

NEIGHBORHOOD ALLIES

Q1 2021

Report
To Our
Allies



THE SPOTLIGHT IS ON...	1
-Community Spotlight	
-Grantee Spotlight	
-Funder Spotlight	

HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS FRAMEWORK	2 - 4
-Equitable Development	
-Quality of Life	
-Neighborhood Image	
-Community Ownership	
-Market Confidence	
-2020 Impact	

NEW FUNDING AWARDS	5
--------------------	---

TEAM MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS	6 - 7
------------------------	-------

PUBLICATIONS & MEDIA	8
----------------------	---

YOUR ALLIES	9
-------------	---

FUNDERS	10
---------	----

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE SPOTLIGHT IS ON...

Community Spotlight

Over the past year and always in collaboration with community members, The Homewood Experience Team has worked with local artists to bring together an Art Walk, created a neighborhood Walk of Fame, worked with youth from the YMCA Lighthouse Project to develop a community soundtrack, and even produced a documentary that provides a grassroots context to the evolution of Homewood, its history as well as the vision and interpretation of the future for Homewood! [Read more.](#)



Grantee Spotlight

Almost 5 years ago, former Millvale resident Marisa Manheim received a \$2,500 Love My Neighbor! Grant from Neighborhood Allies to convene local residents and stakeholders around publicly recognizing and taking the necessary steps to protect this community asset. Allegheny Land Trust has stepped in to guide and assist these grassroots residents in protecting and managing this land as a public park. Just recently, the necessary funds were raised by many community partners for ALT to officially purchase the land and protect and care for it for years to come! [Read more.](#)



Funder Spotlight

Thank you, Dollar Bank, for your \$200,000 award in support of our Centralized Real Estate Accelerator!



“We are at a time where extraordinary challenges exist within our communities. This critical funding will help reduce barriers for our smaller community-based developers, small businesses, and nonprofit partners while increasing access to the capital and technical support they need to succeed”, says Presley Gillespie, Neighborhood Allies’ President. “We are thrilled to receive these resources and put them to work building community ownership and wealth, especially in low-income neighborhoods and communities of color.”

With this support and partnership with Dollar Bank, Neighborhood Allies will be positioned to deploy the Accelerator to breakdown and address the common barriers that have long been weaved throughout traditional community real estate development and revitalization efforts. [Read more.](#)



Equitable Development | Get Online & Grow Online Social Media Campaign

In Q1, we hosted a social media campaign to promote local small businesses as part of our Get Online and Grow Online (GOGO) Program with the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh and City of Pittsburgh! Over several weeks, we featured over 30 different businesses – from restaurants to clothing retailers (and everything in between). We held interviews with entrepreneurs via Zoom, featured the food of restaurant-based businesses on our Instagram stories, held Instagram takeovers, and highlighted others with articles and social posts.

Round 1 and 2 of the program combined brought nearly 100 businesses to participate, half of which are minority-owned. Due to GOGO's success, we have begun offering the program on a rolling basis. We also launched our partnership with Bridgeway Capital's 'Open For Business' program in Q1. The collaboration will allow us to share, rather than replicate, important resources for small



Quality of Life | We're Pleased to Share Our 2020 Economic Opportunity Year in Review!

In Q1, we released our 2020 Economic Opportunity Year In Review to share the progress we made through our Economic Opportunity Initiatives during 2020. We all know that 2020 was full of unexpected hardships related to the COVID-19 pandemic, from health and safety concerns, to losses in businesses, jobs and income, as well as widespread societal inequities that have been around much longer. Here at Neighborhood Allies, with our trusted partners and generous supporters, we expanded the reach of our Economic Opportunity initiatives and achieved significant outcomes in the lives of local families. From adapting to offer financial opportunity and financial empowerment counseling remotely, to launching the Pittsburgh Financial Inclusion and Disability Awareness Working Group, we are proud of what we accomplished with our partners last year.

Much of what we've learned will be carried forward into 2021, and will help us be even more responsive to the persistent needs and great opportunities in our midst. [Read more.](#)

Q1 2021 Healthy Neighborhoods Highlights

HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS

2

Q1 2021 Healthy Neighborhoods Highlights

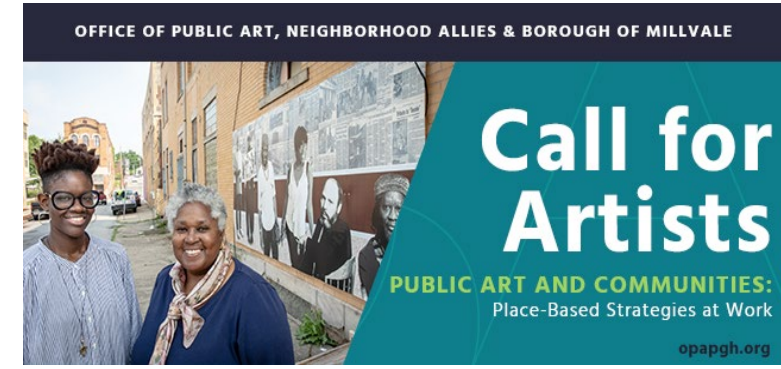
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Neighborhood Image | Public Art and Communities

