



Annual Report

2019-2020

**Harlem Children’s Zone breaks
the cycle of intergenerational
poverty with on-the-ground,
all-around programming
that builds up opportunities
for children, families, and
communities.**

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A Year of Change, Innovation, and Pride

It goes without saying that 2020 brought about enormous change. It was not what I imagined in my first months as CEO of Harlem Children's Zone, but it reaffirmed to me that our organization was built to rise to the occasion in times like this.

Innovation and impact are two pillars of the strategic vision my team and I have laid out for the next five years. The pandemic forced us to innovate and increase our impact far faster than we had anticipated. While 2020 was a year filled with grief and suffering, I am so proud of how the HCZ team selflessly showed up for our community. Everyone met the magnitude of the moment, swiftly innovated how they supported our children and families, and did everything humanly possible to alleviate the stress and pressure COVID-19 put on the people of Harlem. So impactful was our work that the Audacious Project took note and invested \$26 million towards our \$50 million goal to fund our national relief and recovery effort in Harlem and in six partner communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

Thanks to the dedication and spirit of the HCZ team and the unfaltering support of the board, we have ensured that our children and families are supported during these difficult times. Our early planning and strategic approach to addressing this crisis further strengthened our position as a national leader. To the HCZ team and the board, thank you for bringing hope, success, and leadership to Harlem and the country at a critical moment in time.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge a year of transition. In June 2020, we gave a bittersweet goodbye to my predecessor, Anne Williams-Isom. Anne has settled into her next chapter, now serving as a department chair in the Graduate School of Social Service at Fordham University. Fordham is lucky to have her! Anne, you left big shoes for me to fill—thank you for raising the bar and encouraging me to be better today than I was yesterday.



A Privilege to Serve

It is a privilege and an honor to write my first annual report letter as Chair of the HCZ board. I'd like to take a moment to thank Geoff Canada, Stan Druckenmiller, and the entire board for this extraordinary opportunity. I take this new charge with humility, commitment, and great optimism.

Like Stan—whose twenty-year tenure was an incredible success—I was drawn to HCZ because of its first-rate management, trailblazing model, and remarkable results. The quantifiable and unparalleled success of the HCZ model speaks for itself, and the need for this work is greater than ever.

As I am certain you already know, a key ingredient to HCZ's success is Kwame. It has been a pleasure to collaborate with him—his enthusiasm is inspiring, his intellect towering, and his commitment to HCZ indisputable. Kwame's plans for the future are strategic and ambitious. I look forward to the future of our partnership as we support the HCZ team in continuing to change the conversation and offer innovative, high-impact solutions to the intractable problems of poverty, racism, and injustice.

Lastly, I'd like to thank our donors. You power our work. Your generosity is the lifeblood of HCZ. We wish we could thank each of you personally and individually. Thank you for making Harlem Children's Zone a possibility—and an institution that has transformed lives for twenty years and counting. Our team continually seeks to make you proud.

KEITH MEISTER



“Thank you for making Harlem Children’s Zone a possibility—and an institution that has transformed lives for twenty years and counting. Our team continually seeks to make you proud.”

KEITH MEISTER

Gratitude for the Past, Excitement for the Future



How does one adequately thank a person like Stan Druckenmiller? For his twenty years as Chair, Stan and I worked in close partnership to turn a fledgling dream into a robust reality. It is not an overstatement to say: if not for Stan's belief in the vision of HCZ, if not for his unyielding support, and if not for his commitment to this cause, HCZ would not be what it is today.

And what it is today is not only a beacon of light and hope in Central Harlem. It is not only an organization that people in need know they can turn to—again and again—for resources, support, friendship, and opportunity. It is not just at the center of a global conversation on how to, once and for all, eradicate the problems of systemic racism and poverty that oppress people of color and rob them of equal opportunities. It is, in fact, also a national leader of a movement that is rooting out poverty from the ground up in

once-desperate communities. It is working hand-in-hand with policymakers, educators, and nonprofit leaders across the country to effect real change. And it is expanding its scope to educate the like-minded in how to replicate and adapt our programs for the unique needs of their communities.

