

# IMPACT REPORT

*10 Years of Mobilizing for Change*

20  
22







## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE 3	WHO WE ARE
PAGE 5	10 YEARS OF MOBILIZING FOR CHANGE
PAGE 8	MOBILIZATION IN 2022
PAGE 13	THE METROMORPHOSIS MODEL



## WHO WE ARE



## Mission

MetroMorphosis's mission is to transform urban communities from within through developing and mobilizing a critical mass of engaged citizens to design and implement sustainable solutions to persistent community challenges.

## Vision

We envision a world where a critical mass of informed and engaged citizens are equipped to shift community systems to focus on equity, allowing for infinite amounts of sustainable change.

## Values



**Excellence** - Quality execution that exceeds the status quo and prioritizes continuous improvement



**Learning** - The use of data and information to inform decisions and make adjustments



**Chemistry** - The bonding of personalities among team members that allows for ease of partnership



**Self-Care** - The intentional prioritization of activities that serve to strengthen, heal and build us mentally, physically and emotionally



## WHO WE ARE

### *Meet the 2022 Team*

Our work is developed and executed by a talented group of change makers and consultants.



**Raymond A. Jetson** - Chief Executive Catalyst  
**Sherreta R. Harrison** - Chief Sustainability Catalyst  
**T.C. Nash** - Communications Catalyst  
**Terina Washington** - Operations Catalyst

**Darren Wilson** - Community Impact Catalyst  
**Kenya Ridley** - Community Impact Catalyst  
**Samuel Washington** - Community Impact Catalyst  
**Kali J. Graves** - Chief Strategy Catalyst

### *Our Board*

**Brandon Smith** - Chair  
**Sarah Kracke** - Secretary/ Treasurer  
**Johnathan Hill**  
**Joshua Hollins**

**Raymond A. Jetson**  
**Charlette Minor**  
**Jason Thrower**  
**Morgan Udoh**



## 10 YEARS OF MOBILIZING FOR CHANGE



*A Letter to Our Community*

In 2022, we commemorated a decade of impact at MetroMorphosis. The journey to MetroMorphosis began in 2010 when our Chief Executive Catalyst, Raymond A. Jetson, engaged in and completed the Advanced Leadership Initiative (ALI) at Harvard University. Over the course of his experience in the fellowship, Raymond designed a multi-faceted, community-led approach to sustainable change. In 2012, this novel path to community impact became MetroMorphosis.

We have always believed the solutions to challenges that consistently plague communities lie within the people who live there. Thus, it is our goal to equip, empower and mobilize community members to interact with systems and evoke change. This is the very DNA of MetroMorphosis and what we emphasized throughout our year-long celebration of the work. It's the work that will continue in the years ahead.

For our 10 year celebration, we wanted to focus on celebrating three key areas:

- the partnerships and innovations that made up our rich history,
- the people and communities that contribute to our promising present, and
- the power and opportunity of collective action to shape a bright future.

Our team, along with key partners and stakeholders, set out to understand the present conditions and future hopes of community members throughout the city; capture unique stories and oral histories of Baton Rouge; empower 10 community members with grassroots ideas to change their neighborhoods; support small businesses looking to grow their capacity, recover from challenges or implement innovative services; and equip local organizations with new tools and resources to take their work to the next level.

As a community, we faced many disruptions and challenges in recent years, but we continue to press on. That is what it takes to truly impact a community and bring about the change we wish to see.

We are honored to do this work with you and we thank you for your commitment.

Sincerely,

*The MetroMorphosis Team*





To kick off our 10th year in service, we took a trip down memory lane with **10 Moments in the Movement**. The work we do would not be possible without the support and active participation of other local organizations.

### 2012 Mobile Farmers Market

The very first summit MetroMorphosis hosted brought together over 200 individuals around pressing challenges in Baton Rouge, one being **food insecurity** in North Baton Rouge. Out of this came the **Red Stick Mobile Farmers Market** which has served over **61,000 residents** to date.



Photo courtesy of BREADA



### 2014 Coffee & Change

For several years, we gathered at various coffee shops for a community conversation over a free cup of coffee. We estimate that over **500 cups of coffee** and **hundreds of conversations** gave way to key partnerships and opportunities for **collaboration**.



### 2016 Urban Congress

In 2015, we commissioned a study to better understand the status of Black males as it relates to **socioeconomic well-being, academic achievement, health and more**. The results were grim. Months later, we hosted the first Urban Congress on African American Males with over **250 people** to develop what would later become seven comprehensive goals.

