

MEN FOR H.O.P.E

966 South Broad St, Trenton, NJ

E wearemenforhope@gmail.com

W www.menforhope.org

P 609-571-0096

MEN FOR H.O.P.E GRANT PROPOSAL

MISSION STATEMENT Men for H.O.P.E is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization in Trenton, NJ that provides low income and below poverty level citizens with the professional and academic resources needed for success.

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Greetings,

Men for H.O.P.E utilizes community outreach, education, and volunteerism as tools for social and economic development throughout the inner cities of New Jersey. The acronym "H.O.P.E" means "Helping Other People Elevate". Our objective is to address and diminish the prominence of gang violence and truancy in inner communities by providing families and individuals in need with essential academic and professional resources that can help them advance in life without resorting to crime. We have introduced athletic programs in hopes to promote confidence, health, and wellness.

Children and teens in the inner cities of New Jersey need more reinforcement so that they can become active, responsible leaders in their homes and communities. According to the USCensus, 11.5% percent of Trenton's population attained education from ninth to twelfth grade without attaining a degree. In fact, New Jersey Department of Education statistics show that even the most prominent high school in Mercer County had a graduation rate of fifty-nine percent and has yet to reach the statewide college and career readiness target percentages. As graduation rates decrease, the gun related crimes and death tolls increase. Concurrently, the total of firearm robberies has risen from eighty to eighty-nine within the last year. Most of the people that fall victim to these crimes are adolescents. Within the last seven years, our adolescents have made up over half of the violent fatalities and homicides. We focus on building a firm foundation for our youth so that they can avoid these perils. Many of our volunteers and participants are elementary and middle school students that have been directly affected by the violence and poverty and are genuinely interested in their education and being proactive in our community.

As a result, we tutor youth of all ages and host weekly events like Life Skills Mentoring and Gang Intervention. We also have weekly visits to the Rescue Mission. We provide free food and transportation for all of these events. We sincerely love what we do and the kids are all active participants in the program and in their environments. We hope that you will join us in uplifting the children of our community. We are passionate about what we do and we see value in our youth and our city.

Best Regards,



Kelvin Baldwin
kelvinbaldwin1@gmail.com
609-571-0096



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MEN FOR H.O.P.E is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that utilizes education, mentoring, and community outreach as tools for social and economic development. The acronym "H.O.P.E" means "Helping Other People Elevate". The acronym reflects our primary interest in improving the living conditions of those in need. Our central audience is low income and below poverty level residents of New Jersey. We collaborate with other local nonprofits, banks and brands to provide underserved families with essential items and donations as well as professional and academic resources. Our partnerships also aid us in producing engaging, informative events and activities that are open to the public such as our previous financial literacy courses, healthy eating sessions and our annual summer block party.



OUR HISTORY



Founded by Britton Thomas III in March 2011, Men for H.O.P.E began addressing key social issues in Trenton, NJ such as violence, truancy, and poverty. Men for HOPE was conceptualized by twelve students who were passionate about making a difference. Majority of our target population is 125 percent below the poverty level. Many of the families utilize state benefits. The students expressed their community concerns and career interests to us; we utilized the feedback to produce engaging trips and activities that piqued their interest.

Seeing our participants being so ambitious in these leadership roles just reiterated the importance of mentorship and positive reinforcement. We listened and employed what we learned to expand our reach and enrich our curriculum over the years. Now, we service about fifty students during our weekly programs. We've maintained relationships with most of our founding members. In fact, the twelve students that started with us have graduated from high school

- **TRIPS TO CITY COUNCIL**

Participants were able to see the strategic planning that goes into carrying out city development

- **A COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENT**

*Where They Served Meals To 200 People
Now, we have a Rescue Mission program that allows us to feed those in need every week.*

