



2022 IMPACT REPORT



20 Years Into a Journey

Through the combined efforts of our strong community, dedicated staff, and clients and program participants we managed to find a way to ignite change together.

rhicenter.org

You're soaring 100 feet in the air on a magic carpet when you realize that there are no instructions on how to pilot or land this strange vehicle. A note you find says the instructions are on the other side of the rug. How do you flip the carpet, in mid-flight, way above the ground, to get those instructions without anyone falling off? This was the problem posed to a group of middle school students in RHI's afterschool program. They had to communicate to get what they needed. No matter how often they failed, they remained determined to find a successful result. Through their resilience and creativity they made it safely to their destination. As these young people make their way, we ask you to join us as we take you through RHI's recent journeys.

The following report will highlight RHI's journey from July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022. This path often has no clear instructions or direction. Through the combined efforts of our strong community, our dedicated staff, and the clients and program participants we managed to find a way to ignite change together; changes that need to be made against a system rife with obstacles. Systemic racism continues to plague the institutions that surround our community, from the job market to health care, to basic human rights and neighborhood investments. In the midst of multi-pronged health crises, there is still unclear guidance and assistance for those most vulnerable. The educational system is being constantly underfunded and used as a political chess piece rather than an investment. Public housing conditions are an afterthought rather than priority. Through all this, the community and RHI have stood tall. With a remembrance of the past, we turn our gaze to the future.

Community-Based Approach

CONFRONTING SYSTEMIC INEQUITIES IN RED HOOK

- Half of families with children under 18 live below the federal poverty line
- Nearly 70% of households participate in the NYC Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- Less than half of adults have graduated from high school
- Residents develop preventable illnesses, like asthma and diabetes, due to significant health disparities

OUR MODEL



RHI works to shift the levers of power from transactional change to transformational change beginning with the 6,500 residents and youth we serve.

**Data provided via 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates and NYC Food Policy, 2018 Food Metrics Report.*



20 YEARS

of strength and change.

Where will the next 20 take us?

What began as a small program of a local hospital in 2002 has transformed into a nationally recognized model for place-based social change. Our approach serves 6,500 BIPOC residents each year through an interconnected model of youth development, advocacy, organizing on local issues, and community hiring. This has proven to be an effective catalyst for change for both individual lives and for the community as a whole.

Investing in Residents

Holistic Support

Community Input

Pillar for the Community

Community Change Agents

Shaping the Future

2002

Awarded \$50K grant from March of Dimes to begin prenatal program in Red Hook.

2006

RHI changes its name and begins programming that is familiar to this day.

Board of Directors forms.

Transition away from Long Island College Hospital.

Taste of Red Hook begins in the backyard of a board member's home.

2010

Moved in to 767 Hicks Street.

2012

Hurricane Sandy hits Red Hook — RHI is the lead responding agency.

2013

Full launch of Red Hook Wi-Fi and Digital Stewards Program.

Start of Young Adult Program.

2017

Launch of RHI Institute — first class of RHI Fellows + Career Accelerator.

Added Value comes under RHI umbrella — rebranded to Red Hook Farms.

2020

During the global COVID-19 pandemic, RHI staff continues the essential work of supporting the local community.

2022

20 years of creating change from within.

Mothers and Families

Believing in Community Strength

Fueling the Next Generation

Passing the Torch

Evolving to Meet Needs

Finding Purpose

Ambassadors for Change

RHI has developed a recovery agenda that is rooted in healing and aims to improve outcomes across health, education, employment, economic mobility, and food access in order to transition the felt experience of our residents from surviving to thriving. Having impacted a generation of young people and worked to support the core life supports for the entire neighborhood, we are now seeding a vision for the next 20 years.



You have to grow from the inside out.
– Swami Vivekananda

Youth Programming

Engage, Empower, Excel

Many of us start our journeys thinking that we know it all. Through patience and strong guidance, we can envision our futures and what we need to get there. At RHI, we strive to bring that help, make it accessible, and let the youth of the community know they are not alone. Over 300 youth from 6th grade through age 24 participated in year round support and programming. Red Hook's youth are vital to the future of the community and beyond. The youth development offered at RHI brings the opportunity to grow in academics, social support, career exploration, and self-empowerment. Through these programs, community youth grow to become leaders in their neighborhoods and shape their own futures.

