



WALLS
PROJECT

Annual Report

2022



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Who We Are

For the past ten years, The Walls Project has been an integral part of the Baton Rouge community by enhancing the quality of place with our murals, educating youth in tech, providing fresh produce in food deserts, and leading massive community cleanups in North BR.

The Walls Project leads programs, events, and alliances that work to break through and tear down the societal walls that discourage or prevent people from living safe, healthy, and prosperous lives.

Since 2012, Walls has led integrated programs and events, contributing \$3M+ in economic growth to Louisiana's capital region and pursuing areas of need where services and programming do not exist or are cost-prohibitive for much of the population.

Walls was founded on the belief that the physical, social, and economic conditions of individuals ultimately and collectively inform the overall safety, health and well-being, and economic conditions of communities.

OUR PROGRAMS



Baton Roots

Food access through education continued to be the cornerstone of Baton Root's 2022 focus. Partnering with high schools, BREC, and 11 East Baton Rouge Housing Authority sites, Baton Roots engaged over 300 volunteers throughout the year on the benefits of Urban Agriculture (growing where you live to grow nearly 20,000 pounds of produce).

Hustle & Grow

The Hustle & Grow youth training program, hosted at Capital High School, Glen Oaks High School, and Scotlandville High School, introduced 550 youth to the concept of Urban Agriculture and sustainable farming practices. Students in the Hustle and Grow program gain entrepreneurship experience by selling plants and produce at Red Stick Farmers Market at the library on Tuesdays. Students can come to the market after school to sell seedlings and other produce from the farm sites. This gives teens a tangible way to see how farming can be a sustainable profession.



Students at Capital High plant new seedlings for the next rotation (above).

Volunteers prepare garden rows at BREC Howell Park for a new crop cycle (below).





Volunteers from Sprouts Market help with the fall crop rotation.

Sow Good Saturday

Sow Good Saturday, a monthly partnership event with Geaux Get Healthy and the American Heart Association, helps blend activities around health, nutrition, and growing fresh produce into a Saturday morning event. Where else can someone experience a yoga class, get a tasty treat from Chef Traci Vincent, and then go home with bags of freshly picked produce?

Outside of Sow Good Saturday, we hosted groups like Big Buddy, City Year, Key Clubs and Beta Clubs, Sprouts, The Council on Aging, graduates, and families of the Hustle & Grow Urban Ag program, graduates and families of the Geaux Get Healthy Community Wellness Classes, and more. Working with Baton Rouge Green, we replanted and cared for trees in the City Citrus Orchard at the Farm at BREC Howell Park and dreamt of even more permaculture in the future.

2022 PROGRAM SUCCESS WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE SUPPORT OF:

GEAUX GET HEALTHY, AETNA/CVS, CAPITAL AREA UNITED WAY, EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH HOUSING AUTHORITY, ENERGY, LDAF, ROTARY CLUB, SPROUTS HEALTHY COMMUNITIES FOUNDATION, PENNINGTON FOUNDATION, BREC

BREC and Baton Roots constructed a utility yard to house storage for farm equipment, a wash/pack station for preparing produce for distribution, and a hoop house for seedling production. The utility yard will be complete in early 2023 and will allow Baton Roots to grow more food and educate more community members about sustainable urban ag practices.

Public Art & Placemaking

Once COVID restrictions were lessened, our Public Art and Placemaking program launched into full swing! Completing a 300% increase in public art projects, Program Coordinator Morgan Udoh and Artist-in-Residence Ashli Ognelodh offered a fresh and invigorated approach to working with organizations, community groups, and corporations to bring art and creativity into the public's view.



BREC 75th Anniversary mural (seires) by Ashli Ognelodh.

Major projects include a multi-mural series for BREC's 75th Anniversary, the highly-promoted solidarity mural project between Southern University and LSU, and the partnership at Kidz Fest. Additionally, in working with schools, our program expanded its typical placemaking offering to include a mural arts educational component with LA Key Academy's installation. The students were led through the actual mural process and then helped create a mural at their school. Similarly, the beautification efforts with the Northdale Superintendent school allowed for volunteers to contribute to building a comfortable and vibrant place for students to learn.



Volunteers paint mural at BREC Eden Park.

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CAPITAL AREA UNITED WAY, EAST
BATON ROUGE PARISH HOUSING
AUTHORITY, ENERGY, LDAF, ROTARY
CLUB, SPROUTS HEALTHY
COMMUNITIES FOUNDATION,
PENNINGTON FOUNDATION, BREC

Little Art Library

Drawing inspiration from a conversation during a OneRouge meeting, the Walls Project Headquarters opened the first Little Art Library. The concept follows the Free Little Library format, except this one is specific to art supplies and books. Everything that goes in was provided by donations and the community is encouraged to come and take anything inside.



You can bring it back when you no longer need it, or you can hand it on to someone directly.

The structure was custom-built by Doug Moore and it matches the style of the main building. It's large enough to fit canvases, picture frames, or anything else that can be used creatively.