In Q1, we kicked off our Call For Artists as part of our Public Art and Communities (PAC 2.0) Program in collaboration with The Office of Public Art and the Borough of Millvale. The PAC Program invites four artists to create four temporary works of public art within the target geographies of Hilltop (including Allentown, Beltzhoover, Knoxville, and Mount Oliver); Hill District; Wilkinsburg; Homewood; Larimer; Lincoln-Lemington; and the Triboro Ecodistrict. Each artist will collaborate with a community-based organizational partner to create an artwork that responds to the COVID-19 pandemic and addresses its intersection with other public health issues. In addition to developing a work of temporary public art, artists will participate alongside their organizational partner in Placemaking Academy, a series of workshops that will develop public art and creative placemaking skills. Stay tuned as PAC continues to develop!

"I want to communicate residents' experiences, questions, and reflections in their own words." - artist Njaimeh Njie



Community Ownership | Winner of Duquesne Light Company's "Dr. King's New Dream Challenge" Chooses Neighborhood Allies to Receive \$1,000 Company Donation

Duquesne Light Company's (DLC) African American Business Employee Resource Group (BERG) invited employees to participate in its "Dr. King's New Dream Challenge" in honor of Black History Month. Employees were given an opportunity to submit their ideas on what King's iconic dream would look like today, with the winner receiving a \$1,000 company donation for a charity of their choice.

The winner of the challenge, finance accounts payable support clerk Deirdre Spencer, submitted an impactful entry full of reflective poems, resources, and insights on the work that still needs to be done in order to achieve Dr. King's dream. As she put it, "I think Dr. King's dream would be the same today as it was back then..." We connected with Deirdre to learn more about her, her inspiration, and why she chose Neighborhood Allies to receive DLC's donation. [Read more.](#)





Q1 2021 Healthy Neighborhoods Highlights

HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS

NEW FUNDING AWARDS

Market Confidence | Media Coverage: URA Board Approves Sale of Centre Avenue Site For Relocation and Expansion of Big Tom's Barbershop

PITTSBURGH, PA (March 12, 2021) The URA Board of Directors has accepted the redevelopment proposal and approved the sale of 2178 Centre Avenue and three adjacent lots in the Hill District to Thomas Boyd for \$21,000 plus costs to relocate and expand his business, Big Tom's Barbershop. 2178 Centre Avenue is the former home to Hamm's Barber Shop, an iconic building in the neighborhood. Mr. Boyd has operated Big Tom's Barbershop in the Hill for 15 years.

"We're just happy with all the efforts and we appreciate all the support from the URA, Councilman Lavelle, and all the people at Neighborhood Allies," Mr. Boyd said. "I want to push forward to get this development project going because I know it will do a lot to uplift the Hill District community and I'm thankful for the opportunity." [Read the full release from the Office of the Mayor.](#)

Neighborhood Allies Board of Directors Adopts Bold New Roadmap for Expanding Opportunity Across Pittsburgh

We are excited to share our 3-Year Strategic Roadmap of ambitious goals and priorities between 2021 – 2023! Over the next three years we will bring together more people, knowledge, and financial resources to implement our boldest, most ambitious plan in our history. We will seek radical shifts to our norms and traditional systems—systems that have deliberately been structured to leave those who are most impacted out of the decision-making process and that widen the racial wealth gap.



"Beginning today, we will make transformational investments that sustain equitable economic growth and achieve financial stability, especially among our most vulnerable populations. By democratizing development that is people-powered, we will help residents reimagine and rebuild communities with expanded and sustained economic opportunity, high quality affordable housing, and improved mental, social and emotional well-being."

-Presley Gillespie, President of Neighborhood Allies

Our roadmap is guided by our long-term North Star, which states that over the next ten years, we will expand our resources to Accelerate, Scale and Sustain the work of our community partners to create healthy neighborhoods of opportunity and move 100,000 low-income Pittsburghers up the socio-economic ladder. [Read more.](#)

Neighborhood Allies Quarter 1, 2021 Grant Awards

First National Bank \$25,000

To support the continued growth of the Pittsburgh Financial Empowerment Center in 2021.



