



WILMINGTON
ALLIANCE

Wilmington Alliance

Presentation to the Wilmington City Council
Finance & Economic Development Committee

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June 3, 2024



Wilmington Alliance brings people together to drive innovative solutions, leverage resources and promote opportunities to empower the city's residents and businesses.

   [WilmingtonAlliance.org](https://www.WilmingtonAlliance.org)



EQUITY

Our work is guided by the belief that social and economic well-being occurs when traditionally underserved individuals and communities both drive and share in the benefits of economic growth.



RESULTS-ORIENTED

Our programs and initiatives produce demonstrable outcomes that directly and indirectly improve the quality of life for Wilmington's residents and businesses.



INCLUSION

We recognize, value, and embrace the diversity that is found in our community. This includes diversity of thought and experience as well as diversity along race, age, cultural representations, gender identity, sexual orientation and physical ability.



COLLABORATION

We seek to build bridges and create inclusive solutions in our shared commitment to the City of Wilmington and its residents. We do this by listening, engaging, and partnering with the community. We are stronger together as we share expertise, resources and networks.

The Alliance works to make Wilmington a more beautiful, safer, and thriving city that provides opportunity for all through our programs in:



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



ENTREPRENEUR & SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT



CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

Wilmington Alliance anchors its work in two vital conditions for health and well-being:



BASIC NEEDS FOR HEALTH & SAFETY



MEANINGFUL WORK & WEALTH



WRC and WLA Prior to the 2019 Merger

Wilmington 2000 was founded in 1993 and became Wilmington Renaissance Corporation (WRC) in 2000. It had a real estate development arm in early 2000s that initiated Ships Tavern District and Ships Tavern Parking Garage.

- Created the Downtown Wilmington Business Improvement District and its management company, Downtown Visions, which continues today
- Created The Delaware College of Art & Design, which continued until today
- Partnered in the establishment of a Main Street program for the downtown area, which continues today, managed by Downtown Visions
- Served as the redevelopment agency on behalf of the city in the Lower Market Street area (Ships Tavern District). Then partnered in the re-positioning of the Lower Market Street area as LoMa Design District, which exists today
- Played an integral role in increasing the downtown workforce by more than 8,000 jobs in the mid-90s
- Created and managed four consecutive public art programs for the downtown
- Partnered in the creation of a master plan for development in the downtown and riverfront
- Created the Downtown Business Information Zone (DBIZ), a vital source of information for anyone looking to open or expand a business in Downtown Wilmington
- Created new programming and events downtown to bring attention to Wilmington projects in development (i.e.: The Queen, Theatre N, new restaurants)
Events included: Downtown Fall Fest; Kalmar Races, CityLife Awards, CityLife Block Parties.
- Conceived and advocated for the creation of an artist live/work home ownership program and the creation of a Creative District
- Partnered in the creation of a City of Wilmington image campaign *Wilmington: In the Middle of it All*. Today, that campaign has evolved into InWilmDe.com — a comprehensive city events calendar that is free to all businesses and users

Wilmington Leaders Alliance (WLA) was launched in March of 2017 as a coalition of leaders from the private sector invested in making Wilmington the most dynamic small city in the country. With inaugural 31 members and each committing to pay min. \$10,000 in annual dues, WLA planned to engage the business community around four core issues, including leadership, economic development, education and safety.

- Hired Social Contract to research national best practices and assess local organizations focused on reduction of gun violence, resulting in the publication of the Blueprint to Address the Urban Gun Violence in Wilmington (Wilmington Alliance then seeded the Center for Structural Equity with \$250K investment)
- Attracted national workforce development provider, Generation USA, and with them launched the Universal Banking training program, in partnership with M&T Bank, Capital ONE and WSFS Bank – prior to COVID delivered six cohorts with 85 graduates. As a result of COVID, Generation USA exited the market
- In the summer of 2019, ran a 3-month construction cohort, in partnership with AB&C Delaware and Williamson, with 20 graduates – that provided a foundation for creation of the collaborative that provided Construction Helper training during COVID

