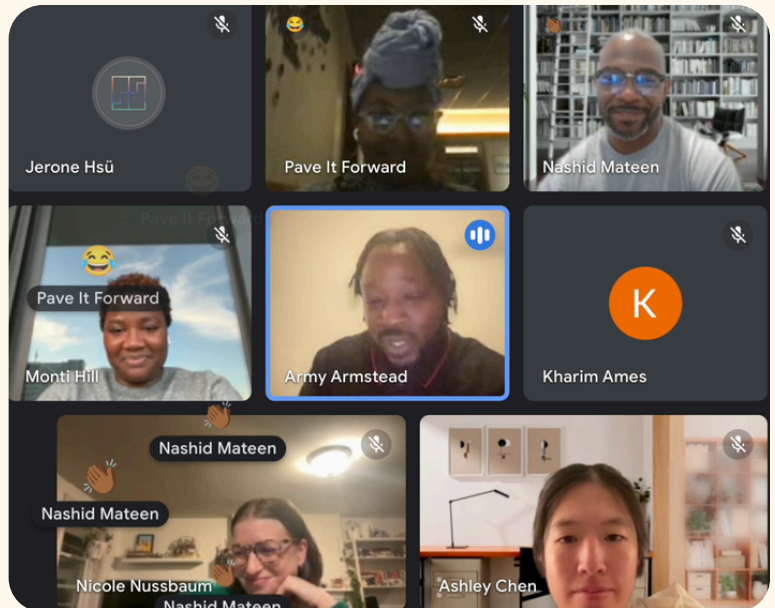
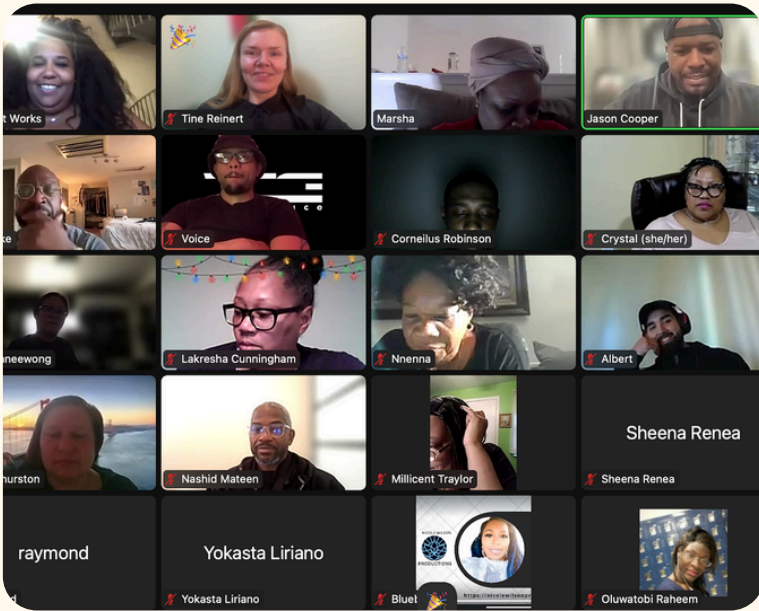


Emergent Works

# Annual Report



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## A Year of Transformation and Impact

2024 has been a year of growth, learning, and impact for Emergent Works (EW). As we continue our mission to provide innovative tech education and comprehensive support services that empower participants to achieve financial independence, personal growth, and stronger community engagement, we remain committed to empowering BIPOC individuals and communities impacted by the criminal legal system. Through education, mentorship, and workforce training, we've provided pathways to healing, economic mobility, and sustainable employment—core to our mission of closing digital literacy and racial wealth gaps for communities impacted by the criminal legal system.

## Programs and Achievements

This year, we rebranded and relaunched our TECK (Technical Education and Career Knowledge) program to align with industry standards, focusing on digital literacy and design to prepare participants for success in both employment and entrepreneurship.

We also relaunched T.RAP (Technology, Rhythm, and Passion), a year-long program supporting youth aged 16–24 impacted by the criminal legal system through technology, mentorship, and the arts.

These efforts led to record-breaking enrollment, with five cohorts serving 73 mentees and providing ongoing mentorship. We engaged 30 industry professionals as mentors and hired four alumni as contractors to help support our programs.



# The Path to Transformation

Emergent Works' impact is driven by four key pillars:

1. **Equipping Returning Citizens** - Providing essential technology literacy to navigate the digital world effectively.
2. **Education and Skills Training** - Delivering comprehensive training to prepare participants for today's workforce.
3. **Mentorship** - Building strong support systems for guidance and motivation.
4. **Career Pathways** - Connecting participants to meaningful employment opportunities for long-term stability and growth.

## Looking Ahead: Goals for 2025

As we move into 2025, we are focused on:

- **Achieving Financial Stability:** Strengthening our financial foundation to sustain and expand organizational capacity.
- **Expanding and Strengthening Programs:** Serving 75 mentees through impactful programming, including:
  - Providing internal and external cohorts.
  - A Train-the-Trainer initiative that empowers T.RAP alumni.
  - Providing technical solutions for system-impacted organizations while offering alumni work experience.
- **Positioning EW as a Leader:** Establishing EW as a convener for organizations committed to ending mass incarceration through social justice and technology.