107
middle and high
school students

31
RHI College
Scholars

At Red Hook Initiative (RHI), we believe that social change to overcome systemic inequities begins with empowered youth. In partnership with community adults, we nurture young people in Red Hook to be inspired, resilient, and healthy, and to envision themselves as co-creators of their lives, community, and society.



Freedom Schools

RHI partnered with Children's Defense Fund to offer Freedom Schools, their culturally-competent, evidence-based, six-week hybrid summer enrichment program for 40 young people in the 6th–10th grades. Each student participated in daily programming that improved literacy skills, deepened historic knowledge of systemic inequality, and built critical social action tools. This was done through reading high-quality, culturally relevant fiction, non-fiction, and reference materials. Each day of the six-week program, youth participated in the Integrated Reading Curriculum, which featured classroom activities related to the day's reading that use a variety of teaching models, including cooperative learning, group discussions, reading aloud, paired reading, creative writing, or visual arts. Each scholar took home at least one brand new book each week.

40
6th –10th graders

Digital Stewards 2.0

In partnership with Pratt Institute, RHI piloted a Photojournalism Digital Stewards program where youth created a podcast, called Digital Stewards 2.0, where they ask listeners to “sit back, relax, and enjoy five high schoolers debunk, discuss, debate and analyze topics of their choosing.” They also created the following zine that was distributed to Red Hook Initiative staff, participants, and Red Hook community members during the annual Peer-Led Health Fair in June. Check out their digital portfolios and dive into each participant's work using the links to the right.

[Access the Digital Stewards Website](#)

[Access the Digital Stewards Zine](#)



Laila

Senior Spotlights

Jordan Brand WINGS scholar Laila Smith will be attending University of Southern California.

Jordan Brand WINGS scholar Michael Martinez-Veloz will be attending Vaughn College.

Delayjah Pringle will be attending St. Francis College on a full merit scholarship and also won the United Neighborhood Houses Paramount Scholarship.



Michael

College Scholar Spotlights

All of the College Scholars who have persevered through the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as a host of other challenges, are slated to graduate in the Fall of 2022.

Daniel Rodriguez and Joshua Soto are on track to graduate with 2-year degrees from Borough of Manhattan Community College.

Kaniayah Fuller is expected to graduate with a 4-year degree from North Carolina A&T.



Delayjah

Q: What is one personal success you accomplished at RHI or with support from RHI?

“Learning how to communicate better and becoming a stronger leader.”

“The ability to talk to new people without being shy.”

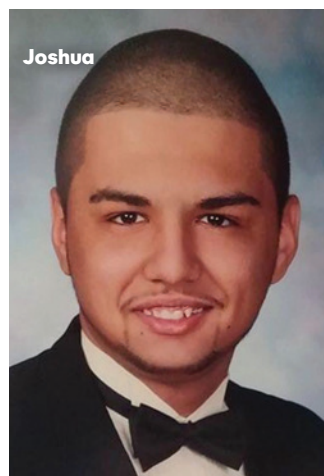
“My personal statement and college scholarships.”

“Growing confidence and feeling true to myself.”

“Getting more into photography and trying to be less antisocial.”



Daniel



Joshua



Kaniayah

I like being in the workforce; it keeps me grounded. – Cathy Freeman

Workforce Development



Working Together, Together Working

When following our paths, guideposts are always a welcome help. The young adult program team offers a way forward by putting a focus on education and workforce development. Through social and emotional learning, 177 participants were able to self-actualize and see a future ahead of them. Through consultations on career counseling, youth adults were taken through the process of entering the workforce-from the start of resume writing to support in their ultimate internships, participants knew that they had the support to see their hopes become reality. Individualized check-ins, peer to peer networks, and consistent outreach helped to make success possible. Through it all, health and wellness was paramount to the process. Participants were encouraged to partake in counseling services and healing groups. Self care is too often overlooked, but is vital. While RHI provided the mold, the participants shaped the journey into what they needed it to be.