Timeline since the 2019 Merger

August 2019

Established Wilmington Alliance

- Continued with executing the WLA and WRC grants: WLA had workforce training cohorts in banking and construction and funded Social Contract's gun violence reduction blueprint report; WRC had creative placemaking work in WCC (construction of the 7&West Park) and small business retail retention and attraction, including kitchen incubator
- In November Renata is invited to attend the NLC CIE program gathering and in December the Philly Fed invites us to their inaugural Reinventing Our Communities (ROC) cohort

2020

In response to COVID-19 and to create a foundation for the economic recovery of the city, launched several initiatives:

- Funded the creation of the Center for Structural Equity with \$250K investment
- Participated in the inaugural Fed Philly ROC cohort focused on equity and inclusion in workforce
- Created and administered the Equitable Technology Fund to address digital divide in workforce funded with Barclays \$100K
- Created and managed multiple cohorts of the Construction Collaborative workforce training to address needs for construction workers
- Invited by JPMC to serve as a backbone organization for their national Second Chance Employment Collaborative program in Delaware (grant from 2020 – 2022)
- Received a letter of support from the Mayor for participation in the NLC CIE first cohort focused on equity and inclusion in entrepreneurship
- Created and co-managed with Cornerstone West CDC the Wilmington Strong Fund through end of 2023
- Created the WilmingtonMADE shop local campaign to draw customers to Wilmington-based businesses
- Launched the Equitable Entrepreneurial Ecosystem (E3) with PDFF, with 3 businesses, as a pilot
- Found a church for the Wilmington Kitchen Collective location and a potential operating partner
- Partnered with Technical.ly to create a journalistic platform for Black and Brown entrepreneurs to tell their stories of what is working and not working in Wilmington, from their experiences (a 12-week series called "Seeking Equity in Wilmington")
- After year long negotiations, signed a promissory note agreement with the City to take over the liquor store and laundromat building and create a community gathering space – received approval from the city council and the DRPC

2021

Developed the first strategic plan (2021 – 2023) and organizational Mission/Vision/Values

- Concluded the WLA Longwood grant that included the gun violence work
- Continued with all the programs established in 2020 with the exception of no longer doing direct training in workforce
- Started construction of the Art O Mat and construction of the Wilmington Kitchen Collective at Grace Church
- Requested and received an additional parcel of land from the Land Bank, adjacent to the Art O Mat
- Offered outdoor programming in West Center City, from late Spring through the Fall
- After successful Year 1 of the NLC CIE program participation, received Mayor's support to address the access to capital needs for small businesses
- Through participation in the Fed's ROC, was introduced to and accepted into the National Fund for Workforce Solutions



Timeline since the 2019 Merger, continued

2022

Continued with the following programs:

- Second Chance Employment Collaborative which also included partnering on the expungement and job fairs and clinics
- Through the membership with the National Fund for Workforce Solutions, selected by Annie E. Casey Foundation for Year 1 Generation Work and for Systems Change Lab
- Wilmington Strong Fund with Cornerstone West CDC
- WilmingtonMADE piloted providing paid marketing support for small businesses
- Equitable Entrepreneurial Ecosystem (E3) with PDFF
- In January opened Wilmington Kitchen Collective at Grace Church; with high demand for kitchen use, opened the second location, at First & Central Presbyterian Church, in December of 2022 – started conversations about other churches to meet the demand
- As part of NLC CIE program participation, launched Kiva Delaware, in partnership with Cornerstone West CDC
- Formed public policy ad-hoc committee to explore the best ways Wilmington Alliance can be engaged in advocacy
- Continued to explore what could be Wilmington Alliance’s role in gun violence reduction and the retention & recruitment of businesses
- For example, went to Baltimore to meet with the Baltimore Development Corporation that does economic development for the city of Baltimore
- Continued construction of the Art O Mat while also programming the Rock Lot, 7 & West Park and the community garden; installed 3 Art Racks
- The Executive Board approved the completion of the WRC’s “Vacant to Vibrant” Plan, with the Art O Mat, as the last part of that plan

2023

Completed the Art O Mat construction bringing us to now 3 properties that need to be safe, maintained and programmed for the West Center City community

