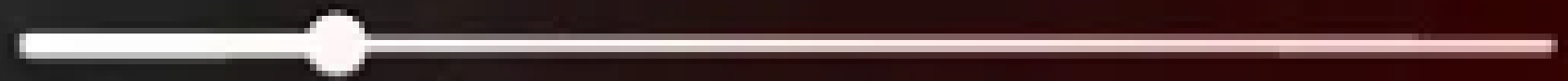
Elise and Aly



Share

Pathway to Home Ownership Program

ELISE AND ALY



PATHWAY TO HOMEOWNERSHIP
Watch on YouTube



Budgeting Basics with Tashana

We're Building
Black Wealth,
One Financial
Lesson at a
Time!



FINANCIAL LITERACY

"IF YOU UNDERSTAND HOW MONEY CAN WORK FOR AND AGAINST YOU, YOU CAN MAKE BETTER DECISIONS. FINANCIAL LITERACY IS NOT ABOUT WEALTH BUT ABOUT UNDERSTANDING MONEY REGARDLESS OF THE AMOUNT. IT'S ABOUT HOW YOU TREAT IT AND HOW YOU MAXIMIZE OPPORTUNITIES."

~MELLODY HOBSON

Erie's Black Wall Street (EBWS) is dedicated to financial empowerment and education within the Black community in Erie County. Through their "Financial Literacy" programming, EBWS offers essential services & knowledge, led by certified professionals.

Ms. Tashana Pulliam, a Certified Financial Social Worker, provided personalized coaching and counseling, focusing on budgeting, savings, debt management, and credit repair.

Complementing Ms. Pulliam, is Green Nest Consultants, an experienced Financial Advising company, who guides aspiring entrepreneurs and investors. They believe in long-term financial planning, investment strategies, and wealth-building, tailored to the community's needs.

EBWS's financial literacy initiatives aim to bridge knowledge gaps, instill trust in financial institutions, and empower the Black community with the tools and confidence needed for financial success and generational wealth creation in Erie County.

EBWS will have a Certified Financial Coach on staff to address your relationship with money and your financial goals in the summer of 2024.

2023 Financial Literacy Program Numbers

25

Number of Program Registrants

ENTREPRENEURIAL SUPPORT

"WE CAN TRANSCEND THE SCRIPT OF A PRE-DEFINED STORY, AND PAVE THE WAY FOR THE FUTURE THAT WE DESIGN. WE JUST NEED TO TAP THAT POWER, THAT CONVICTION, THAT DETERMINATION WITHIN US. THE GOOD NEWS IS, WE FOLLOW PEOPLE THAT LOOK LIKE US IF THE STORY IS TOLD THE RIGHT WAY."

~ JOHN H. JOHNSON

Entrepreneurial support is a comprehensive framework of resources, guidance, and assistance provided to new and growing businesses to help them navigate the complex landscape of entrepreneurship. It plays a crucial role in fostering business success and economic growth and it is vital for businesses, especially those owned by Black people.

EBWS' entrepreneurial support encompasses a wide range of services, programs, and resources designed to assist individuals and businesses at various stages of development. This support system aims to empower entrepreneurs and business owners with the knowledge, tools, and networks they need to start, sustain, and build up their ventures. Key components of entrepreneurial support include:

1. Education and Training:
2. Access to Resources: Offering information & access to resources like funding opportunities.
3. Mentorship and Coaching: Connecting entrepreneurs with experienced mentors, advisors, and industry experts who can provide guidance and offer emotional support.
4. Networking and Collaboration: Organizing events, networking sessions, and platforms for entrepreneurs to connect with peers, potential partners, customers, and investors.
5. Incubators and Accelerators: Supporting startups through incubator and accelerator programs that provide resources to entrepreneurs.

Why Support is Important:

- Knowledge and Skill Development: Entrepreneurial support provides valuable education and training to bridge these knowledge gaps.
- Reducing Risk: Launching & growing a business involves significant risks. Having access to mentorship and expert guidance can help entrepreneurs make informed decisions.
- Access to Funding: Many businesses struggle to secure the necessary capital for growth. Entrepreneurial support connects businesses with potential funding sources, increasing their chances of obtaining financing.