The response has been phenomenal. WBRZ's Taylor Rubach filmed a feature story during its early weeks. Additionally, Samantha Morgan talked about the Little Art Library on the Arts Council's weekly radio broadcast. More importantly, thousands of dollars worth of donated supplies have made their way through the LAL. From typical supplies such as paint, crayons, and sidewalk chalk, to unusual items such as a bag of trophy toppers, a bag full of googly eyes, and a full living room set for miniatures.

We hope to expand in 2023 and add another LAL in a different location.

Walls Plus One

The flagship podcast for the Walls Project launched in Spring 2022 with a 12-episode season. Each week a different leader in the local nonprofit community came on to discuss a different topic. Week after week, each guest talked about ways their organization addressed issues related to poverty. The final interview focused on Louisiana's coast, which is being lost at an alarming rate. What will happen to those communities? That question became the foundation for season 2, which is focused specifically on our changing climate. Louisiana is already feeling the impacts of climate change, but are we ready to deal with the consequences?

This season features two guests per episode. The second half of the second season is spilling over into 2023. After a short break, we'll be back with season 3. Don't worry, we're going to lighten things up a little bit. That's kind of our thing at the Walls Project; we like to keep you on your toes.



Futures Fund

With classes geared towards youth and adults, the Futures Fund programming prides itself on building culture and curriculums that resonate beyond the instruction. In spring, summer, and fall, the Coding Boot Camp (adult) and Tech Academy (youth) reached participants from all over East Baton Rouge Parish.



Coding Instructor Stephen Young II helping with Level 1 Coding Trainees.

Tech Academy

Futures Fund Tech Academy (TA) reconvenes weekly sessions on Saturdays in-person and virtually at TT Allain hall on the campus of Southern University.

For the spring, there were 21 trainees. For the fall semester, there were 25 trainees enrolled in the program focusing on coding, photography, leadership development, and mentorship. These trainees have had the opportunity to hear live music from local artists like Joe Scott and Shy Speaks along with advice and knowledge from local leaders like Justin Hutchinson and Tony King.



Photography students practice with their cameras.

2022 PROGRAM SUCCESS WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE SUPPORT OF:

BASF, WILSON FOUNDATION, CAPITAL ONE, EXXONMOBIL, MICROSOFT, LOSFA, SANTANDER CONSUMER USA, MOOZIE FOUNDATION, STATE FAIR OF TEXAS, UNUM

Futures Fund

Coding Boot Camp

Coding Boot Camp (CBC) held its 8th and 9th Capstone Event this year where trainees presented their captivating projects. Trainees in the beginner and intermediate levels created websites over the course of several weeks after receiving instruction from instructors in the industry. They independently executed the planning, design, and development stages of the software development life cycle and presented the final results as an elevator pitch. Trainees in the advanced level worked as a team to create a full website for an imagined entertainment company in addition to each building their own interactive JavaScript feature.



Trainees learning Coding for the web (above).
Trainees hearing from a guest speaker (below).

Throughout the semester, we heard community leaders speak on the following topics: Resume Building, Interviewing Tips for the Tech Industry, Certifications for Your Career, Financial Literacy and Building Generational Wealth, and general Inspiration and Motivation. 21 virtual sessions were held, 86% attendance rate, 69% retention rate, 3 trainees completed the full 3-level course.



OneRouge Coalitions

2022 saw a lot of progress with the OneRouge Coalitions, with building the infrastructure and momentum as its focus. Understanding this, OneRouge programming, shepherded by the collaboration of MetroMorphosis and The Walls Project, sought to build with the intention to strengthen as the years progress.

With the addition of Program Coordinator, Pepper Roussel, OneRouge Weekly Community Calls were able to cast light on month-long thematic arcs linked to the 9 Drivers of Poverty. One such moment, in September, saw a deep dive into the struggles faced by those looking to become citizens of the United States. Community conversations like these, allow for voices not usually heard to be raised and for new understanding to be had.

In the solidification of the OneRouge Coalitions process, MetroMorphosis and Walls Project worked hand-in-hand to utilize the Collective Impact 3.0 Model. This model showcases the importance of community inclusion and understanding to build movements by leveraging the voices of all community members and elevating the solutions that are born closest to the problem instead of in meeting rooms across town.

With the support of our 2022 Leadership Council, we have also selected leaders to guide the aspirational work to

**“FOSTER AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY CULTURE IN OUR CITY
THAT LEADS TO EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL.”**

Additionally, we have installed co-chairs who work to achieve the coalition mission and goals through working groups and smaller task forces in our first 3 coalitions: CAFÉ, Education to Career, and Transportation and Mobility.

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CAPITAL AREA UNITED WAY, BR
ALLIANCE, AMERICAN HEART
ASSOCIATION, BLUECROSS
BLUESHIELD OF LOUISIANA

OneRouge is leading the Capital Region in systemic systems change by encouraging cross-collaborative, cross-sector work to address poverty in a holistic and intentional manner.