- JPMC decided not to continue with the Second Chance Employment Collaborative, but we continued the work we started
- Annie E Casey Foundation selected us for Year 2 of the Generation Work
- Paused the Wilmington Strong Fund to assess its impact and needs for that type of small business support
- Expanded WilmingtonMADE to offer more direct marketing supports but also piloted the back-office support for small businesses that turned out to be in more demand than we initially planned
- Continued with E3 partnership with PDFF and Kiva Delaware access to capital partnership with Cornerstone West CDC
- Completed construction in kitchen #3 and identified kitchen #4 to be open in 2024
- Kicked off 2024 – 2027 strategic planning process
- Exec Board approved Wilmington Alliance advocacy and public policy engagement in two vital conditions for health & well-being
- Paid for windbreakers, T-shirts, book bags and hats for the City's Community Public Safety Initiative

2024

Programming from 2023 continues into 2024 focused on three areas: workforce development, entrepreneur & small business support and creative placemaking



2023 Impact

Since 2015, our investment in **West Center City** totals **\$3.1 million**

Since 2021, through multiple collaborative partners, we have supported over **1,300 job seekers** and secured **341 jobs**, with **91%** being **justice-impacted**



2023 IMPACT

Wilmington Alliance brings people together to drive innovative solutions, leverage resources and promote opportunities to empower the city's residents and businesses.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Wilmington Alliance works with partners to advance an equitable workforce by identifying barriers, and addressing the challenges with the legal, hiring and retention practices, while actively advocating for policy changes and system-based solutions.

- 159** people enrolled in job readiness training
- 148** people received assistance with fines and fees
- 44** people received job transportation supports
- 479** participants had their records reviewed across 5 expungement events
- 40** people placed in gainful employment



CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

Wilmington Alliance has led a multi-project revitalization effort in West Center City and offers free art, cultural and community programming, to generate community engagement and civic pride.

- 3** revitalized properties in West Center City - (7th and West Park, Rock Lot, Art O Mat)
- 72** arts & cultural activities with an estimated 1,092 attendees
- 20** artists & **36** local small businesses supported



2023 Impact

Since 2020, Wilmington Alliance supported **566 small businesses** and contributed over **\$1.4 million in programming**



ENTREPRENEUR & SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

Wilmington Alliance collaborates with multiple partners to support entrepreneurs in the city and reduce barriers many underserved small business owners face on their path to success

WILMINGTON KITCHEN COLLECTIVE:

Wilmington Kitchen Collective is a Partnership between Wilmington Alliance and Riverfront Ministries

17 Culinary Entrepreneurs across 2 Kitchen Locations

\$33,628

in Grants, License/Permit Fees, and Marketing Services to Culinary Entrepreneurs

KIVA DELAWARE:

In Partnership with Cornerstone West CDC we provided 12 Small Businesses Access to Capital totaling

\$81,500

EQUITABLE ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM (E3):

In Partnership with Pete du Pont Freedom Foundation we supported **5 Wilmington Based Small Businesses**



WILMINGTONMADE:

9 Small Business Workshops with 159 participants

24 Small Businesses Received Free, Direct Marketing or Back-End Services

totaling **\$40,500**

ENTREPRENEUR & SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAM DEMOGRAPHICS:

Minority Owned - **81%**

Women Owned - **70%**

Wilmington-Based - **77%**

West Center City

CREATIVE PLACEMAKING REVITALIZATION IN WEST CENTER CITY



By investing in infrastructure within the community, Wilmington Alliance creates an equitable environment where community members have access to resources and experiences in their own neighborhood. Our creative placemaking work aims to generate community engagement and civic pride. We have invested over \$3 Million in West Center City, including the revitalization of 3 public spaces that have transformed vacant lots to green spaces and vacant buildings to community assets.

Key Projects since 2015:

- Murals/Public Art
 - Rock Lot
- 7th & West Park & Community Garden
- Wilmington Kitchen Collective @Grace Church
 - Art O Mat



ART O MAT | 501 W. 7TH STREET

Located on the corner of 7th and Washington, this project was completed in 2023. Once a former liquor store and laundromat, this multi-use indoor space and adjacent patio, now houses art and wellness programming, art exhibits, community meetings and workshops.