Twenty years into our story, HCZ exists and thrives thanks to Stan's leadership. Last year, it was a highlight of my career to honor him at the virtual Friend of the Children Award Celebration. Yet, when it comes to my gratitude for all that he has made possible for us, even that acknowledgment is merely the tip of the iceberg.

We are excited about what lies ahead for HCZ's next twenty years. I am thrilled to welcome Keith Meister as Chair. He shares Stan's passion for the work we do, and his experience positions him to excel in this role. Keith is an asset to HCZ, and I look forward to our collaboration. With the extraordinarily talented and indefatigable Kwame Owusu-Kesse at our helm—pushing HCZ to innovate, think differently, aim even higher, and lead the way for vulnerable communities across the U.S.—the future is bright.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Canada', is placed below the main body of text.



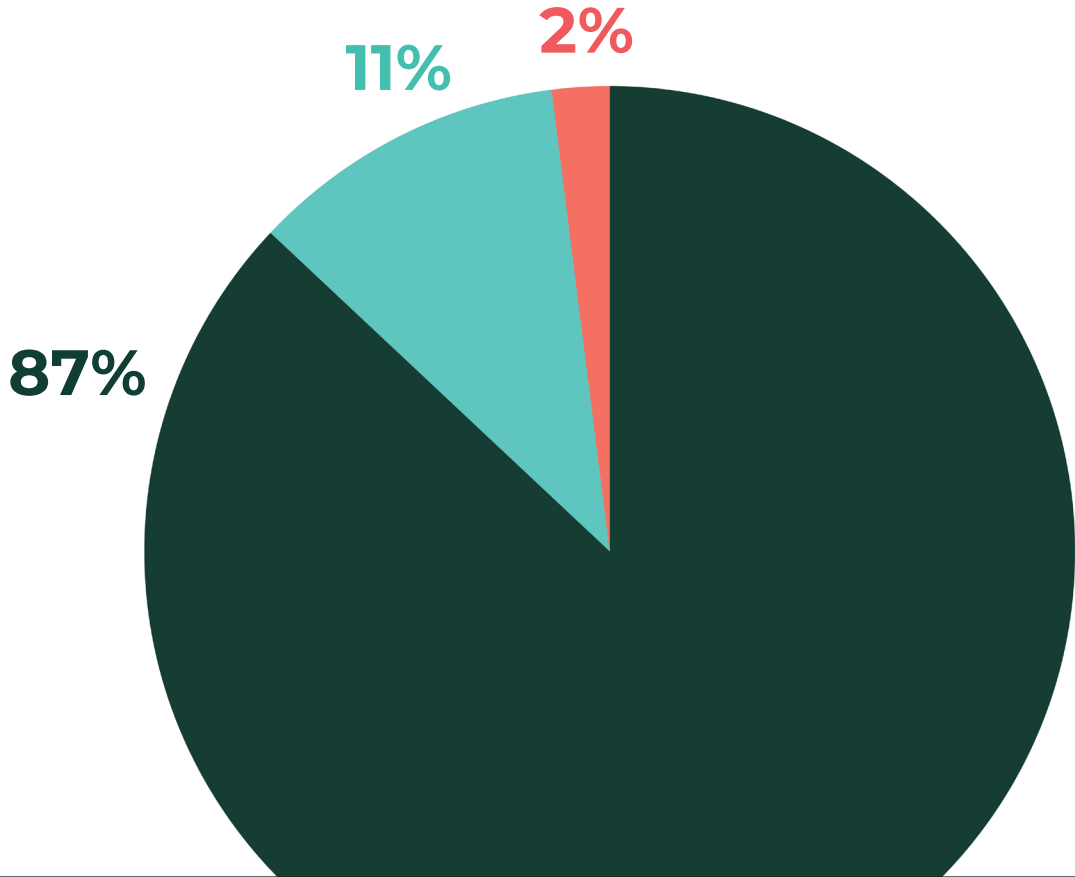