- Networking and Collaboration: Building a professional network is essential for business success. Entrepreneurial support helps businesses establish connections that can lead to partnerships, collaborations, & attracting more customers.
- Stimulating Economic Growth: Successful businesses contribute to job creation, economic stability, and community development. Nurturing new and growing businesses, plays a vital role in boosting the local economy.
- Innovation and Competition: Encouraging Black businesses fosters innovation and competitiveness in the business landscape. New ideas and solutions emerge & that benefits customers & the community.

BLACK WOMEN LEAD



46

Attendees

No count on the number of mimosas consumed.

JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION



32
Vendors

Coordinated by EBWS

GREENLIGHT GALA AWARDS



22
Winners

JUNETEENTH MIX & MINGLE



39
Attendees

THE VANGUARD ERIE PILOT

The Vanguard Erie



13
Participants

PARAMOUNT PURSUITS BUSINESS COHORT



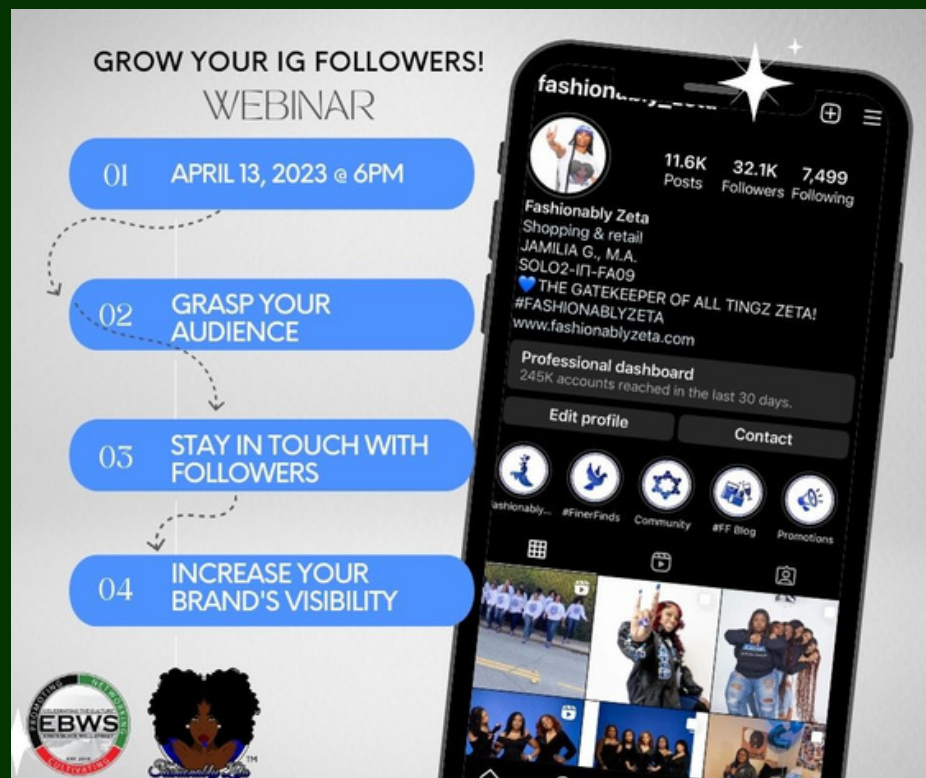
6
Participants
\$38,000

BUSINESS GRAND OPENING



1
Participant

GROW YOUR IG FOLLOWERS



22
Participant

BLACK ICE NIGHT



4
Vendors



COMMUNITY BUILDING

“THAT’S HOW WE DO IT IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY; WE GIVE BACK TO THE PEOPLE WHO MADE US WHO WE ARE. WE NEVER FORGET THAT.” ~ Snoop Dogg

Community plays a paramount role in the lives of Black people, especially when it comes to entrepreneurship. For centuries, Black communities have been centers of resilience, innovation, and mutual support, and these qualities are especially evident in the world of business.