ROCK LOT | 305 W. 8TH STREET

This first effort to remake vacant lots in West Center City, opened in 2017. The space features a grass lawn and outdoor seating, used for cultural events and programs. A Lending Library, located at the Rock Lot, is an accessible community "bookshelf" for children and youth, featuring books centering diverse experiences, and written from the perspectives of authors of color.



7TH & WEST PARK | 320 W. 7TH STREET

Completed in 2019, this project reclaimed empty and blighted brownfields in West Center City. Through the process of remediation, construction, and landscaping, the 17,000-square-foot park, located at the corner of 7th and West Streets, has become a green oasis for the neighborhood. It includes a community garden with 11 accessible raised beds.



West Center City – Programming

Since 2022, we hosted 126 free community events with over 2,000 attendees



WILMINGTON ALLIANCE SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

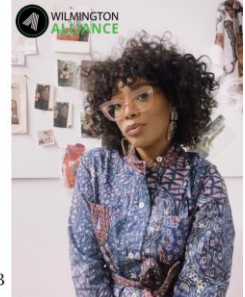
6:00-7:30 PM

The Wilmington Alliance Summer Concert Series is back! Co-sponsored with Gable Music Ventures, this series brings favorite Wilmington-area musicians to 7th & West Park. No cost to attend. Open to the public!



SHEFON N. TAYLOR

11-01 - 12-01-23



ART O MAT ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

Wilmington Alliance welcomes new Artist-in-Residence Shefon N. Taylor, interdisciplinary artist whose Art O Mat residency will focus on personal collective reimagining through vernacular photography and the archive.

WILMINGTON ALLIANCE

Self-Care for Sistas

THURSDAYS @ 5:30 PM
April 18 - July 18
excluding June 6th - July 4th

Self-Care for Sistas is designed to support women through yoga practices, breath work, and meditation to help balance emotions, cultivate resilience, and allow the body to experience deeper and more nourishing states of rest. Participants will engage in soulful movement, mindful journaling, the embodiment of sisterhood, and much more!



WILMINGTON ALLIANCE

Art O Mat

CARIBBEAN DANCE FITNESS

FREE CLASSES!
• Improve cardiovascular health,
• Increase flexibility,
• Self-confidence,
• And build muscular strength



Beginner level friendly and recommended for adults ages 18 and up.
Join Us @ the ART O MAT
Register Today!
WELCOME INSTRUCTOR CRYSS

BUSS & WINE
SATURDAYS
10AM-11:15AM
March 23
April 6
April 20
May 4
May 18
June 1

Creating Joy Through Movement & Music !!

Urban yoga

FACILITATED BY FLYOGI
POWERED BY WILMINGTON ALLIANCE
LOCATED AT THE ART O MAT

OUTSPOKEN POETRY WORKSHOPS

MONDAYS @ 6:00 PM

HOSTED BY ANTHEM!

KYMA

Mantra Music Artist, Sound Healer, and Mindfulness & Meditation Instructor

Community Sound Healing Experience

Monthly Sessions: Every Third Wednesday @ the Art-O-Mat 6PM-7:30PM

Please Register and Join Us!

Meditation | Breathe Work
Live Instrumentation and Voice Guide

50.00 NIGHT ART MARKET
LIMITED SPACE AVAILABLE!
August 13, 7-9:30 PM
The Rock Lot, 305 W. 6th Street, Wilmington, DE
493

Why we need diverse books for children
All Ages Welcome
379

OUR BOOK DRIVE PARTNER
LENDING LIBRARY KICK-OFF PARTY!
Tuesday, July 19 6-7 PM
234

LENDING LIBRARY BOOK DRIVE KICK-OFF!
July 19 6-7 PM
258

OUR BOOK DRIVE PARTNER
LENDING LIBRARY KICK-OFF PARTY!
Tuesday, July 19 6-7 PM
234

LENDING LIBRARY KICK-OFF PARTY!
Tuesday, July 19 6-7 PM
220

LENDING LIBRARY BOOK DRIVE KICK-OFF!
July 19 6-7 PM
258

LENDING LIBRARY BOOK DRIVE!
child literacy in a new way. Buy a book, get a book, and share your experiences.
170