### 2014 ULDI

A key MetroMorphosis Initiative is **The Urban Leadership Development Initiative (ULDI)**, a year-long fellowship dedicated to equipping change makers with the tools necessary for leadership. Since 2014, ULDI has taught over **80** individuals how to identify opportunities, develop innovative solutions, and build coalitions to foster positive, long-term change in their community.



### 2015 Failure Fest

People often shy away from discussing the difficulties of running an organization or a business, but in reality, **failure** is always a part of success. So, during Baton Rouge Entrepreneurship Week, we hosted Failure Fest, a conversation with local leaders about the **vulnerability and courage of risk-taking**.





## 2016 GradNation

In 2016, the high school graduation rate of Black boys in EBR was a mere **44%**. Around that same time, GradNation, a national campaign, partnered with organizations across the country to host community summits. In October of 2016, we became the only site to host a summit geared **specifically towards males**. As a result, we worked with our partners to develop a **mentorship-focused** action response.



## 2018 Mentoring BR

**MentoringBR** was one of MetroMorphosis' earliest collective action networks. In January 2018, we hosted two sessions on **culturally relevant Mentoring practices** which led to the training of more than **700 people** to increase the number of mentors in Baton Rouge and enhance their mentoring skills.



## 2019 LaunchBR Pitch

In 2019, we expanded our focus on small businesses with LaunchBR. After participation in a year-long fellowship, **six local business owners** took part in a pitch competition judged by local leaders. They provided an overview of their business and their wildest aspirations for growth. The winner received \$1,000 in which they used to purchase liability insurance and secure substantial contracts.



## 2020 Dehumanization of Black Men

MetroMorphosis hosted a workshop to gain a deeper understanding of the dehumanization of Black boys and men in our city. This training led to partnerships with key systems to eliminate systemic biases in their sectors. To date we have trained more than **100 individuals** to develop a plan to disrupt their unfair practices.




## 2019 Barbershop Talks

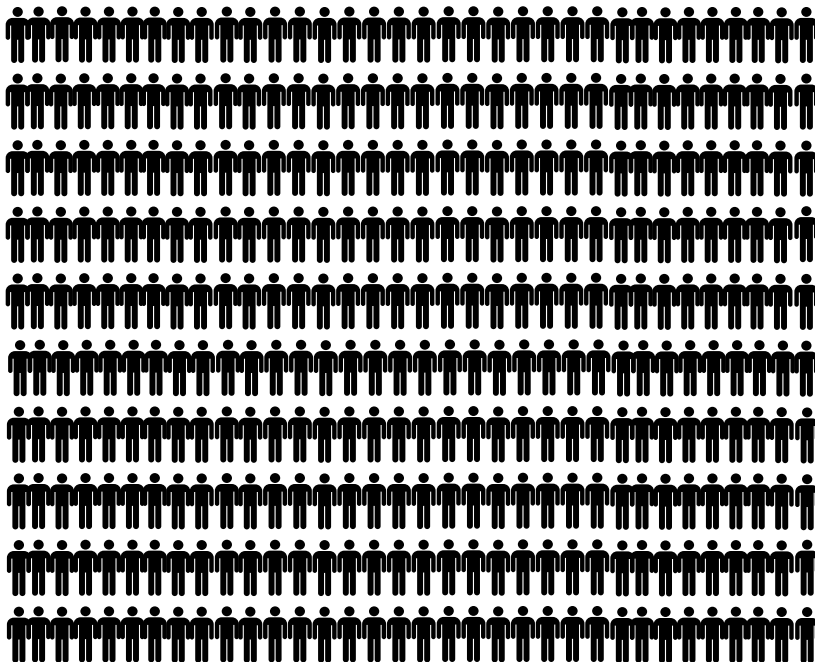
What started as a safe space for Black men to discuss issues important to them evolved into Barbershop blood pressure checks and Community Hubs for resources following the onset of the COVID19 Pandemic. We conducted **921 blood pressure readings** and found that **91%** of those tested were at risk for hypertension.