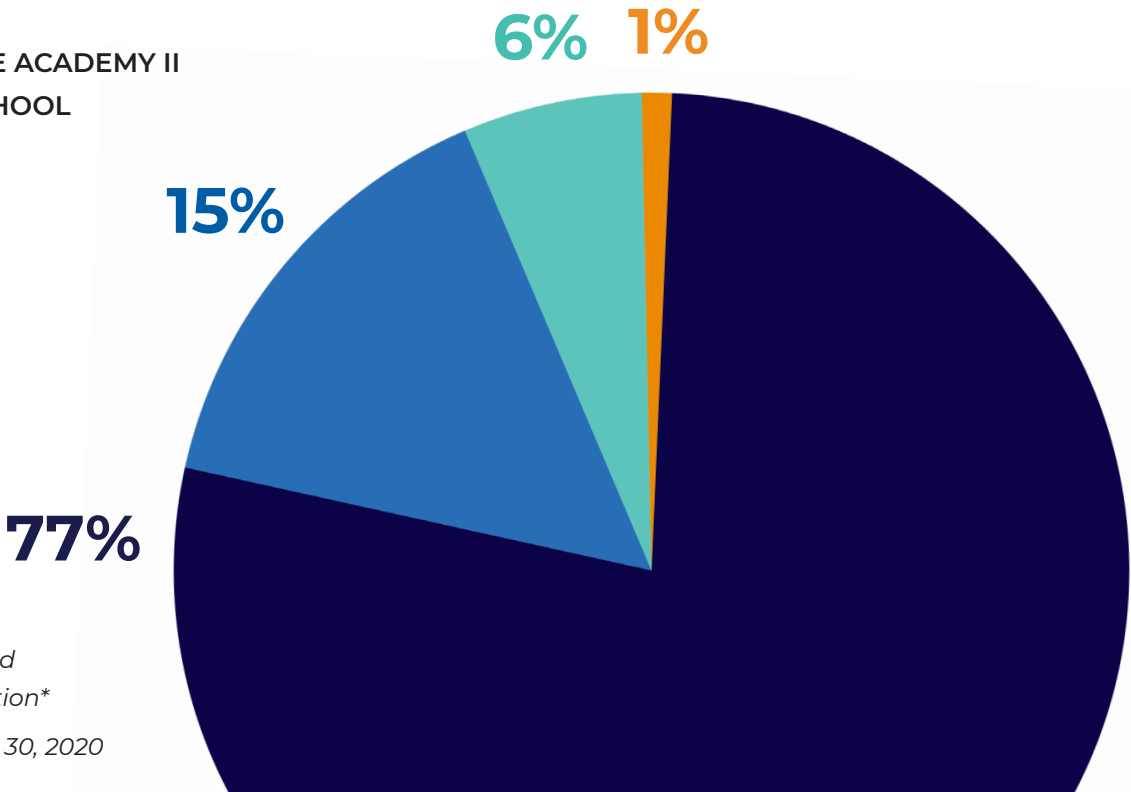
Ensuring a Sustainable Community

Revenues and Support

PRIVATE GRANTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS**	\$124,487,994	77%
GAIN ON INVESTMENTS, NET	\$24,730,631	15%
GOVERNMENT GRANTS	\$9,721,306	6%
RENTAL INCOME FROM AFFILIATES	\$1,985,243	1%
INTEREST & OTHER INCOME	\$387,884	0%
<hr/>		
TOTAL REVENUES	\$161,313,058	100%

HCZ PROMISE ACADEMY
CHARTER SCHOOL
\$24,909,618

HCZ PROMISE ACADEMY II
CHARTER SCHOOL
\$25,023,830



Expenses

PROGRAM SERVICES	\$80,059,711	87%
MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL	\$9,928,741	11%
FUNDRAISING	\$2,100,928	2%
<hr/>		
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$94,150,245	100%

HCZ PROMISE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL	\$24,254,700
HCZ PROMISE ACADEMY II CHARTER SCHOOL	\$24,179,503

* Excluded from the above data are in-kind contributions from HCZ to the Promise Academy Schools.
** Includes multi-year commitments as required under U.S. accounting regulations.