At the heart of this importance is the concept of collective strength. At EBWS, we understand that Black entrepreneurs often face unique challenges, including historical economic disparities and systemic barriers. In such an environment, the community that we create serves as a source of inspiration, mentorship, and collaboration. It's a place where experienced business leaders share their knowledge, emerging entrepreneurs find guidance, and aspiring visionaries discover role models who have overcome similar hurdles.

In this tight-knit ecosystem, trust is a precious currency. Trust in the community creates opportunities for joint ventures, partnerships, and financial support. Black entrepreneurs are more likely to receive backing from within their communities, helping them secure the necessary resources to start and grow their businesses and this support extends beyond financial contributions. It's the encouragement that fuels the pursuit of ambitious goals, the reassurance during challenging times, and the celebration of successes both big and small. This collective spirit instills a sense of belonging and purpose, motivating Black entrepreneurs to persevere despite obstacles.

Community also a vital marketplace. Black consumers often prioritize supporting Black-owned businesses, fostering economic empowerment within the community. As these businesses thrive, they create job opportunities and stimulate local economies, contributing to a more prosperous and self-reliant environment.

It is this source of strength, resilience, and shared aspirations that supports progress, innovation, and makes a lasting economic impact.

JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION BLOCK PARTY

In a powerful and fruitful collaboration with the Erie's Juneteenth Celebration Committee, Erie's Black Wall Street (EBWS) took charge of securing and coordinating Black-owned businesses and day-of logistics for the second consecutive year. Against the backdrop of a perfect sunny day in June, our vibrant community came together to commemorate the significant holiday that symbolizes our lawful freedom.

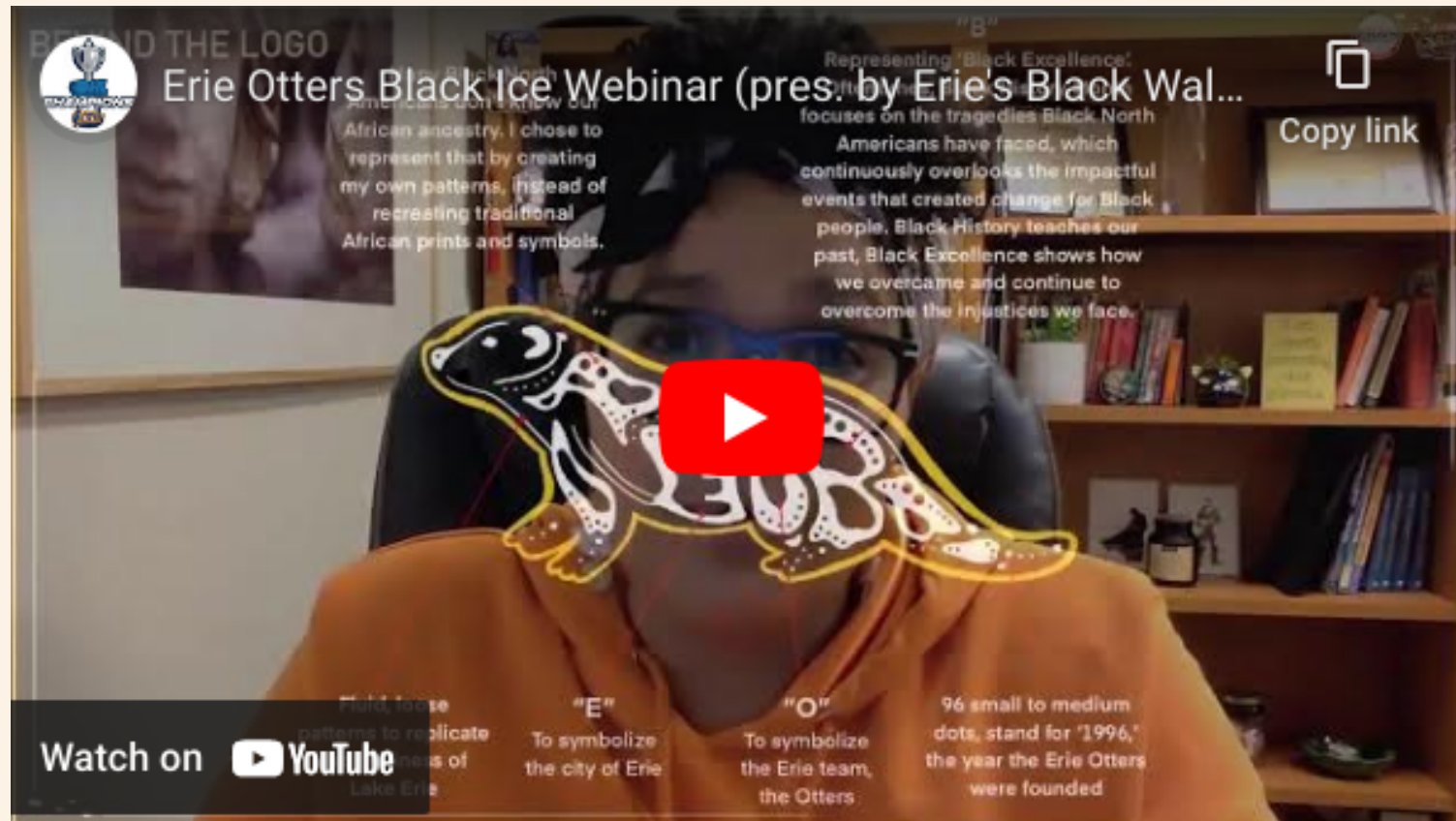
This extraordinary celebration, pulsating with cultural pride and unity, was not just a moment in time but an embodiment of EBWS's commitment to fostering community empowerment. As part of our dedication to uplifting the youth, EBWS went a step further by generously giving away scooters and bikes to children and young individuals. It was a symbolic gesture, echoing our belief in the boundless potential and future prosperity of the next generation.