## PEOPLE & NUMBERS

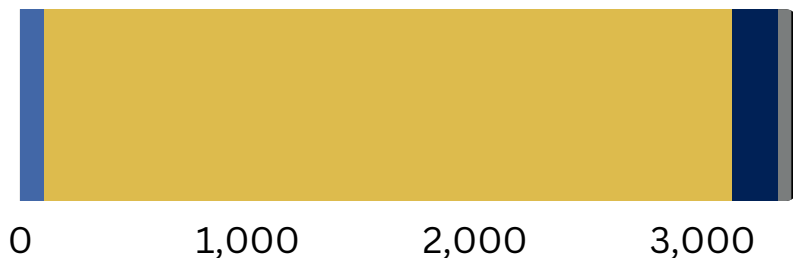
*In 2022, we continued to strengthen urban communities through the mobilization of 3,400 people.*

 = 10 people



### Mobilization by Level of Engagement

■ Informed    ■ Consulted    ■ Involved  
■ Collaborated    ■ Empowered



### LEVELS

- **Informed:** Person receives information
- **Consulted:** Person offers information once or attends an event once
- **Involved:** Person offers information or attends an event 2x
- **Collaborated:** Person executes work between meetings/events
- **Empowered:** Person initiates work on their own





Our work revolves around the people who live in the communities that we serve. Through several efforts, we mobilized over 3,400 community members to share insight and experience, pursue grassroots efforts, utilize new tools and resources, and ultimately create lasting change.

## Black Futures Quilt & Archive Project

In February, we kicked off the Black Futures Quilt & Archive Project as a unique illustration of where we've come from. We collected over a dozen **oral histories** that highlight Black life in Baton Rouge, alongside hopes and visions for the future. Additionally, we gathered pieces of fabric that complemented the stories and sewed them into a **traveling quilt**.

This visual representation of key moments and experiences in Baton Rouge made several stops throughout the city and can be found at the Scotlandville Branch Library.



## Village Chats

Elevating community voices is a core tenet of the MetroMorphosis model. Over the course of several months, we hosted five conversations in notable and historic neighborhoods across the city of Baton Rouge. Community members from **Gardere, Eden Park, Mid City, McKinley** and **Scotlandville** shared what they believe to be the current state of their community, the challenges they face and who they believe is best-suited to create and sustain change.

Through a series of short conversations, participants identified **stakeholders, resources, community building** and **infrastructure** as critical elements in creating thriving urban communities. These are all elements that continue to drive the work we do with organizations and systems in our city.





## 10 for 10 Community Fund

In the Spring, MetroMorphosis launched the **10 for 10 Community Fund**, an investment strategy designed to promote community- led change making. Dozens of grassroots leaders applied and ultimately, we chose to invest **\$10,000** in 10 community-focused change efforts seeking to transform their neighborhoods. Through the investment of dollars and strategic support, we aim to amplify impact that leads to additional support and resources, something we refer to as ***catalytic investments***.

From July 2022 until June 2023, we are working with these individuals, some who lead small organizations, to develop and execute strategic project plans, communicate the work they do effectively, and mobilize others in their communities for lasting impact. The selected projects range from mental health support for mothers to blight removal in underserved communities.



**Hazel Bradley- Davis**  
North Baton Rouge  
Youth Empowerment



**Laci Sherman**  
Culinary Training  
Program for Youth



**Miranda Georgetown-Riley**  
Normalizing Autism  
in Children



**Stacci Tobin**  
"The Longest Table:"  
A Community Conversation



**The Gardere Initiative**  
Youth-led  
Community Impact



**Be Brave Mom**  
Mental Health  
Support for Moms



**Amanda Moorer**  
Cultivating Mentors  
for Students



**Lynda Turner**  
Community Revitalization  
& Voter Registration



**Ella Morgan**  
Addressing Blight  
in Eden Park



**Sophie Ziegler**  
The Louisiana Trans  
Oral History Project





MetroMorphosis recognizes the impact small businesses have on the city of Baton Rouge and the critical need to support small business leaders as they work to grow and serve their communities. Thus, we actively operate several opportunities under our LaunchBR container geared towards **expanding business ownership** in under-represented populations and **spurring job growth** in under-invested areas. In 2022, we coached, vetted, and connected small businesses to opportunities that resulted in millions of dollars in contracts and dozens of valuable procurement connections.

188

total businesses  
engaged around  
training, contracting  
and capital  
opportunities

75

women, minority and  
veteran owned  
businesses vetted and  
connected to  
contracting  
opportunities

\$33M+

awarded in contracts  
to small women,  
minority and veteran  
owned businesses

**VOTE YOUR VOICE!**

2022 was a critical election year in Louisiana and beyond. We sought out to ensure community members understood not only the gravity of this election, but also the power in both their voice and their vote. Through phone banking, canvassing and social outreach, we connected with over **3,000** citizens, many of whom voted for the first time as a result.

3,076

COMMUNITY MEMBERS REACHED





The C3 Summit revisited the early days of MetroMorphosis by centering innovation and partnership through intentional convening. The Summit focused on equipping nonprofit teams with new tools and resources to more effectively create sustainable change. The three Cs: **creativity**, **collaboration** and **capacity** are principles we believe drive this change.

