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Press Release: Breaking Barriers and Building Futures: REDF Accelerator Announces New Cohort of Social Enterprise Leaders

BLOG > THE LATEST > ARTICLE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Breaking Barriers and Building Futures: REDF Accelerator Announces New Cohort of Social Enterprise Leaders

21 Visionary Entrepreneurs Across the U.S. Converge at REDF Accelerator for Intensive Business Program to Amplify Social Impact

SAN FRANCISCO (December 13, 2023) – REDF, a leading organization dedicated to advancing employment social enterprises (ESEs) and creating a more inclusive economy, is proud to announce the selection of its next cohort of impact-driven entrepreneurs for the [REDF Accelerator](#). This cohort, composed of 21 inspiring individuals leading ESEs in locations across the U.S., represents a diverse and dynamic group of change-makers committed to driving positive social and economic impact.

The Accelerator is a 5-month capacity building program that equips leaders with the network, skills, and tools to further grow their businesses. Employment social enterprises reveal and reinforce the talents of individuals overcoming employment barriers with a unique combination of paid, on-the-job training and wraparound support. Participants employed in ESEs are able to stabilize their lives, gain and strengthen skills, and move into competitive employment.

A core tenet of REDF's mission is the belief that transformative social and economic solutions must be deeply rooted in the real-world insights of those who have directly experienced systemic

barriers to employment. This commitment is reflected in the demographics of this latest Accelerator cohort: 71 percent of this cohort's leaders have first-hand experience of the barriers faced by the people they employ, and 43 percent of these businesses are led by people of color.

"So much of where I'm at today boils down to being given a chance to try, even after all the work I've put in. I want to make sure to pay those opportunities forward," shares Jackie Huebbe, of SugarBot Sweet Shop and Creamery. "I want everyone that comes through our doors to succeed at what they're working toward. I'm so excited to join the Accelerator, and learn ways I can better support my team."

The selected leaders will participate in an intensive program, focusing on honing various aspects of business development, impact measurement, and sustainable growth, with the goal of equipping these entrepreneurs to make a lasting difference in their communities. At the conclusion of the Accelerator, each enterprise will receive a \$20,000 grant to support operational growth. Leaders will also have the opportunity to connect with ESE peers in REDF's thriving [REDF Community](#), and may be eligible to apply for [REDF's Growth Portfolio](#), which offers additional grant funding and capacity-building support.

"I started CoBuild to leverage my privilege, experience and knowledge within the industry to increase access to its opportunities," shares Tate Williams, of CoBuild, LLC, in Kansas City, Missouri. "Our goal is to train employees to have an immediately marketable skill for employment beyond their time with us. I'm so honored to join this REDF cohort, and I'm excited to learn with and from others."

This cohort will convene leaders from 10 states and Washington, D.C., representing a broad swathe of industries, including construction, food service, media, and environmental services:

- Shirley Boubert-Rumble, [Usource Construction](#), Washington, DC
- Ted Christians, [Amplify Chicago](#), Chicago, IL
- Jeffrey Delp, [Carver Neighborhood Market](#), Atlanta, GA
- Melissa DeVos, [Zero Waste East Side](#), San Jose, CA
- Naseema Gilson, [Sanctuary Kitchen by CitySeed](#), New Haven, CT
- Jackie Huebbe, [SugarBot Sweet Shop & Creamery](#), St. Charles, MO
- Matthew Huff, [Beacon House Thrift Shop](#), Long Beach, CA
- Caroline Johnston, [Greensland Bakery](#), Washington, DC
- LeeAnn Krause, [Big House Beans](#), Antioch, CA
- Charmaine Landicho, [City Beet Kitchens/Project Renewal](#), New York, NY
- Sabine Langer, [Global Café](#), Memphis, TN
- Aleksander Martray, [Big Picture Alliance](#), Philadelphia, PA
- Mark G. Mulroe, [A Safe Haven Foundation](#), Chicago, IL

- Steve Nash, [Advance Memphis](#), Memphis, TN
- Domonique Perkins, [People's Pottery Project](#), Los Angeles CA
- Alisa Pifine, [Catholic Charities of Louisville, Inc.](#), Louisville, KY
- Addison Shockley, [Ready for Good Co.](#), Lawrence, KS
- Kim Watson, [Project Joy, Inc.](#), Lancaster, CA
- Tate Williams, [CoBuild, LLC](#), Kansas City, MO
- Tracey Williams, [Urban University](#), Oakland, CA
- Sadiyyah Wyllie-James, [Vested Solutions](#), Desert Hot Springs, CA

This cohort will join the [160 ESE leaders the REDF Accelerator has supported](#) since its launch in 2016.

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