The success of 2024 was made possible by our supporters, partners, and volunteers. Yet, there is more work ahead. Together, we can continue breaking cycles of poverty and recidivism by investing in education, mentorship, and economic empowerment.

Thank you for being part of our journey. Let's keep building pathways to transformation in 2025 and beyond.

Sincerely Yours,

*Army Armstead*

Executive Director

A man with a beard, wearing a blue baseball cap, a plaid shirt over a white t-shirt with a skull logo and the text 'A BATHING A...', and yellow shorts, stands in a room. In the background, there are shelves with various items, a desk with a computer monitor, and a person sitting at the desk. The room appears to be a workshop or classroom.

## Mission

At Emergent Works (EW), we are dedicated to breaking the cycles of incarceration and poverty that disproportionately affect system-impacted BIPOC individuals. Our mission is to provide innovative tech education and comprehensive support services that empower participants to achieve financial and technical independence, personal growth, and stronger community engagement. By offering digital literacy, design skills, and mentorship, we create pathways for success in the technology sector, opening doors to sustainable careers.

## Vision

Emergent Works Inc. is a mission-aligned, barrier-breaking tech non-profit that envisions a world where tech literacy, education, skills-based training, and employment opportunities are free and available to individuals and communities that are impacted by mass incarceration. We strive to be a driving force in dismantling the systemic inequalities that limit access to economic mobility and opportunity.

## Theory of Change

Through EW's programs, we envision a world where equitable economic mobility becomes a reality for Black and Brown communities affected by mass incarceration. By closing digital literacy and racial wealth gaps, we disrupt cycles of poverty and incarceration. In this transformed landscape, pipelines to mass incarceration will cease to disproportionately affect these communities, allowing individuals to thrive through technology-driven opportunities and sustainable careers.

# Organizational Growth and Capacity Building

This year, Emergent Works strengthened its foundation through intentional growth and capacity-building initiatives that aligned with our mission to close digital literacy and racial wealth gaps.

## Staff and Leadership Development

We practiced a shared leadership model, empowering our team with autonomy to drive impact. Our Executive Director graduated from The Unlocked Futures cohort, led by New Profit and John Legend, and Columbia University's Developing Leadership Program. These milestones provided tools for personal and professional growth, positioning us to lead with greater effectiveness and vision.

## Systems and Infrastructure Improvements

We focused on financial sustainability and operational efficiency by transitioning from costly systems like Virtuuous and Sage Intacct to leaner tools such as Brevo and GiveButter. Our internal technologists built CRMs using Airtable and Thinkific, enabling us to streamline data collection and program management. These upgrades support our mission by ensuring resources are allocated effectively to scale impact.

[Learn More About Unlocked Futures Round Table Talk ft John Legend](#)





## Collaborations and Partnerships

- **Dream.org's Day of Empathy:** In March, we partnered with Dream.org to host the NYC Day of Empathy—the nation's largest day of action for criminal justice reform. We shared space with over 60 leaders, government officials, and change-makers to amplify the voices of system-impacted individuals and advocate for systemic change.
- **Staten Island Justice Center:** In March we launched our very first Staten Island T.RAP cohort in collaboration with SIJC, equipping their young participants with artistry skillset and therapeutic writing practices to take their art to the next level! We are excited to facilitate 2 more cohorts with SIJC in 2025!
- **Bail Fund App:** In May, EW successfully completed the Bail Fund App (BFA) in partnership with the Community Justice Exchange and the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative. Serving 90+ bail funds nationwide, the BFA enhances support for individuals in pretrial and immigration detention, exemplifying our commitment to using technology to address systemic inequities and promote economic mobility.
- **EW TechaThon:** In June, we hosted our first-ever "Digitizing Dreamz" Techathon, sponsored by the Ford Foundation. Over 25 community members joined to develop tech solutions and participate in panel discussions. This event demonstrated the power of innovation and collaboration in addressing societal challenges.
- **Undesign the Redline Exhibit:** In September, EW collaborated with the Undesign the Redline exhibit to highlight the history of structural racism and inequality. This partnership reflects our commitment to dismantling systemic inequities and aligns with our mission to create pathways for equitable economic mobility. Notably, one of our alumni actively contributed to this project, showcasing how EW participants become changemakers.



# Community Impact

## TECK: Digital Literacy and Digital Design

This year, we launched our first instructor-led TECK cohort in Digital Literacy. Under the guidance of Monica Gragg (L&D Strategist), our exceptional instructor and curriculum developer, mentees embarked on a transformative 12-week journey. During the cohort, mentees obtained the following skills:

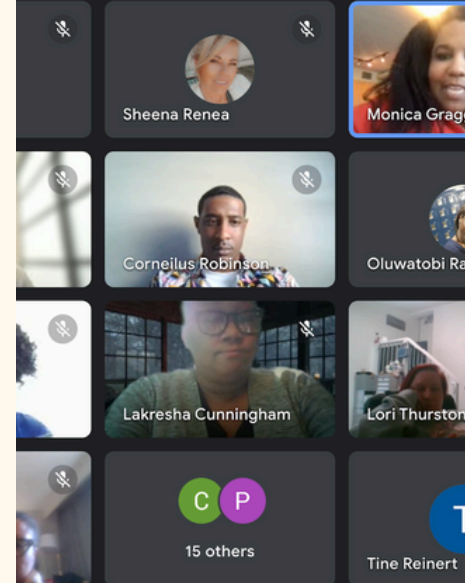
- AI
- Google Suite
- Basic computer skills
- Digital communication
- Content creation
- Website development

These skills are intended to enhance expertise, opening pathways to entry-level digital employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. This cohort was one for the books, and we are so excited for the next one with Monica!