In pairs, participants were guided through a series of activities found in the **C3 Principles Toolkit**, a manual we designed specifically for this experience. Each pair developed a “challenge statement” to address an opportunity for impact in their community.



And because we will always promote partnership, we also facilitated a collaboration walk. Participants were asked to review each others’ challenge statements and notate ways they would like to support or collaborate on the effort.



We will continue to engage organizations through the C3 Academy (detailed on page 14).

### **Example Challenge Statements:**



How might we increase access to jobs, education and services through better transportation options?

How might we invest & partner with the most distressed people through economic inclusivity by leadership driven initiatives.

How might we support all children as successful, empowered learners?

How might we provide schools for autistic children throughout the city, state and country?



## THE METROMORPHOSIS MODEL

**The last 10 years has confirmed our belief in the power of citizen led change.** To that end, we seek to upend long-standing and life-altering racial disparities by cultivating local agents of change to be the driving force for lasting systemic change.

The next few years involve us deepening our impact in Baton Rouge and developing a model through which communities can develop a critical mass of citizens who are equipped with the needed skills and are committed to shifting the conditions that prevent progress.

### *The goal?*

Our goal is to partner with communities to enhance their capacity to drive the change they wish to see. Rather than define the scope of an intervention in isolation and implement it unilaterally, we identify a potential opportunity either through observation or by hearing from members of a community and then employ **five core tactics** to build collective action toward achieving our outcomes.

These core tactics are repeated throughout the life cycle of an intervention until the change we seek becomes reality. The result is a committed group of stakeholders empowered to improve the lives of their families and community.



**We engage and convene stakeholders** from the community to increase awareness around the disparity, to determine the root causes and to reimagine the community without the disparity.



**We identify and advocate for best practices** to eliminate the disparity, address the root causes of the issue or bring about the reimagined community. We often look to other communities to learn what has worked in other places and adapt those solutions to the community we intend to impact.



**We develop equitable processes** by facilitating conversations and activities to build a customized solution in a way that fairly leverages the resources already present in the community and ushers in new resources.



**We reinforce citizens' power and equip them with skills and tools** to lead the change they wish to see. This allows for greater authenticity, sustainability and expanded capacity because the solutions aren't depended solely on one organization.



**We influence and support new narratives around inner city communities** from one of need and deficit to one of strength and possibility. The narrative shift builds public will for the interventions and, ultimately, a new, thriving community.





To illustrate the effectiveness of the model and continue our impact throughout Baton Rouge, we will use efforts such as My Brothers Keeper, the C3 Academy, the Revolving Loan Fund and more.

### **MBK ALLIANCE - Baton Rouge**

We are absolutely thrilled to have played an important role in advancing conversations about Black men and boys here in Baton Rouge. From convening the Urban Congress from 2016, to helping the city reestablish a local chapter of My Brother's Keeper in 2021, we have been unwavering in our commitment to ensuring Black boys and men have access to the resources and supports that will allow them to thrive. In 2022, we added key partners to our steering team and recommitted to our focus on the following three areas:



**Education:** increased access to the ACT exam and preparation



**Public Safety:** increased access to community supports, with a focus on decreasing the occurrence of violent incidents and homicide



**Workforce Development:** increased transition support for out of school young men ages 16-24

As we look to 2023, MBK is poised to hold a local Community Action Summit in late February, which is a critical step on the path to becoming a fully recognized MBK Community by the National MBK Alliance. We celebrate MBK's new home with the **YMCA** and look forward to continuing to support the advancement of this critical work.

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Following the inaugural C3 Summit, pairs from local non-profit teams will meet on a quarterly basis to dig deeper into the C3 Principles Toolkit and **advance their challenge statement**.

Through this effort, participants will not only learn new ways to identify and engage stakeholders, but also deploy tactics to mobilize those stakeholders in ways that accelerate impact.

The academy will culminate at the next C3 Summit in October 2023.



**CREATIVITY | COLLABORATION | CAPACITY**





**LAUNCHBR**  
**REVOLVING LOAN FUND**

We launched the Revolving Loan Fund through a partnership with **Essential Federal Credit Union** to provide businesses looking to **grow** in capacity, **recover** from the impacts of disaster or crisis, or **pivot** their services to reflect innovation in their sector with capital and resources.

Small and minority owned businesses in East Baton Rouge Parish have historically been excluded from traditional funding paths and deserve an opportunity to develop their businesses without prejudice to better serve and support their communities. This fund will not only provide access, but also ongoing support to ensure their success.



For more information on our work, visit [metromorphosis.net](https://metromorphosis.net) and follow us on social media.



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