Twenty years ago...

Geoffrey Canada dared to set out on what *The New York Times* called “one of the most ambitious social experiments of our time.” He had a vision of building up a series of community-responsive, place-based services and solutions targeted to the needs of Central Harlem and its families. Today, we have a generation of proof that this bold and innovative approach to rooting out poverty and opening pathways to success works.

In the past twenty years...

Our aim has remained simple: provide a wraparound and holistic offering that encompasses cradle to career and addresses a breadth of community needs. Our process has been robust: based on what we learn from our community, we have consistently built upon our suite of programs and services—from early childhood development, to best-in-class charter schools, career services, health and wellness, and community organizing and advocacy—and we are not done.

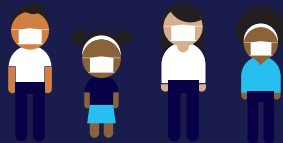
Twenty years from now...

We want anyone in need of a proof positive solution for intergenerational poverty to access the resources and turnkey solutions to implement place-based solutions of their own. As we continue to dedicate our relentless creativity and persistence to the people of Harlem, we are also leading the way more broadly, supporting policymakers, educators, and nonprofit leaders across the world to do the same in their communities.

Impact

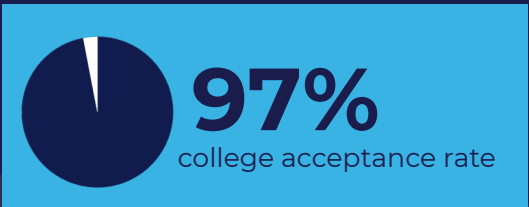


535 U.S. communities and 79 countries have visited the Practitioners Institute



6 partner cities replicating our COVID-19 Response and Recovery effort

Impact



graduates from The Baby College® since 2000

7,038



1,106



college graduates since 2011



12,000

participants in our Healthy Harlem program since 2012

22,500

youths and adults served annually across 97 blocks



20 years of HCZ

Ours is a story of relentless evolution in the name of a revolution—to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty in Central Harlem, once and for all.



GEOFFREY CANADA:
Purpose and Possibility
HCZ's Founder and CEO from 2000 to 2014



ANNE WILLIAMS-ISOM:
Strengthening and Sustainability
CEO from 2014 to 2020



KWAME OWUSU-KESSE:
Innovation and Impact
Transitioned to CEO in 2020

HCZ opens the Practitioners Institute as a way to invite policymakers, educators, and nonprofit leaders across the world to learn the best practices for place-based services.

Promise Academy® I Charter School opens its doors—and invites scholars of all ages to set their sights high on college and beyond.

College Success Office (now the Center for Higher Education and Career Support) launches. HCZ reaffirms its commitment to ensuring that all of our young people persist to and through college to career.

Lincoln and St. Nicholas Community Centers open.

HCZ hosts national “Changing the Odds” conference.



Geoffrey Canada's vision of a new way to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty is launched as Harlem Children's Zone.

The Baby College® is born. TBC offers an unprecedented support system for expectant and new parents and their children—tomorrow's college graduates and community role models.

Harlem Gems® PreK opens, and its teachers make sure even Harlem's littlest children are enthusiastic about working hard to become college graduates and self-sufficient citizens one day.

Promise Academy® II Charter School opens and welcomes many more Harlem scholars into the HCZ family.

HCZ Community Center (now the Geoffrey Canada Community Center) opens its doors as a safe haven for neighbors, families, and friends in Central Harlem.

A second Harlem Gems® location opens. The HCZ education universe grows further.



The Armory—with its sprawling 50,000 square feet—opens to the residents of Central Harlem. The space becomes a hub for sports, fitness, and community events.

The Baby College® extends to include GRADS (Guardians Responding and Developing Strategies) for TBC graduates to deepen knowledge and strengthen parent-child relationships.