In 2020 the Financial Empowerment Center:

- Served 602 clients in 1,657 sessions;
- Achieved 979 client outcomes;
- Increased total savings by \$831,762; and
- Reduced debt by a total of \$682,974.

In 2021, the FEC continues to attract new clients and serve existing clients as financial struggles persist due to the ongoing pandemic. Thank you, First National Bank, for continuing to support our initiatives and help us to ensure that residents have the opportunity to reach financial wellness, even amid COVID-19.

Dollar Bank \$200,000

To support our Centralized Real Estate Accelerator Program.



"Investments like this from Dollar Bank allow us to build confidence and capacity in community-based developers, increasing capital absorption in low-income neighborhoods," said Director of Real Estate Services at Neighborhood Allies, Matt Madia. "Investments into the Accelerator position us to work in conjunction with broader civic initiatives like Avenues of Hope to revitalize commercial corridors in disinvested communities."



Support from Dollar Bank will go towards the Accelerator's agenda of wealth building through real estate for entrepreneurs of color, including:

- Gaining a fuller and more nuanced understanding of the business districts in communities of color throughout Pittsburgh's rapidly changing real estate market;
- Engaging neighborhood entrepreneurs in the benefits and potential pitfalls of real estate ownership;
- Building a pipeline of investable projects that revitalize commercial corridors, improve business sustainability and resiliency, and increase wealth for entrepreneurs of color.

"We are thrilled to receive these resources and put them to work building community ownership and wealth, especially in low-income neighborhoods and communities of color," said Presley Gillespie, President of Neighborhood Allies.

[Read the full release.](#)

Team Member Highlights

Neighborhood Allies Welcomes Javier Janik as Program Manager of Economic Opportunity!

Javier Janik joins our team as the Program Manager of Economic Opportunity. In this role, he will support the programs and initiatives of Neighborhood Allies' Economic Opportunity portfolio, as successful partnerships and persistent community needs have positioned it for growth. He will contribute to sustaining and scaling fundraising efforts, help nurture and develop programmatic partnerships, and review research on topics and trends that can improve initiatives.



Javier brings several years of experience in the banking sector as a financial analyst and nearly a decade of experience in the nonprofit sector to the team. Some of his previous positions include teaching English, math, literacy, chess, and physical education to children in Peru with an education nonprofit and managing the Pittsburgh Schweitzer Fellows program. He is also a proud AmeriCorps alumni. Prior to joining Neighborhood Allies, Javier served as the Disaster Response Program Coordinator at Brother's Brother Foundation, where he managed efforts related to disaster preparedness and response. [Read more.](#)

Neighborhood Allies Welcomes Violet Graham as Controller!

Violet joins our team as the Controller at Neighborhood Allies. In this role, she will serve as the primary finance executive of the organization, providing a range of financial services, such as accounting, financial reporting, treasury, budgeting strategic forecasting; and support our plans for significant and continued growth. As head of accounting, her responsibilities will include daily, weekly, and monthly transactional entries, month-end close out, preparation of financial statements and projections, monitoring internal controls, and ultimately leading the management of our capital, including financial and social returns and risk management.



Violet brings more than 13 years of strong accounting and skills in Financial Reporting, Budgeting, Account Reconciliation, Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable, Audit Oversight, and Retirement Benefits Administration to our team. Prior to joining Neighborhood Allies, she worked as a Senior Accountant at Duquesne Light Company (DLC), with a primary focus on DQE Communications, a telecommunications service provider. [Read more.](#)

TEAM MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Q1 2021 President's Special Initiative Award Winners

Glenn Grayson, Jr.

Glenn has worked incredibly hard over the past year, and throughout the pandemic, and we want to recognize all of the work he has carried out during that time. Starting in April of 2020, Glenn organized and led our Paycheck Protection Program TA, helping nearly 25 businesses to retain over 120 employees and receive \$1.5 million in funds. He was able to coordinate a lot of people from several organizations to mobilize and help as many businesses as possible, all while learning the ins and outs of a brand new small business federal loan program. Throughout the rest of 2020, Glenn remained dedicated to supporting Hill District small businesses and developers as our organization worked to advance our real estate concepts. Relationship-building is so important to this work, and we are confident that Glenn's personality and compassion for his neighborhood informs his work daily.



Demi Kolke

Demi's dedication to helping Homewood businesses sparked the Get Online & Grow Online (GOGO) program early-on in the pandemic. In addition to providing direct support helping businesses apply to PPP, she used her deep community connections to find out what, exactly, businesses needed. Demi was simply trying to make sure the small businesses in her neighborhood - that she and so many of her neighbors love - could survive the pandemic. Now, as we continue to adapt to new technology, GOGO will remain an important resource for many small businesses. GOGO has been literally life-changing for some of the small businesses that have participated. Now, Demi has found a way to expand the GOGO program beyond the City to reach every single one of our focus neighborhoods. Amid all of that, Demi has also continued to manage and help launch 'The Homewood Experience.'