- **A PUBLIC DIALOG SERIES**

led by young speakers referred by our participants to share their experiences with peer pressure, drugs and violence in the city. Events like these inspired the formation of our Gang Intervention program for all ages.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Statistics show that less than 21% of young adults in Trenton, NJ, ages 18-21, have enrolled in college after graduating from high school. Unfortunately, as college enrollment decreases, the gun related crimes and death tolls increase. From 2015 through 2017, there was a 26% increase of juveniles charged with gun offenses statewide, according to an article by Philly; in addition, there's been a 200 percent increase in juvenile shooting victims in Trenton, NJ. The age of offenders and victims seems to be starting out younger as well. An article from NJ discusses gang involvement of children and teens. In this article, Trenton Juvenile Officer Steven Smith explains that he's dealt with children as young as eight years old. He continues to reveal that, in some cases, they can't place handcuffs on these children because their hands are so small. Our organization fights to combat this by providing children and teens with free programming that informs them about their career and academic opportunities postsecondary school. We give them free access to computers and show them professional skills that they can use in the workforce. We also give them positive reinforcement and surround them with positive influences that guide them throughout their academic career.

According to the US Census, the average household in Trenton, NJ makes \$35,524. This means that Trenton families take home over \$25,000 less than the average US family. They also report that, in our city, at least 27.3% of the citizens are living in poverty. Majority of our target audience is actually 125 percent below the poverty level so, we see the impact of their financial struggles. Without free programming, many of our participants would struggle in school because their parents can't afford to pay for tutoring. Many come from families who don't have access to a reliable form of transportation, so they wouldn't be able to tour different campus locations without the

help of free college tours. In some cases, children don't even have access to computers without programs and public places. Children and teens in Trenton, New Jersey suffer when they don't have access to adequate resources during their academic career. For example, the US Census also shows that although 77% of families in Trenton, NJ have computers, only 58% have access to broadband internet.

This means that there is a large number of teens who still can't carry out essential tasks such as finishing homework assignments, completing job applications and fill out college applications or even at home. We eliminate this issue by having computer on site during our programs. We monitor their activity during sessions. Our partnership with Lifebridge Technology allows us to have free technical courses that give participants access to computers. In some cases, children are able to take home a computer after completing the program.

These children succeed when they have access to more professional and academic resources. They also flourish when they are surrounded by more positive role models and reinforcement. Many of our volunteers, facilitators and participants are citizens that are directly affected by the violence and poverty and are genuinely interested in their education and being proactive in our community. We focus on building a firm foundation for our youth to grow from and were enjoy being a safe haven in our community. We've seen participants of all ages change their lifestyle, eating habits and become more financially adept as a result of our sessions. We attribute our success to our passionate volunteers and facilitators, generous partners and our four way approach to community outreach.

OUR “FOUR-WAY” APPROACH

Below, is our **four way approach to community outreach**.

STAGE ONE

We try to reach children early on and tutor them so that they can operate within the confines of the inner city without being easily persuaded by negative influences. We reward and acknowledge their achievement, give them extracurricular activities to stay engaged, and try to instill responsibility and accountability early on. During the **first stage**, we also patiently guide them as they work on areas of their life they struggle with both personally and academically.

STAGE TWO

If we don't reach them as children, the teens will most likely be with us during our **second and/or third stage** of the program. When teens work with us, they attend one of these programs: Youth for Hope, Life Skills Mentoring, and/or Gang Intervention. We want to ensure that they develop into sustained adults that are active civic leaders.

STAGE THREE

Our **third stage** of the program is reaching out to young adults in need through volunteering at rescue missions and more. This is our way of reducing the number of at risk inner-city adolescents that are dying young due to violence or drugs, going to jail, or becoming homeless.

STAGE FOUR

Our **fourth and final stage** focuses on guiding disadvantaged adults; we provide them with food, as well as, professional and educational resources. The children and teens participate in rescue mission trips to develop a sense of compassion and empathy. It's also a stark reminder of how violence, crime & addiction can be.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Enrollment & Assessment Process

Our program is year round. We get youth recommendations throughout the year from DCF and the court system. We do an entry assessment. They are placed into programs based on assessment results. Afterwards, we follow up by having our volunteer facilitators do monthly evaluations. We provide references and resources based on those results. We discuss their strengths and areas of concerns with their parent or guardian. The evaluations allow us to document their progression as they advance through our program.