Promise Academy's® first high school graduates throw their caps into the air, making HCZ so proud as they prepare to head off to college.

HCZ introduces Healthy Harlem, a program with a mission to help the people of Harlem make better health and nutrition choices in the name of long, vital lives.

Anne Williams-Isom is named CEO. Geoffrey Canada remains President, and the HCZ Community Center on 125th Street is renamed in his honor.

President Barack Obama announces the Promise Zones initiative, inspired by HCZ. Promise Academy® students attend the announcement ceremony at the White House, where Promise freshman Kiara Molina introduces President Obama.



FLOTUS Michelle Obama celebrates College Signing Day with HCZ students.

In partnership with The Audacious Project, HCZ launches a swift and supercharged effort to provide COVID-19 relief and recovery to Black communities disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

Under President Geoffrey Canada's leadership, HCZ launches the William Julius Wilson Institute to be the home of HCZ's national leadership efforts.

Kwame-Owusu Kesse is named CEO. A grateful HCZ says goodbye to CEO Anne Williams-Isom.



Promise Academy® I School and Westside Community Center opens. In partnership with the city and generous private funders, HCZ opens a state-of-the-art, 135,000 square foot building in the heart of the St. Nicholas housing development. The facility becomes a locus of activity within the St. Nick community.

The Geoffrey Canada Scholarship is launched to provide financial support to a select group of our college-bound scholars each year.



Promise Academy® II celebrates its first graduating class—and their stellar 100% college acceptance rate.




The Emotional Wellness program kicks off, and seeks to offer a breadth of emotional supports, promote mindfulness, and be a beacon of hope to the people of Harlem.

The HCZ Approach

Our work focuses on three broad categories:

Education and Youth Programs



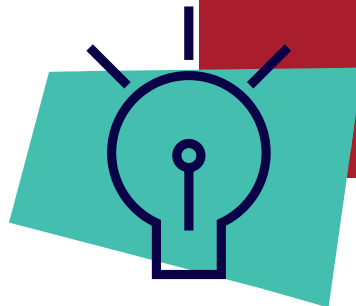
- The Baby College®
- The Baby College GRADS
- Three-Year-Old Journey
- Harlem Gems®
- Promise Academy® I and II Charter Schools
- Promise Afterschool and Athletics
- Peacemakers
- A Cut Above
- Housing Development Programs
- Academy of Arts & Civic Engagement
- Employment & Technology Center
- Countee Cullen Community Center
- Center for Higher Education and Career Support

Health and Community Programs



- Westside Community Center
- Geoffrey Canada Community Center
- Community Pride
- The Armory
- Healthy Harlem
- Emotional Wellness

National Leadership



- William Julius Wilson Institute (WJWI)
- Practitioners Institute
- National COVID-19 Relief and Recovery Effort

Promise Academy® Charter Schools

We believe every child has boundless potential. Our job at Promise Academy® is to help scholars identify and unleash their potential—so they will one day graduate from college and progress to successful, fulfilling careers. Along the way, we do whatever it takes to make sure every scholar knows his or her talents and is supported in nurturing them.

Take Mansour—today, he’s a seventh-grade Promise Academy® scholar, years from now he could be a principal clarinetist with one of the world’s great orchestras. In his third-grade orchestra class—which all our scholars take, as we believe a rich education includes the arts—he was asked to play clarinet. His teacher quickly recognized he had a gift. With no prior experience, this young boy was playing with high school-level proficiency.

Determined to do whatever it takes for Mansour to cultivate his natural talent, the Promise Academy® music department customized an accelerated jazz and classical music curriculum for him. They have also facilitated numerous opportunities for him to access enrichment outside of the school, including:

- Support with his successful application to the Manhattan School of Music Summer, for which he received a full scholarship and where he was the youngest student in attendance.
- Coordinating the chance for Mansour to meet and play for Anthony McGill—the esteemed principal clarinetist of the New York Philharmonic.
- Introducing him to invaluable role models, such as accomplished male African American Jazz/Classical musicians.
- The opportunity to perform with older peers within the Promise family in order to see other scholars who look like him excelling in the field of music.
- As a fifth-grader, inviting him to play with the middle school and high school bands.
- Gifting him a new instrument and equipment so that he may compete with the best students in the world. For example, Mansour surpassed level two at his first NYSSMA Solo and Ensemble Festival and received a score of “excellent” on a level three piece as a fifth-grader.