48

young adults completed CSS

28

young adults completed an average of 300 hours in subsidized internships

17

young adults secured employment and/or enrolled into a leadership development program or occupational/certification-based program

40

young adults secured unsubsidized jobs outside of RHI



[O]ne of the most vital ways we sustain ourselves is by building communities of resistance, places where we know we are not alone.
– Bell Hooks

Public Safety Organizing Program

RHI's Public Safety program seeks to break the cycle of violence by providing direct platforms for our young adults to engage with local community stakeholders, have their voices heard by decision makers, and learn more about the issues and policies that affect them and their community. These young adults have become active voices in various safety movements, and are helping us advance our mission of giving Red Hook a voice in these conversations, and empowering the neighborhood through police accountability and community reinvestment.

Q: What was one of your favorite moments at RHI this year?

"Being a Peer Health Educator."

"Going on trips and taking pictures with my group."

"Making everyone that I worked with laugh."

"Meeting my new co-workers and making new friends."

"Getting my first check."

12

articles published on issues related to the Red Hook community

1

video produced from interviews with residents on community safety

11

Public Safety Organizers worked at least 10 hours a week and attended over 50 hours of different trainings

6

auto-ethnographies on personal meaning of safety

Community Building

Rise Up Together

One of the greatest parts of a journey is the companionship. Through the RHI community building programming, neighbors are brought together and given the opportunity to organize. Positive change for the community comes from an increased awareness of the issues. The residents of Red Hook public housing have fought for improved living conditions, better health care for their fellow residents, and fair and equitable treatment. By focusing investment in self and community, we can strive for reinvestment from the state. RHI's team helps to sharpen that focus and get results.

30

residents trained with the Organizing Academy

11

residents traveled to Albany for 153-11 Albany action #FullyFundRedHookHouses

6,496

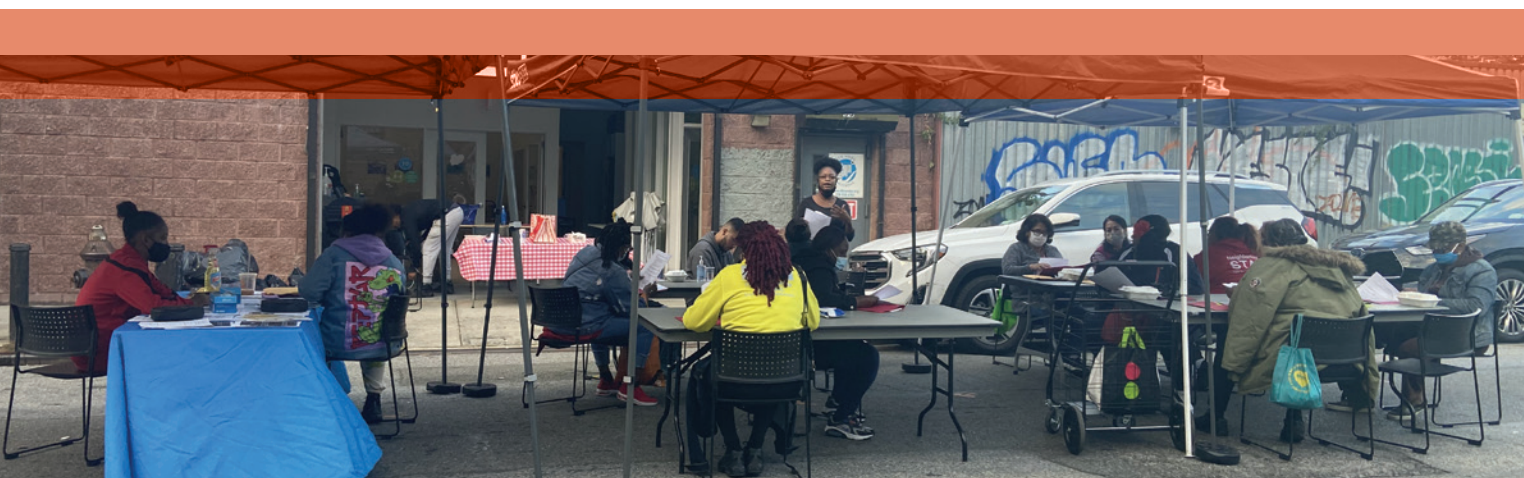
COVID-19 tests,

180,000

masks, and

192

bottles of hand sanitizer were distributed



In partnership with community adults, we nurture young people in Red Hook to be inspired, resilient, and healthy, and to envision themselves as co-creators of their lives, community, and society.