Building on the success of the Digital Literacy cohort, we introduced a new Digital Design pathway led by Nicole Nussbaum (Product Design Manager), our phenomenal instructor. This advanced cohort catered to business-focused graduates, equipping them with the following skills:

- UI & UX Fundamentals
- Wireframing
- Design principles
- Branding
- Website development

This cohort was for our mentees to enhance existing websites or create new ones from scratch for their businesses. The creativity and accomplishments of these mentees were truly inspiring, and we are excited to see how they leverage these skills to grow their businesses.



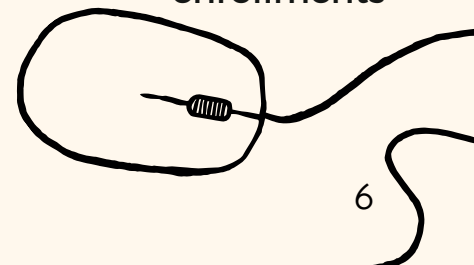
cohorts



mentees served

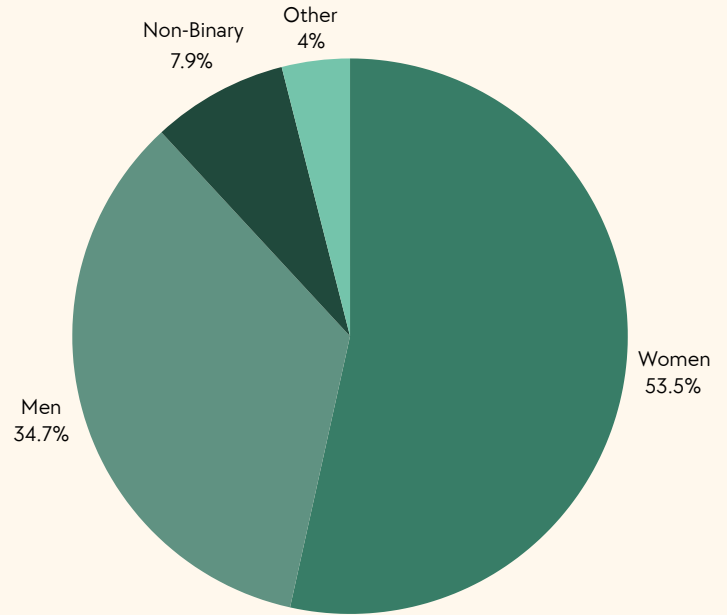
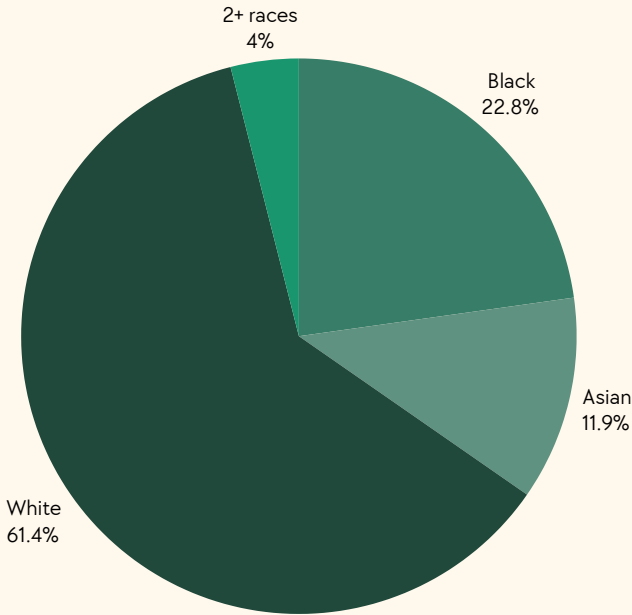


increase in TECK enrollments



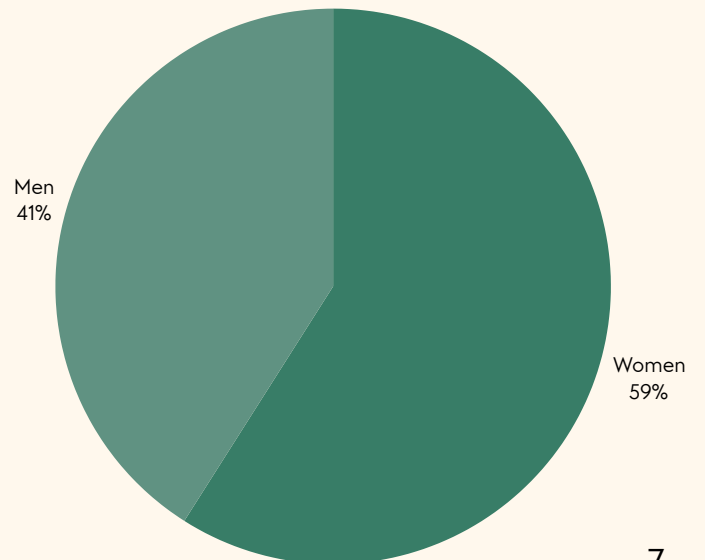
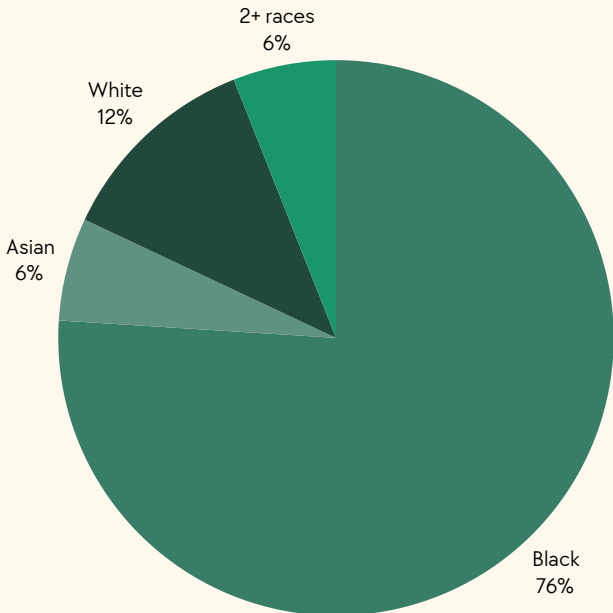
# Mentor Demographics