LENDING LIBRARY BOOK DRIVE!
child literacy in a new way. Buy a book, get a book, and share your experiences.
170

LENDING LIBRARY BOOK DRIVE!
child literacy in a new way. Buy a book, get a book, and share your experiences.
170

The Rock Lot

7th & West Park and Community Garden



Workforce Development



@WilmingtonAlliance



Have you visited our
Resource Directory?

www.WilmingtonAlliance.org/ResourceDirectory



**DELAWARE
CENTER FOR
JUSTICE**
PROJECT NEW START



- Resource Directory
- Expungement Events
- Fines & Fees Support
- Stipends Support
- Transportation Support
- NEW: dedicated employment pipeline into healthcare

**WILMINGTON ALLIANCE
EXPUNGEMENT &
JOB EXPO**

**DO YOU NEED HELP FINDING
EMPLOYMENT?
IS YOUR CRIMINAL RECORD
HOLDING YOU BACK?**

Employers and community
resource partners will be
on site!

Walk-ins welcome but
pre-registration for
pardon and expungement
services is preferred.

JOIN US!

**FRIDAY,
SEPTEMBER 15, 2023**
1:00PM - 6:00PM
WILLIAM "HICKS" ANDERSON
COMMUNITY CENTER
501 N. MADISON STREET
WILMINGTON, DELAWARE 19801

SCAN HERE TO REGISTER
FOR PRIVATE ONE-ON-ONE
EXPUNGEMENT SERVICES

If you are an
employer or
resource agency
and would like to
participate, please
contact,
Larry@wilmington
alliance.org.

**FREE FOOD | GIVEAWAYS
FAMILY FRIENDLY
ACTIVITIES AND
ENTERTAINMENT**

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WilmingtonAlliance.org



Friendship House
A Way Home



Entrepreneur & Small Business

WilmingtonMADE

Selected small businesses are matched with vendors to receive free marketing or back-end support. We also host monthly workshops for entrepreneurs and maintain a local small business online directory.

Wilmington Kitchen Collective

In partnership with Riverfront Ministries, we have commissary kitchens in Wilmington. These serve culinary entrepreneurs by providing a low-cost, commercial kitchens for use. Members work to move from informal to formal businesses and are guided through all certifications, as we help to remove the financial barriers by covering the initial costs of licensures and permits. Members also receive other program supports.

Kiva Delaware

Cornerstone West CDC and Wilmington Alliance launched Kiva Delaware in May 2022, to provide local small businesses an alternative access to capital and the opportunity to become bankable. Kiva US is a national expert in providing small 0% interest loans that support credit building. Microloans range from \$1,000-\$15,000.

Equitable Entrepreneurial Ecosystem (E3)

In 2020, in partnership with the Pete du Pont Freedom Foundation, we created the E3 program. As part of our commitment to support ethnically diverse entrepreneurs located in Wilmington, we participate in the selection of businesses into the E3's annual cohort, and we fund the support for Wilmington-based businesses accepted into that cohort.



EXPANDING ACCESS TO CAPITAL FOR ENTREPRENEURS

A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN
Riverfront
WILMINGTON ALLIANCE

WILMINGTON Kitchen COLLECTIVE

Wilmington Kitchen Collective is a community-based project. We serve as a center of activity for entrepreneurs seeking a career in Wilmington's culinary arena. We provide lower-cost and higher-quality commercial kitchen facilities for growing food entrepreneurs.

Additionally, the Collective provides a curriculum of business services and training to assist entrepreneurs in their business growth.

Together we provide a creative space for professionals to share contacts and knowledge, for businesses to thrive.

WilmingtonKitchenCollective.com
Follow us on Social Media:
@WilmingtonKitchenCollective

Ready to give? Donate here:

"We all come together in the Kitchen!"

Ways to Support:

- Hire our entrepreneurs for your next event
- Mentor a member
- Speak at a workshop



Introducing Entrepreneurial Training

- Monthly WilmingtonMADE workshops and training sessions
- Kauffman FastTrac: 10 Week Training for new entrepreneurs. Pilot Cohort will start in June



KAUFFMAN
FAST
TRAC®



**Learn more about Wilmington Alliance
at:
www.WilmingtonAlliance.org**