597
people served

61 grants
totaling
\$80,363
distributed

Community Resource Team

RHI's Community Resource Team provides access to benefits and resource services for Red Hook residents through community outreach, office hours, case management services, and home visits. The community resource team provides services in English, Cantonese, Mandarin, and Spanish. Services include: housing repair support and advocacy, SNAP and One Shot Deal enrollment, translation services, and referrals to community partners for additional support.

Counseling Program

RHI supports program participants through crisis navigation and planning, service referrals, and intensive support as they work toward personal goals. As participants co-created goals, RHI staff followed-up and tracked progress. Regular check-ins, combined with advocacy, support and referrals to RHI's strategic partners and internal programs were a central part of case management. In addition to case management and individual support, in 2021 we launched our Abolitionist and Healing group with a subset of our young adults.

"I have grown very fast and addressed issues I've thought about for years with answers from (the RHI Blended Healing) group."

– Counseling Program Participant

COMMUNITY BUILDING FLASHBACK

Hurricane Sandy: 10 years later

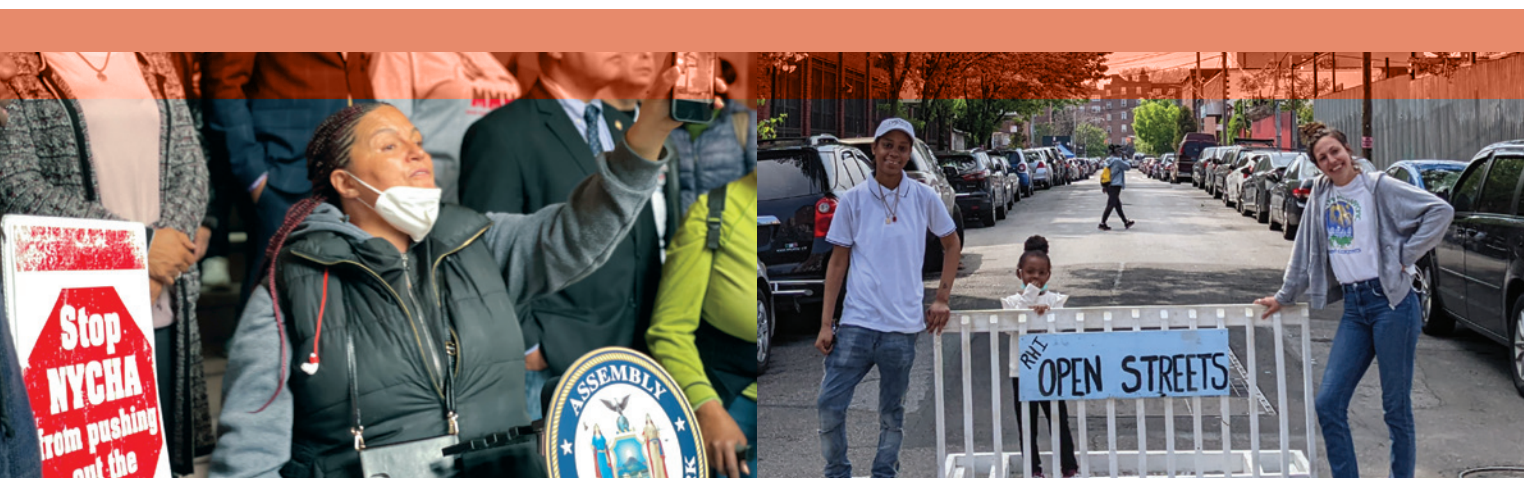
The cold and darkness became constant. What was supposed to be a safe space was suddenly not. Sandy knocked out power for nearly a month and residents could not get it restored. Much of the area remained underwater, storm surges brought water levels as high as five feet. The community had suffered the trauma of the strongest storm to hit New York City in a lifetime. Red Hook was forgotten.