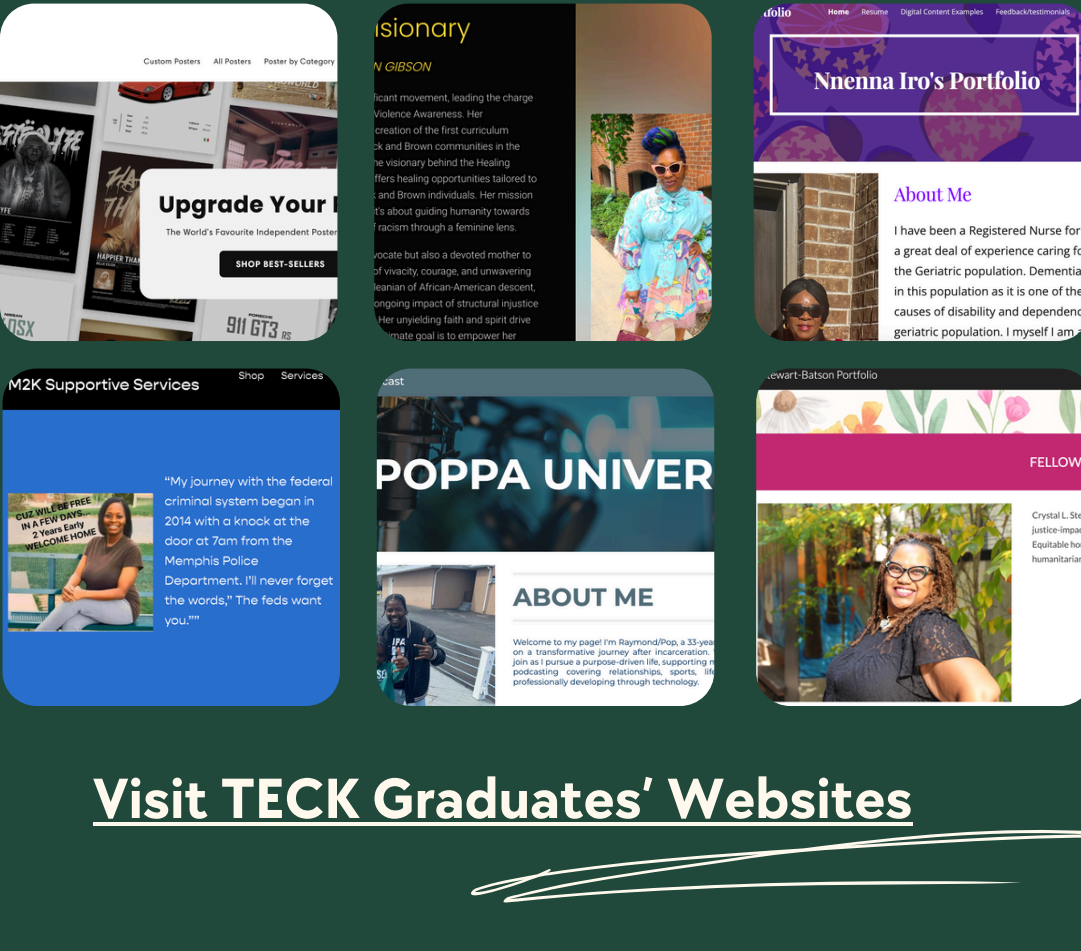
This year, we had 30 incredible industry professionals volunteer with us from various companies such as GitHub and Bandcamp, to mentor our mentees, and we simply can't thank you enough for your vital support.



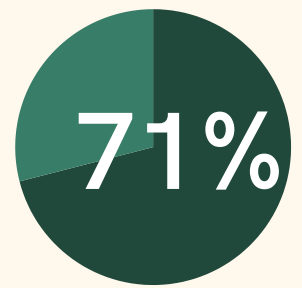
# Mentee Demographics

In 2024, we truly experienced a major increase in enrollments, an astounding milestone that reflects the growing demand for digital skills among system-impacted individuals.