The seamless execution of the Juneteenth Celebration, coupled with the joyous giveaways, underscored EBWS's unwavering commitment to creating impactful and memorable experiences that resonate with the spirit of freedom, unity, and community strength.



CINEMA, COCKTAILS & CONVERSATIONS

At this year's Cinema, Cocktails, & Conversations event, the featured film was "The Color Purple." Attendees had the opportunity to delve into the rich nuances of this cinematic masterpiece, fostering engaging discussions and a memorable experience for all. Join us next time for another cinematic journey and insightful conversations!



ERIE OTTERS COLLABORATION

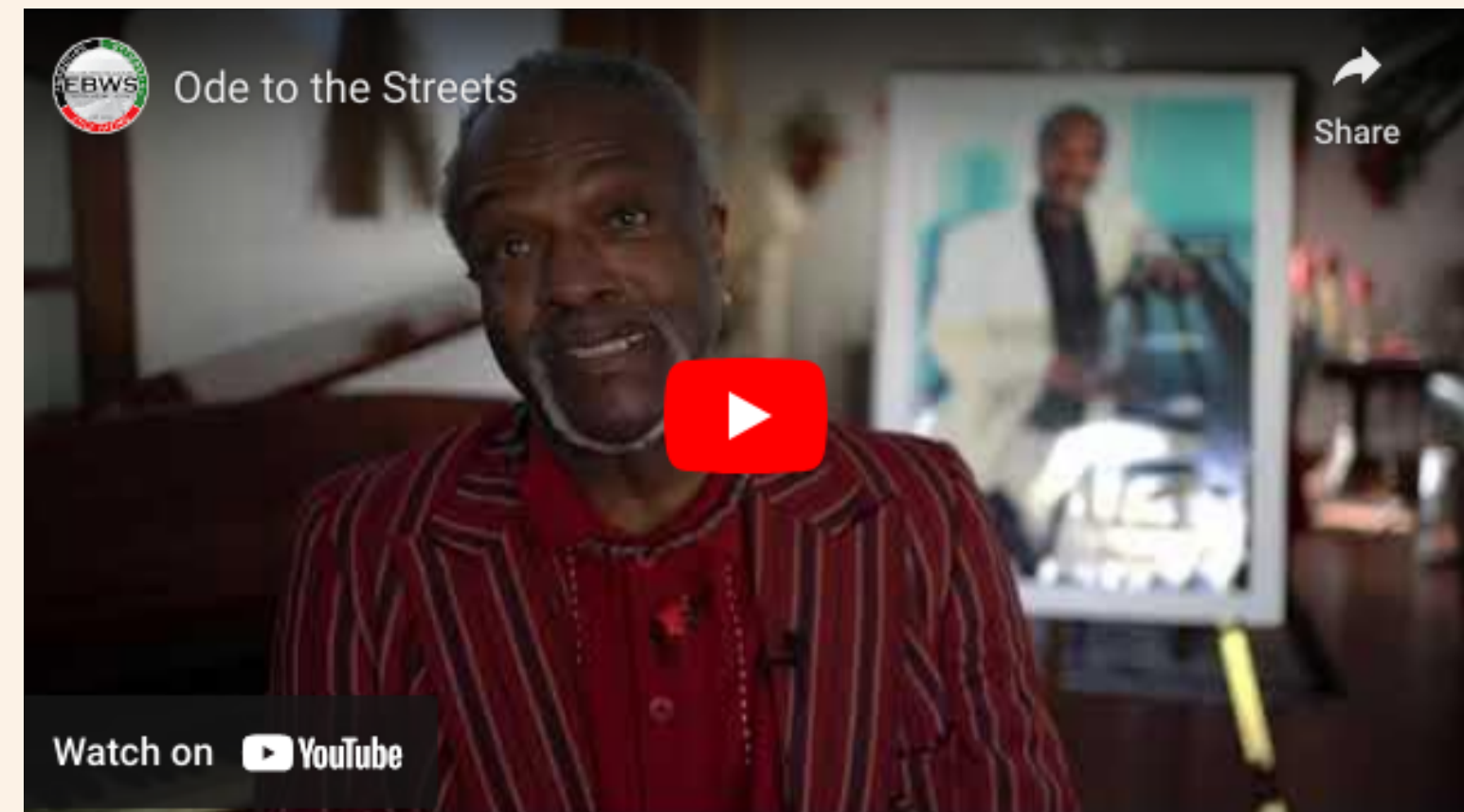
In a groundbreaking collaboration, the Erie Otters teamed up with EBWS to highlight the intersection of Black communities and hockey. During a notable game night, we were honored as the Non-Profit of the Night, showcasing our commitment to diversity and inclusion. This recognition served as a testament to our efforts in raising awareness about the underrepresented aspects of the sport.

Furthermore, our active participation in Black Ice Night was a remarkable celebration, shedding light on the profound contributions of Black individuals within the realm of hockey. As we joined forces to acknowledge these accomplishments, EBWS, alongside the Erie Otters, worked towards fostering an inclusive environment that resonates with the diverse narratives within our community. The unveiling of the 2023 Black History jerseys, skillfully designed by Jordan Dabney, marked a significant moment in celebrating Black excellence. These jerseys made their debut on MLK Day and will continue to be worn on Black Ice Night, with proceeds benefiting Erie's Black Wall Street, underlining our commitment to honoring the past and building a future of inclusivity and empowerment.

ODE TO THE STREETS

Last year, Ode' to the Streets served as the dynamic kickoff event for Erie Arts & Culture's prestigious festival, "The Views." As the pulse of our city's cultural scene, EBWS took a momentous step by crafting a compelling documentary that delves into the rich history and profound impact of dance on Erie's cultural tapestry. This documentary not only captures the rhythm and soul of the street dance movement but also serves as a testament to the resilience and creativity embedded in our community.