But in the absence of light, the community shone through. Neighbor helped neighbor. The community pulled together and worked with what limited resources they had. Community centers like RHI became hubs of distribution and assistance, as well as places to charge up, literally and figuratively. 10 years later, repair and rebuilding continues at a frustratingly slow speed.



Hannah's Story

For Hannah, RHI has always been home. Hannah started coming to RHI around 2005 when her mom started working at the organization. Hannah says that she always thinks that the people here have wanted to be helpful, wanted to be part of her life, and wanted to see her grow and thrive. She knew RHI was going to remain a part of her life when she was going through a really hard time at school. Hannah came to RHI and the program teams helped her get everything she needed for school—not only for college, but middle school and high school as well. In Hannah's own words, "RHI has been so supportive. I really do consider the staff at RHI...to be family."





*"The soil is the great connector of lives...
Without proper care for it we can have no
community, because without proper care for
it we can have no life." – Wendell Berry*

Red Hook Farms

More Than A Garden

The scent of fresh tomatoes on the vine. The rustling of bright green leaves in the wind. A fig tree bursting with fruit ready to be harvested. All of this is possible because of the work of the community and Red Hook Farms. Throughout the travels of life, we must find the time to stop and nourish ourselves-both in mind and body. Increasing access to healthy, affordable produce is vital to the well-being and longevity of the neighborhood. Red Hook Farms engages community members where they live, inviting them to join a local gardening club, to come visit to see what's growing, and to partake in a CSA or visit our weekly farm stands. Farming helps the youth of today grow into the next generation of BIPOC leaders, raising awareness of the need for green space and climate justice.

**RHI Operates Two
Farms in Red Hook:**



19,760
pounds of produce grown
on both farm sites



2,532
volunteer hours served



5,007
pounds of free produce
distributed to residents via
Wolcott Street farm and
food pantry donations



1,358
visitors to our weekly
farm stand at the
Columbia Street farm

1,108
community members took
part in our weekly free/
barter produce distribution
at the Wolcott Street
farm—**96%** were NYCHA
residents

4
local restaurants supplied
with produce

*Based on Red Hook Farms 2021 season
(January 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021).*

Q: What do you love about RHI?

*"How welcoming everyone is and how there's different
events to make the youth entertained and have fun."*

"The community and how it's like one giant family."

"The staff and the ability to be comfortable here."





Dyami's Story



Dyami began his journey with us as a youth farm apprentice at Red Hook Farms. After several years into the apprenticeship, he graduated and was referred to join our Career Starter Series to continue his career development. In workshops and employment consultation discussions, Dyami unpacked his desire for a career in media production and committed to a journey with our workforce development team in this pursuit of the field. In coaching, project-based learning assignments were designed for him to explore his passion. To build his exposure, Dyami was referred to art training collaborators Pioneer Works and Reel Works, landing a competitive internship at Reel Works as a production assistant. After completing his entry internship subsidized by RHI, he was hired for three months with Reel Works as a Youth Production Assistant, where he thrived. Dyami had entered our programs fearful of working more than 10 hours, but upon completion of his work with Reel Works, he requested our help to find a full-time job. He transitioned to become a full-time paraprofessional at P.S.15 where he works with youth from his neighborhood who, like himself, are seeking guidance. We referred him to internal college access support through which he is now enrolled at LaGuardia Community College, pursuing a career as a film producer.

THANK YOU

Volunteers & Partners

Thank you to all the groups who chose to spend their time together furthering our mission in Red Hook, Brooklyn.

1834 Project	Grace Church
Abercrombie & Fitch	MIO Partners
Americon HIIT	National Grid
Aruliden	PS.58 PTA
Cookfox Architects	Red Hook
Crave Fishbar	Conservancy
Earth Angel Sustainable Production Services	Ripple
Future Green Studio	Sirius Point
Good Shepherd New York	Whole Cities Foundation
	YNG

A special thank you to these groups for partnering with us throughout the year. Members of their teams engaged with staff and youth across our programming and championed the values of our work while helping to get us closer to our goals.