## Visit TECK Graduates' Websites



Graduation Rate



Program Satisfaction Rate

## Growing Satisfaction and Impact

Our mentees' experiences reflected the success of our efforts:

- Program satisfaction soared to 9.9 (up from 9.6 last year).
- Instructor and mentor ratings reached 9.9 (compared to 9.7 in 2023).
- Willingness to recommend EW to peers jumped to 4.9 stars, a significant increase from 4.5 stars last year.

These improvements validate the power of our instructor-led model and the meaningful impact of our TECK program. As we look to 2025 and beyond, we remain steadfast in our commitment to creating transformative experiences that prepare our mentees for a future filled with opportunities.



Instructor & Mentor Ratings



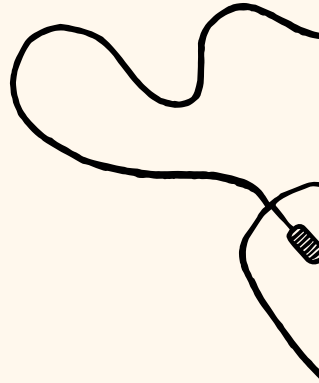
Mentees Willingness To Recommend EW To A Peer



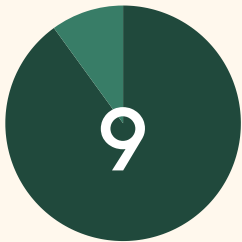
## A Transformative Year For T.RAP

This year, T.RAP reached new heights with three impactful cohorts and the introduction of website development workshops. Led by board member Jerone Hsu, mentees gained skills to create personal websites showcasing their music and passions. This innovative addition, now a permanent part of T.RAP, enhances our program alongside the collective T.RAP album produced each cohort. These are the following skills mentees gained:

- Artistry Development
- Therapeutic Writing
- Audio Engineering
- Song Creation
- Google Suite
- Website Development
- Communication
- Live Performance



Program Satisfaction Rate



Average Program Element Satisfaction Rate

## Mentee Success and Program Satisfaction

The results speak to the success of this year's program:

- Program satisfaction averaged 9.2, with individual program elements—including mentoring, website development, artistry development, resume support, and goal-setting—scoring an impressive average of 9.
- Among our work-eligible mentees, 65% secured employment in companies such as Amazon, UPS, and Burlington Coat Factory, achieving an income increase of 13%. 24% also pursued education in GED or High School, demonstrating the program's power to open doors to brighter futures.



# 75%

of work-eligible graduates secured employment

# 100%

of graduates completed work readiness training

# 34%

of graduates pursued continued education opportunities



## Key Program Outcomes

An incredible 75% of our 2024 work-eligible graduates are now employed, stepping into opportunities like freelancing, social entrepreneurship, program management, software engineering, and project management in places like UPS, retail chains, and CBOs nationwide, including EW.

100% of graduates successfully acquired essential 21st-century digital work readiness skills, including proficiency in Google Suite, digital project management, website creation, using AI for work, content development, and beyond. These skills have prepared them to pursue entry-level digital roles such as data entry specialists, technical support professionals, and coordinators across various industries, ensuring they are equipped to thrive in today's workforce.

We have additionally seen many of our mentees reporting an increase in income, earning above NYC minimum wage. Notably, the alumni we hired this year experienced an increase of 67% in hourly wages. In 2025, our goal is to provide more work contracting opportunities for both T.RAP and TECK alumni so more of our alumni can obtain above-minimum wage and also gain valuable work experience to pursue future opportunities.

An inspiring 34% of graduates took their ambitions to the next level by pursuing continued education, from coding boot camps and GED programs to project management certifications at institutions such as Justice Through Code, Google Classroom, and Coursera. This commitment reflects their drive to expand their knowledge and unlock new growth opportunities.

We also hosted four events, engaging over 1,000 community members and strengthening our role as a convener for the social justice and tech-for-good movements.



## Celebrating Growth and Achievement

- **100%** of our T.RAP graduates reported an increase in motivation and drive, ability to communicate and becoming a better artist.
- **80%** of our T.RAP graduates reported improved digital skills and higher self-esteem.

These achievements reflect not only their hard work and dedication but also the program's ability to nurture well-rounded, digitally skilled young artists.

[T.RAP EP](#) →

[Mentee Website](#) →

## Looking Ahead: A Vision for 2025

As we look to 2025, we're thrilled to announce plans to take T.RAP to the next level by integrating components of our Digital Literacy curriculum from TECK into the program. By pairing website development with additional digital literacy training, we aim to create more digitally independent young people ready to leverage these skills for further education, employment, and entrepreneurial ventures. In addition, aim for our cohort to involve Participatory Action Research on matters that hurt them in order to influence the music our mentees develop as well as increase their civic engagement to impact their communities and have a voice in change.

The future of T.RAP is brighter than ever, and we can't wait to continue this transformative journey alongside our incredible mentees, mentors, and supporters. Together, we're shaping lives, one beat—and one website—at a time.