Building Relationships

Some of the people come from homes without male figures. The men from our programs step in and fill that void. Whether it's a father & daughter dance or a basketball game, we are a part of anything where the kids receives recognition. During tough times, we act as family intervention and offer external resources. We even attain permission from parents to speak to teachers and counselor about grades and behavior. For most of the families we assist, we've become more than a community resource. We're actually an extension of their family and we pride ourselves on being a safe, kid friendly haven in our community.

One of our favorite aspects of our programs is that the curriculum is guided by the feedback from our students. We don't want to assume that we know what's best for our youth and ultimately end up creating curricula that's uninteresting and irrelevant to their professional and academic goals. We avoid this by encouraging children speak up. One main theme we've maintained over the past decade is ensuring that the youth involved feel heard. This makes them more open and willing to confide in us about their academic and personal concerns. Getting input also helps us plan group activities and trips. This also guides us when evaluating students and constructing



individual career plans for each participant.

Weekly Programming During the School Year

We provide free food and transportation for up to fifty people during programs. Our project allows students and parents from all over the city to unite. Children have opportunities to receive mentoring, opportunities to volunteer and fitness programs. We also volunteer at senior homes in the area frequently.

Our weekly programs allow local children, mentors, college students, and professors to collaborate with people in the area; students learn about volunteerism, leadership, teamwork and social responsibility. We also use our free services redefine how our youth views post-secondary education, health and entrepreneurship. Throughout the school year, educational trips and college tours are taken during weekends and after school.



Graduation

The children involved usually graduate from the program when they are high school seniors. After leaving, some graduates come back to the program as volunteers or interns. Most of them enroll in college or trade school. Others begin working or apprenticing for our officers. In the past, a few have gone to prison. Once they are released, we help them with rehabilitation by referring them to shelters, job programs and other people within our network that can assist them. We also provide them with resources. If an individual becomes homeless, we assist them through via our Homelessness Assistance program.

Summer Programming

During the summer, we try to expose the youth to new locations. We take them on trips to lakes and parks. We also have fun cookouts and scavenger hunts. We provide free food and transportation for these day long experiences. We also take educational trips out of state during this time.

OUR TEAM

Here are the great people that help us make a difference in our community!



BRITTON & FELICIA THOMAS

Founders

Britton Thomas a local owner of a welding business. Britton has been mentoring children and teens for 13 years. He also had a career in boxing. He pulls from that experience to produce curriculum for fitness and clean eating activities.

Felicia Thomas has been uplifting children and teens for over a decade. She prides herself on instilling self love and confidence. For example, she teaches young women about personal hygiene and self care. She also leads networking events for women for all ages.

e-mail: min.brittonthomas@gmail.com
phone: 609-847-8993

e-mail: endoneza2@aol.com
phone: 973-489-0942

OUR AFFILIATES

WOMEN FOR H.O.P.E is an extension of Men for H.O.P.E. These are women centric, women led programs focused on uniting, educating and inspiring women of all ages through fellowship, volunteering and mentoring. These events include our weekly Women's Cafe.

YOUTH FOR H.O.P.E is the youth sector of Men for H.O.P.E. This includes children, teens and young adults. Our programs give our participants a chance to gain experience in volunteering, internships, team building, leadership, entrepreneurship and more. Most children involved in this program are also involved in our other academic and athletic programs as well.

PARTNERSHIPS

Our organization has joined forces with both Wells Fargo and Big Brothers Big Sister over the years. Wells Fargo has helped us implement financial literacy programs, and Big Brothers Big Sisters helped us host several events like our annual block party. Investors Bank, Camp Fire NJ, One Simple Wish, Trenton Free Public Library, RealTime Mentoring Project, Thomas J Rubino Academy, True Love Ministries and No Silent Ranks are other partners that have generously supported our organization over the years as well.