Once in college, Mansour plans to major in engineering and minor in music composition. Like all of our scholars, we cannot wait to see how he continues to grow and achieves great success.



We will go to college.
We will succeed.
This is our Promise.
This is our creed.

Promise Academy® Creed



HCZ PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT:

Healthy Harlem—Harvest Food Distribution



At HCZ, change is a constant. To remain faithful to our mission, we are rigorously culturally responsive—adapting our programs and introducing new ones based on the needs of our community. Healthy Harlem exemplifies this promise.

Healthy Harlem was founded in 2012 to empower HCZ’s children, families, and community residents to develop lifelong healthy habits. The program model focuses on nutrition education, physical activity, and targeted interventions to improve health outcomes. In addition to offering no-cost cooking classes, fitness classes, and wellness workshops, we also have a free food distribution program—and its evolution over the years illustrates our whatever it takes approach to helping everyone in the Zone achieve health and vitality.

In 2013, we expanded upon our existing food distribution activities and established a City Harvest Mobile Market location. Our “Harvests” operate in partnership with City Harvest and local CSAs. For years, Harvests have taken place on the second Saturday of every month in the plaza of the St. Nicholas Housing Development. Participants leave with 15-to-20-pound bags of no-cost fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as recipes inclusive of the ingredients and produce they’ve received.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, food insecurity skyrocketed across the entire country. Low-income communities like Harlem, where access to healthy food was already an issue, were hit even harder. Given our unwavering commitment to the health and wellbeing of those in the Zone, we had to intervene—and as quickly and safely as possible. Doing so required that we adapt Harvest and find a way to, yet again, distribute more food to more people.

As of July 2020, we have distributed over 80,000 pounds of produce. While food distribution is now split across multiple sites and the friendly faces of staff and neighbors are safely behind masks, the communal spirit of Harvest remains alive and well. So long as anyone in our community struggles with food insecurity, we will be there to support their health and wellness—the bedrock of living happy, successful, and productive lives.

STUDENT HIGHLIGHT:

Elijah Dormeus



We can look at Elijah Dormeus’s story in one of two ways. We can see hardship. Or we can see incredible resourcefulness, drive, and hunger for success.

Born in Harlem, Elijah is the fifth oldest of nine children. When he was seven, his Dad passed away, leaving his Mom to raise her family on her own. The family had no choice but to lean on the community and use any resources available to survive.

Despite these struggles, Elijah had a gift for seeing beyond the realities in front of him. Determined to build a resume and go to college, Elijah joined HCZ’s Employment and Technology Center (ETC) when he was a student at Frederick Douglass Academy, a traditional public high school located in Central Harlem. At ETC, Elijah’s dedication earned him the role of Presidential Ambassador, where he liaised between HCZ’s development team and donors. He would later turn this experience into an internship in HCZ’s Development Office. Not only did these opportunities allow him to gain career-

relevant experience, but they also allowed him to network with community and city leaders.

ETC staff were integral to helping Elijah navigate his college applications. With their support, and due to his scholastic achievement and impressive resume, Elijah enrolled in Morehouse College. Throughout his college education, HCZ’s Center for Higher Education and Career Support (CHECS) team stayed with Elijah every step of the way, connecting him with scholarship opportunities, providing guidance to ensure that he remained on track to graduate, and helping him navigate housing challenges. Highlights of Elijah’s college experience were the internship opportunities he found through CHECS. He spent one summer as a Development Officer at Robin Hood, where he analyzed grant requests and Robin Hood’s local partnerships. Elijah was also selected for a competitive, month-long summer internship in Amsterdam, where he worked as a Project Manager at the ReeHorst Hotel.