The film, a labor of love from Erie's Black Wall Street, weaves together narratives of passionate dancers, influential choreographers, and the very streets that have been the canvas for countless performances. It encapsulates the spirit of Ode' to the Street and highlights the integral role of dance in shaping Erie's identity. This documentary stands as a testament to the power of the arts in reflecting the heart and soul of a city, making Ode' to the Streets not just an event but a profound celebration of Erie's cultural legacy.



Appalachian Regional Commission
\$234,000

Erie Community Foundation
\$100,000

Diverse Erie
\$100,000

Erie Gives Day
\$74,408.35

Hamot Health Foundation
\$15,000

Black Equity Coalition
\$10,000



This year, EBWS has been fortunate to secure substantial funding from various sources, enabling us to continue our mission of empowerment and support for the Black community in Erie County. These funds will be strategically allocated to further our initiatives and create lasting impact:

- **ARC Grant:** We are grateful to have received a generous ARC Grant of \$234,000, which will be utilized over three years from December 2023 through 2026. This grant primarily supports our administrative costs and the crucial entrepreneurial support programs that empower Black entrepreneurs and business owners. This funding ensures the sustainability and growth of our efforts.
- **Erie Community Foundation Shaping Tomorrow Grant:** EBWS is honored to have received a \$100,000 grant from the Erie Community Foundation. These funds will be dedicated to staffing costs, organizational training, and development, reinforcing our commitment to building a stronger foundation for the organization throughout 2023 and 2024.
- **Diverse Erie Grant:** Our mission extends beyond entrepreneurship, and this \$100,000 Diverse Erie Grant will enable us to enhance our office infrastructure. These funds will be utilized for the purchase of essential office equipment and capital improvements, ensuring that our workspace is conducive to productivity and collaboration by May 2024.
- **Erie Gives Day Donations:** The community's support is invaluable to us, as evidenced by the \$74,408.35 received during Erie Gives Day. Of this amount, \$50,000 will be directed towards our transformative Pathway to Homeownership program, helping more families achieve their dreams of homeownership. The remaining \$24,408.35 will cover various expenses not covered by grants, ensuring the smooth operation of our initiatives.
- **Hamot Health Foundation:** EBWS acknowledges the vital importance of health and well-being within our community. The \$15,000 grant from the Hamot Health Foundation will be allocated to Pathway to Homeownership expenses, reinforcing our commitment to improving living standards and housing access for Black families.
- **Black Equity Coalition:** In collaboration with the Black Equity Coalition, EBWS is dedicated to addressing health disparities and educating our community about the impact of Covid-19. To achieve this, we will create an informative and impactful educational video series. The \$10,000 grant from the Black Equity Coalition will support the development and dissemination of this crucial resource.

KYRA TAYLOR, CO-FOUNDER | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
(SHE/HER)
KTAYLOR@ERIESBLACKWALLSTREET.ORG



RHONDA MATTHEWS | CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
(SHE/HER)
RMATTHEWS@ERIESBLACKWALLSTREET.ORG



SHALEA FISH | DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
(SHE/HER)
SFISH@ERIESBLACKWALLSTREET.ORG



To our amazing staff members, whose unwavering dedication and passion have transformed dreams into reality, we extend heartfelt gratitude for donating the majority of their time to the mission and vision of Erie's Black Wall Street.

JAMILIA GATES | ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
(SHE/HER)
ADMIN@ERIESBLACKWALLSTREET.ORG



NATALIE RICHMOND | DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST
(NAT)
PROGRAMS@ERIESBLACKWALLSTREET.ORG



TENAY TAYLOR | PROGRAM ASSISTANT
(SHE/HER)
PROGRAMS@ERIESBLACKWALLSTREET.ORG



KORAN BUTLER | COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT
(HE/HIM)
COMM@ERIESBLACKWALLSTREET.ORG



JENESSA NORTON, PRESIDENT

DALEN MICHAEL, VICE PRESIDENT

KYRA TAYLOR, SECRETARY

RHONDA MATTHEWS, TREASURER

BRIAN ATTERBURY, MEMBER AT LARGE

DREW WHITING, MEMBER AT LARGE

We thank you for your constant support and willingness to do the work of change.