Tamara Cartwright

Tamara has gone above and beyond the standard workload, simultaneously managing our Love My Neighbor! program, while navigating public involvement in PAC 2.0, Design Justice work, and stepping up to assist with our Digital Inclusion work. She has been more than an exceptional counterpart in managing the construction elements of the LevelUp 412 program, from handling design debates to imagining, coordinating, and negotiating complicated construction processes and outcomes. No matter what the task, Tamara centers the community; advocating for better accessibility of our materials, processes, and language, or making sure that we never lose sight of what matters. She is the embodiment of the Neighborhood Allies' spirit.



Q1 2021 Media Coverage

- PRZen | The Homewood Experience Unveils New Rebrand Declaring “Homewood is Home”
The rebrand will focus on community heroes, past and present as well as newly commissioned murals, street banners, and commercials.
- The Hill | It’s not too late to fix this part of the COVID-19 crisis
Neighborhood Allies is proud to partner with the City of Pittsburgh and Cities for Financial Empowerment on Bank On Allegheny County alongside other Economic Opportunity Initiatives.
- Pittsburgh Post Gazette | North Homewood Avenue: A revitalization plan knocked off track by the pandemic, but not giving up
“The positive image campaign has taken a back seat with so many people’s lives and livelihoods on the line,” said Demi Kolke, senior corridor manager for revitalization at Neighborhood Allies, a nonprofit that works to bring equity and resources to Homewood and other distressed communities.
- Visit PGH | Homewood Is Home
- Pittsburgh Post Gazette | Better late than never: Last Crawford Square houses to be built some 20 years after the first
- Office of the Mayor | Pittsburgh Financial Empowerment Center Saves Clients Millions in Savings and Debt
The Pittsburgh Financial Empowerment Center (FEC) has provided direct personal financial management support to 868 people since the City of Pittsburgh and Neighborhood Allies launched the program in March 2019, leading to nearly \$1.3 million in total debt reduction and \$1 million in increased savings.
- Pittsburgh Business Times | Dollar Bank invests \$200,000 in Neighborhood Allies for real estate accelerator



PUBLICATIONS & MEDIA YOUR ALLIES

Team Members

- Presley L. Gillespie, President
- Stephanie Chernay, Chief Operating Officer
- Sarah Dieleman Perry, Director of Economic Opportunity
- Talia DePasquale, Director of Communications and Storytelling
- Shad Henderson, Director of Equity and Community Partnerships
- Vanessa Buffry, Director of Digital Inclusion
- Matt Madia, Director of Real Estate Services
- Violet Graham, Controller
- Demi Kolke, Senior Program Manager of Corridor Revitalization
- Glenn Grayson Jr., Senior Program Manager for Neighborhood Development
- Jael Jones, Senior Program Manager for Real Estate Services
- Cait Lee, Interim Organizational Growth Liaison
- Tamara Cartwright, Program Manager for Social Impact Design
- Javier Janik, Program Manager of Economic Opportunity
- DeOndra Parker, Operations and Program Support Manager
- Ben Emswiler, Executive Assistant and Office Manager
- Chelsea Contino, Communications and Outreach Program Manager

Board Members

- Sallyann Kluz, Chairperson
- Carolina Pais-Barreto Thor, Vice Chairperson
- Karris M. Jackson, Secretary
- David Serafini, Treasurer
- Mamadou Baldé, JD
- Gerald S. Dickinson
- Jane Downing
- Dr. Roderick Harris
- Abigail Horn
- Henry Horn-Pyatt
- Mark Peterson
- Tammy Thompson
- Diamonte Walker

Investment Advisory Committee

- Mamadou Baldé
- Jane Downing
- Sallyann Kluz
- Majestic Lane
- Henry Horn-Pyatt

FUNDERS

Core Funders

Anonymous Donor
The Pittsburgh Foundation

Program Funders

Annie E. Casey Foundation
Aurora
Bank of America
Bank of New York Mellon
BNY Mellon Foundation of Southwestern Pennsylvania
The Benter Foundation
The Birmingham Foundation
The Buhl Foundation
Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund
Citizens Bank
City of Pittsburgh, Community Development Block Grant
Computer Reach
Dollar Bank
First Commonwealth Bank
First National Bank of PA
Google
Grable Foundation
The Heinz Endowments
Hillman Family Foundation
JP Morgan Chase
KeyBank
KeyBank Foundation
Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
McAuley Ministries
National Equity Fund (NEF)
National League of Cities
Opportunity Fund
The Pittsburgh Technology Council
Phillips
PNC Foundation
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