“It was intense, fast, fun, and educational—an experience of a lifetime. And I wouldn’t have had it without HCZ.”

ELIJAH DORMEUS

“At ReeHorst, I was entrusted with the task of producing a book that staff would use to market the hotel to customers,” Elijah said. “In a month’s time, I was learning InDesign, laying out the book, selecting photos, helping translate copy from Dutch to English—and then holding a book that I helped create in my hands. It was intense, fast, fun, and educational—an experience of a lifetime. And I wouldn’t have had it without HCZ.”

Today, Elijah is an AT&T Regional Channel Manager. While he’s worked with AT&T for

less than two years, he’s been promoted twice. After all his resilience and consistent hard work, Elijah is financially independent and thriving.

Elijah—and the five of his siblings who have also participated in HCZ programs—are why we do the work we do. We exist to ensure that every child’s story can turn into one of incredible resourcefulness, drive, and hunger for success, no matter the hardships along the way.

National Leadership

We're committed to creative partnerships and novel approaches to spreading the HCZ model

Under CEO Kwame Owusu-Kesse's leadership, we are ushering in an era of innovation to broaden the reach of our impact—at home and elsewhere. While we continue to focus our efforts on the people of Central Harlem, we are also committed to sharing our vision with other communities that could benefit from our model. We've gained a lot of wisdom in our twenty years, and our results prove that our approach to fighting intergenerational poverty is working. If we can successfully share our approach with others, we can help them avoid pitfalls, while building higher-impact programs and delivering them faster and more effectively.

The William Julius Wilson Institute: A Hub for Partners in Place-Based Solutions

With Geoffrey Canada leading the charge, the William Julius Wilson Institute (WJWI)—housed within HCZ—was established. Named in honor of one of our nation's most prolific African American scholars on poverty and inequality, WJWI acts as a hub for place-based partnerships and for backbone organizations to access the supports they need to close opportunity gaps and open pathways to social and economic mobility in neighborhoods across the U.S. We are excited and optimistic about the potential of this promising new Institute.

The COVID-19 Pandemic: A Case Study in National Leadership

The COVID-19 pandemic hit our community—and Black communities across the United States—with disproportionate ferocity. We had to act, and we had to act fast.

In short order, we conceived a five-pronged emergency response and recovery plan in Harlem to close resource gaps and address vulnerabilities in the fallout of the pandemic:

- Protecting the most vulnerable
- Bridging the digital divide
- Preventing learning loss
- Mitigating the mental health crisis
- Providing economic relief and recovery

HCZ garnered widespread praise for our speed and effectiveness in protecting the people of Harlem. In turn, we partnered with local organizations in six cities (Minneapolis, Oakland, Newark, Detroit, Chicago, and Atlanta) and three national organizations (NAACP, PolicyLink, StriveTogether) to help their leaders replicate our COVID-19 response—and a new model to aid other communities was born. The Audacious Project made a generous \$26 million commitment towards our goal of raising \$50 million to fund ongoing COVID-19 relief and recovery efforts in Harlem and our six partner cities. The newly launched William Julius Wilson Institute at HCZ is serving as the platform for this national effort.

We partnered with local organizations in six cities and three national organizations to help their leaders replicate our COVID-19 response—and a new model to aid other communities was born.





A Thank You to Our Donors

We love our donors. Without your contribution, HCZ would exist still only as a vision, a dream. Thanks to your support, it's a reality—one that you have helped us make so successful that it's become a model copied the world over.

Every donation counts. Big, small, or something in between, your contribution makes a difference. A real difference—in the lives of real people, of all ages in Harlem and beyond.

From the bottom of our hearts, we thank you.

The HCZ Team

\$1 MILLION

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Sony Corporation of America
Katherine Farley and Jerry Speyer

The Barry and Mimi Sternlicht Foundation
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Workday Foundation

\$5,000 - 9,999

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