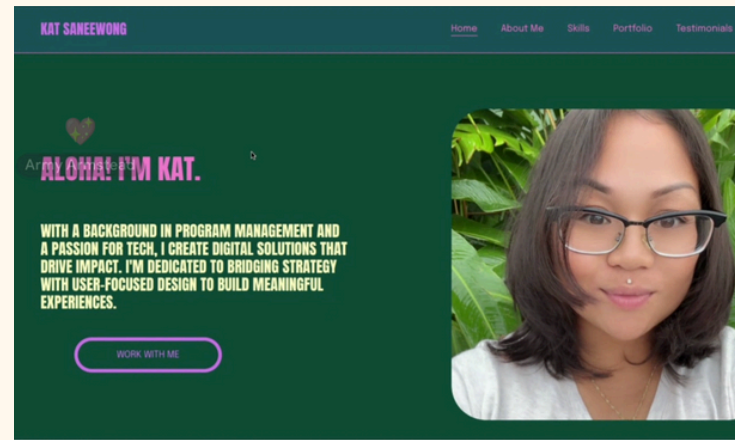


**Thanks to your generous support  
\$90,000 went directly to our mentees in  
2024 through stipends and contracting**

## Emergent Works Has Been A Game Changer

"The Emergent Works TECK Program and Digital Design Cohort have been a game-changer for me. They have given me the tools and support I need to pursue a career in Tech. Since completing the program, I've built several websites for clients and started freelancing as a digital design and strategy specialist. This journey has boosted my confidence and helped me realize my potential, inspiring me to take the next step by pursuing a Master's in Engineering Management. I'm excited to keep growing and finding new ways to make an impact through technology and design."

**Kat 2024 TECK Graduate**



[Kat's Website](#) →

## Emergent Works Is A Community

"Even as someone with coding experience, navigating the ever-evolving landscape of technology felt daunting as someone impacted by systemic challenges. EW offered a lifeline, fulfilling their promise of equipping me with the skills that helped fill in the gaps due to incarceration. Empowered with the skills & support from EW, I'm ready to embark on the next chapter of my journey. Emergent Works has not just enhanced my technology skills but also cultivated a sense of belonging & hopefulness for the future. Emergent Works isn't just a program; it's a community."

**Nashid, TECK 2024 graduate**

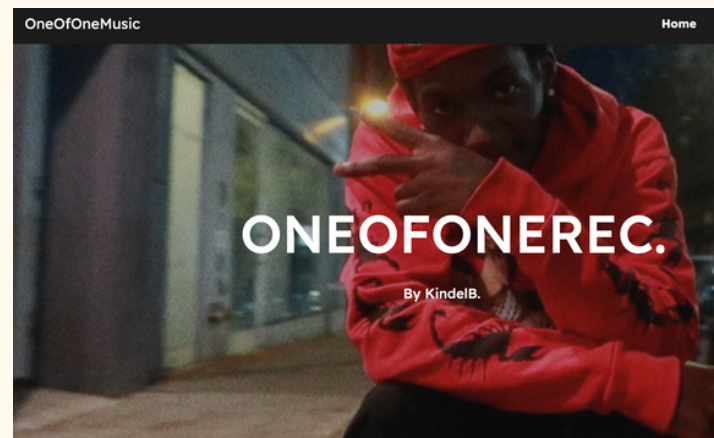


[Nas' Website](#) →

## The Program Impacted Me In So Many Ways

I joined the program to help w grief, help me grow, and the program just wants better for the youth and I'm on that same thing with my music so it just felt right. Being in the program, it meant a lot. it was a new experience for me and I enjoyed it honestly, it impacted me in so many ways from being an artist, to being a growing person. Everyone just made it comfortable and I appreciated the love & support from all mentors, everything just felt real, felt natural, felt at peace when I'm there.

**Kindel 2024 T.RAP Graduate**



[Kindel's Website](#) →

### **I'm So Impressed By Lori's Commitment**

"I've really enjoyed getting to know Lori. I'm SO impressed by her commitment to learning and how quickly she's picking up all these new skills.

This is my second time mentoring for Digital Literacy Skills cohort and it's so different, in a good way. Now, the students benefit from class time with an instructor twice a week, and Lori and I meet weekly. Sometimes we go over exercises or we'll talk in greater depth about concepts she's learning in class. She is thoughtful about how she'll apply what she's learning to her career and I can't wait to see what she does next. She works hard and she is a star."

**Meagan, TECK Mentor 2023 & 2024**



### **I Am Grateful To Be Part of Blueberry's Journey**

It was a perfect pairing between me and Blueberry. It's been a pleasure to get to know Blueberry we have so much in common. Her mindset and outlook is so positive and has already accomplished so much. I see that she can manifest anything. She puts her mind to. I am grateful to be a part of her journey and see her grow in design. She already had knowledge of CMS and is currently using her new skills designing for the user in refreshing her own website. I'm excited to see how everything turns out. In our sessions, we focus a lot on learning Figma and developing personas to better understand the user we are designing for. Blueberry is advancing her skills in Figma at an impressive pace.

**Dawn, TECK Mentor 2024**



### **Mentoring Kat Has Been Such a Joy**

"Mentoring Kat has been such a joy. She puts so much time in learning UX design that when it comes to our sessions, it feels more like conversations than teaching. It's become my favorite part of the week.

Kat and I have been reviewing her portfolio and freelance websites. I love seeing Kat's progression in her website designs. She already has a good eye for design. So using her new skillsets has made her website better! My favorite part is watching her explore new opportunities that she didn't have prior to learning technical skills."

**Melissa, TECK 2023 & 2024**





## Transformative Partnerships

Emergent Works thrives because of our incredible partners. Their unwavering support fuels our mission and amplifies the impact we create together. We're deeply grateful for their dedication, collaboration, and belief in empowering system-impacted individuals to transform their futures.