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Sixpoint Brewery
Spaghetti Café
Steve's Authentic Key Lime Pie
Strong Rope Brewery
The Longshoreman
The Red Hook Winery
Tito's Handmade Vodka
Travel Bar
United Sandwiches of America
Van Brunt Stillhouse
Wet Whistle Wines

The Red Hook community came out in full force to enjoy food and drink generously provided by award-winning Brooklyn restaurants, breweries, wineries and distilleries.

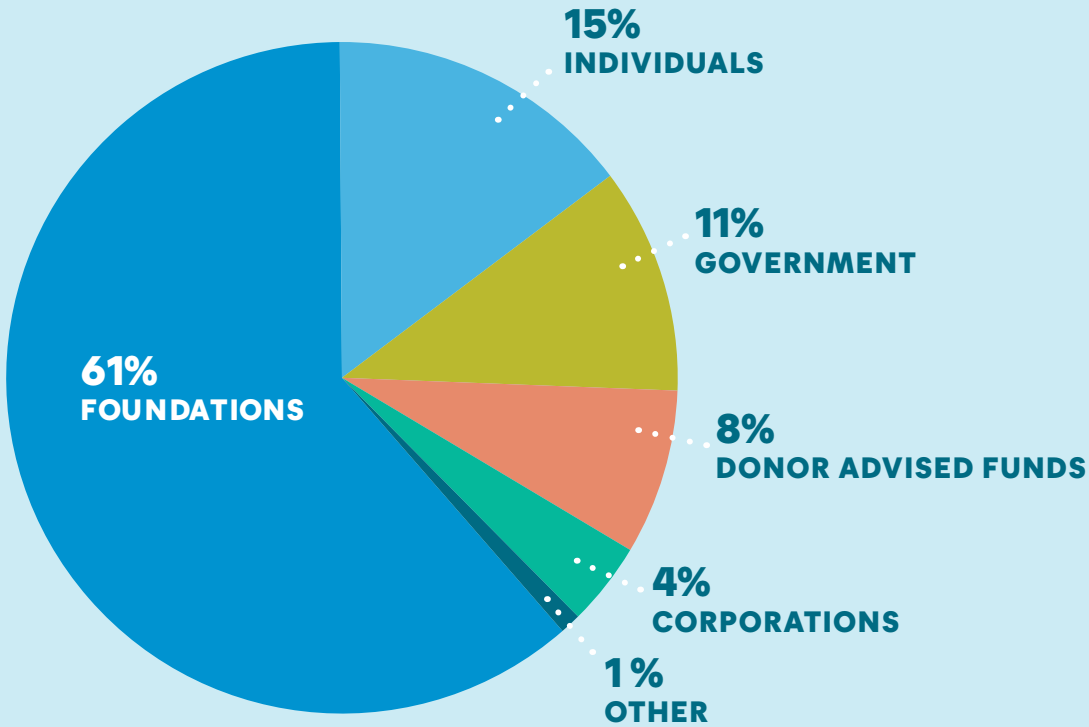
The crowd was treated to demonstrations of RHI's programs, and got to interact and connect with staff and participants. The evening was a great success, raising awareness of all the RHI and Red Hook has to offer.

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Regent Atlantic
Richard's Rainwater
Sitex
The Durst Organization
The Liberty Warehouse
The Lonuzzi Team at Compass
Tito's Handmade Vodka
UPS

2022 INCOME

Total Expenses: \$4.6M



INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORTERS

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* This list includes institutions contributing \$2,500 or more.





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Brooklyn, NY 11231

OUR MISSION

At Red Hook Initiative (RHI), we believe that social change to overcome systemic inequities begins with empowered youth. In partnership with community adults, we nurture young people in Red Hook to be inspired, resilient, and healthy, and to envision themselves as co-creators of their lives, community, and society.

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CREATING CHANGE FROM WITHIN

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