### Workforce 1 Harlem

"Through our collaboration, I have seen firsthand the transformative power of your work. Your commitment to providing resources, support, and education to those who need it most has created positive change in the lives of many. Your unwavering collaboration and commitment to social equity inspire us to keep striving to build a brighter future. We look forward to continuing this impactful partnership and creating even more opportunities for the community.

Thank you again for all the work you do. We are honored to work alongside you in making a meaningful difference."

### Center For Community Alternatives

"Having Emergent Works as a part of our NextGen Network, our CCA reentry initiative, has been an immense reward. We truly value this partnership and the positive change it brings to our community. Your collaboration and commitment inspire us to keep building a brighter future for those we serve.

Thank you for being an integral part of this journey. We look forward to continuing our work together and achieving even greater milestones."

### Staten Island Justice Center

"Emergent Works helped us provide invaluable music programming to the youth on Staten Island. It is because of this partnership that we were able to create a safe space for youth to embrace their talents and dreams. We could not have done this without their dedicated team."



# Advocacy and Thought Leadership

At Emergent Works, we believe true change begins with action and amplifying voices. This year, we championed systemic change by advocating for the end of mass incarceration and addressing barriers to economic mobility. Through digital literacy, coding education, and fair chance hiring initiatives, we've empowered system-impacted individuals to thrive in the tech sector while driving innovative, community-driven solutions to break the cycle of inequality.

Our team contributed to national conversations on equity and justice, engaging in panels, podcasts, and conferences, including the NYC Day of Empathy, Non-Profit Technology Conference, and Congressional Black Caucus Conference, to name a few. These platforms allowed us to share our insights, collaborate with like-minded leaders, and inspire actionable solutions.

## Thought Leadership platforms/panels:

- NYC Day of Empathy: Host/Moderator
- Non-Profit Technology Conference: Equity in tech through fair Chance hiring: Panelist
- BlackManVent Podcast: Guest
- Congressional Black Caucus conference: Exhibit Presenter
- EW TechaThon: Fair Chance Hiring: Panelist
- Peerpacolypse Conference: Presenter
- New Profit's The Well conference: Panelist
- Brooklyn Artfest: Panelist
- BarCafe Podcast: Guest
- Civic engagement work with 100suits and Activate your Life LLC (justice for all voting campaign)





# Challenges and Lessons Learned

Every year brings unique challenges, and 2024 was no different. As we expanded our impact, we faced hurdles that tested our resilience and resourcefulness. With fewer staff members and learning to navigate a funding climate post-George Floyd, we had to reimagine how we operated, often taking on additional responsibilities and stretching our capacities with less time. This meant doubling down on our existing roles and finding innovative ways to streamline processes and ensure we continued to deliver exceptional programs.

One major initiative was developing and integrating a CRM system, which allowed us to organize, track, and run programs more efficiently. This tool became a cornerstone of our operations, enabling us to simplify workflows, improve participant experiences, and free up time for deeper, more meaningful engagement. We additionally also applied a project management system that streamlined all our organizational goals with aligned tasks, and ensured transparency and progress amongst each level. Additionally, we also added more success criteria for graduating in our programs and made all our programs instructor-led.

Despite some challenges we have had, the numbers speak to our collective determination: we successfully served 73 system-impacted mentees this year. Through creativity, teamwork, and an unwavering commitment to our mission, we ensured every mentee received the support, mentorship, and resources they needed to thrive.

Looking ahead, we're focused on refining our systems, investing in staff development, and fostering partnerships that streamlines certain services for our community & team. We're committed to building a foundation that can support even more mentees without compromising the quality of our programs. These lessons have made us stronger, more adaptive, and ready to meet the challenges of the future head-on.



# Our Finances

In 2024, the generosity of our supporters and partners fueled our ability to empower system-impacted individuals through transformative programs and initiatives. From philanthropic foundations to innovative tech collaborations, and individual donors, each contribution helped us deliver on our mission. This year's funding highlights reflect not only the trust of our donors but also the breadth of our impact across various communities.

Here's a look at our expenses that made our programs possible and the resources that equipped our mentees with the tools to thrive.

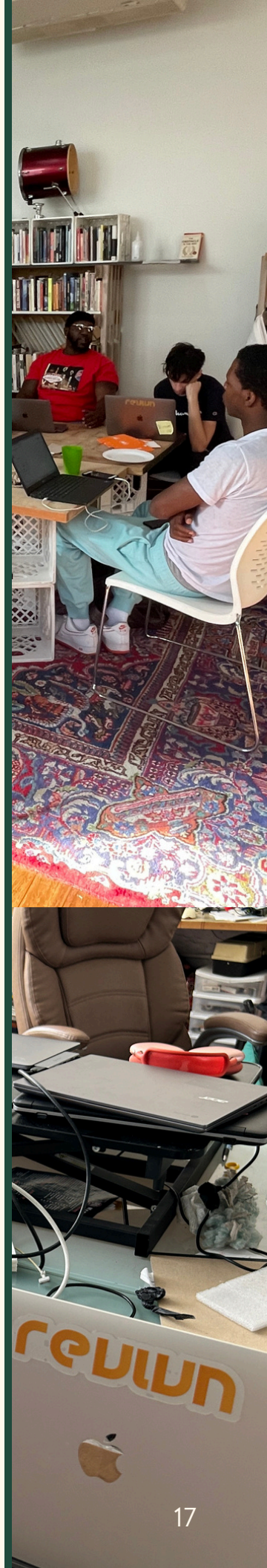
## 2024 Total Expense by Category



Chart: Stephanie Cooperman, YPTC Associate • Source: Sage Intacct • Created with Datawrapper

## Thank You To Our Partners

- Nike
- Revivin
- New Profit
- Crypto Harlem
- West Rock Fund
- Neo Philanthropies
- The Ford Foundation
- The Pinkerton Foundation
- West Side Community Fund
- Community Justice Exchange
- Michael Jordan Family Foundation
- Center for Community Alternatives



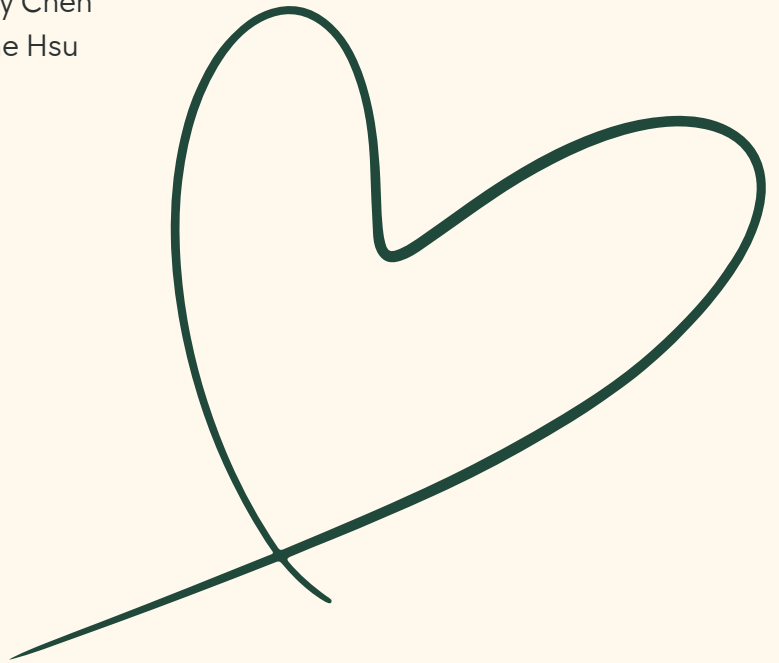
# Thank You To Our Dedicated Donors and Board Members

## Donor Shoutout

- Clara O'Neal
- Ling Kong
- Katherine Saneewong
- Emiliano Lopez
- Nikki Nikkhoui
- Montrinaa Hill
- Yu-Ann Chen
- J Hyde
- Dzyana Maher
- Natalie Polen
- Niels Steenstrup
- Logan Gittelson
- Alice C
- Andy and Sharon Nussbaum
- Jose Dominguez
- Edward Diaz
- Roberto Goizueta
- Michelle Jackson
- Harrison Ribeiro de Oliveira
- Jessica Meng

## Board Members

- Monti Hill
- Dion Ridley
- Rosalind Zavras
- Ashley Chen
- Jerone Hsu



**\$14k+ raised**

Digitizing Dreamz Campaign

**\$1500 raised**

Giving Tuesday Campaign

**\$1k raised**

Art over Content Concert





# Future Plans: Strategic Vision for Growth and Impact in 2025

Building on the transformative milestones of 2024, Emergent Works is embarking on an impactful journey in 2025 with a focus on program reach, capacity building, and innovation. Our goal is to amplify impact, empower communities, and create sustainable pathways to success.

## Expanding Our Reach

As we move throughout 2025, we aim to:

- Empowering a movement for digital literacy for all individuals, especially those impacted by the criminal legal system.
- Supporting them in gaining technical independence and real-world practice.

## Driving Innovation

We're integrating digital literacy into T.RAP and refining our mentorship and career development models to equip mentees with 21st-century skills and opportunities for growth.

## Fueling Growth

To sustain and expand our impact, we're diversifying funding streams through new grants and innovative campaigns, building the financial resilience needed for the future.

## Looking Ahead

As we move into 2025, we're focusing on efforts that drive 80% of our impact through 20% of strategic actions. With a leaner team, enhanced systems, and strengthened partnerships, we are ready to close digital literacy and racial wealth gaps while deepening engagement and scaling impact.

*Together, we're shaping a future where everyone has the tools to thrive.*

# Thank You Truly For Supporting Us

We are profoundly grateful for your belief in Emergent Works and commitment to empowering our amazing community of system-impacted youth and adults. This year's achievements and stories showcase the transformative power of unity, innovation, and resilience.

Now more than ever, we need your support to sustain and expand our impact. Every contribution directly determines how many lives we can touch each year, how many mentees we can equip with critical skills, and how many barriers we can help dismantle for those seeking a brighter future.

Your involvement fuels our mission to close digital literacy gaps, foster economic and technical independence, and create sustainable opportunities for those most affected by systemic inequities. Whether you're an individual inspired by our work or an organization eager to partner, your support is crucial in driving meaningful change.

Thank you for standing with us—let's build a future where opportunity knows no bounds.

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[Donate](#)



[Learn More](#)