KELVIN BALDWIN

Co-Founder & Project Manager

Kelvin Baldwin is also a business owner and trusted local community leader. Kelvin has 20 years of experience working with youth. He provides youth with career and internship opportunities. He also provides on job training.

e-mail: kelvinbaldwin1@gmail.com
phone: 609-571-0096

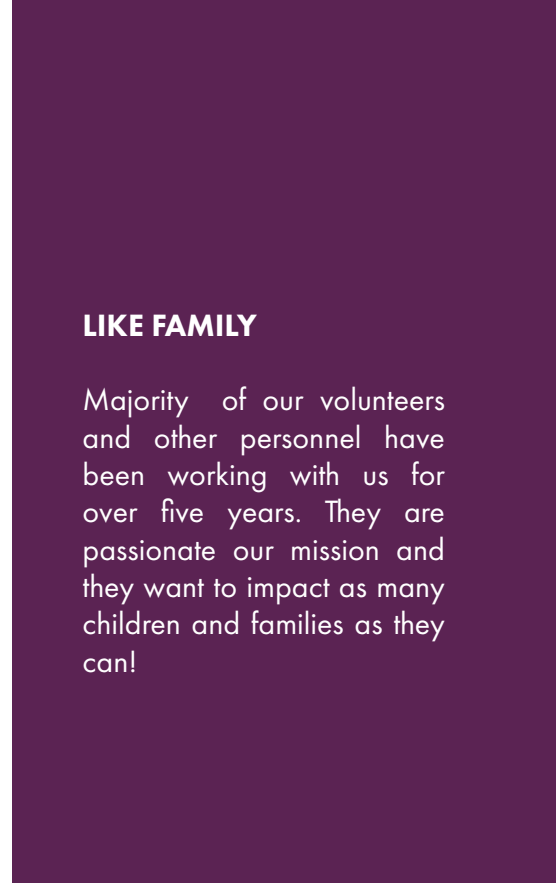


DAMON NORMAN

Coordinator

Damon Norman has been coaching and mentoring children and teens for 12 years. He has owned his HVAC and home improvement business for 15 years. He provides workopportunities to local young adults.

e-mail: aplusfamily04@yahoo.com
phone: 609-638-9193



LIKE FAMILY

Majority of our volunteers and other personnel have been working with us for over five years. They are passionate our mission and they want to impact as many children and families as they can!



PATRICIA HALL

Facilitator

Patricia Hall is an entrepreneur who actively works towards change for youth in Trenton, NJ. She's a board member for the Trenton Downtown Association and The Trenton Literacy Movement. She's worked with Trenton Free Public Library, and Camp Fire NJ.

e-mail: patriciahall1967@gmail.com
phone: 609-510-6862

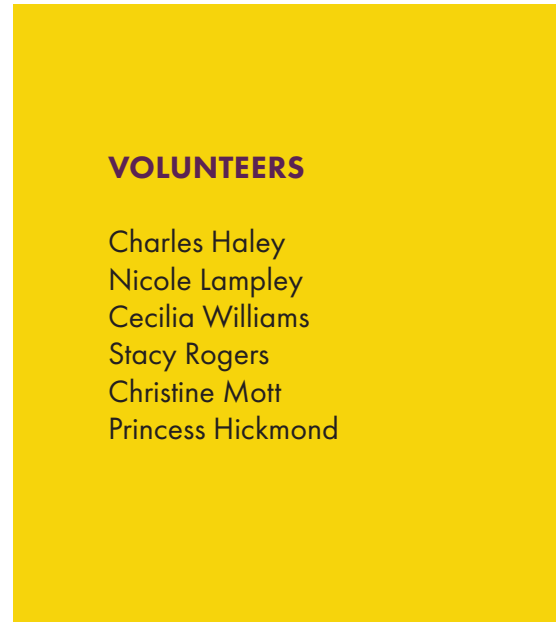


PATRICK HALL

Facilitator

Patrick Hall owns a business management service, a contracting company and a business coaching/consulting company. Patrick and his wife have been working with Trenton's youth for over a decade. He trains men and women of ages in entrepreneurship and marketing.

e-mail: PatrickH8055@gmail.com
phone: 609-610-1897



VOLUNTEERS

- Charles Haley
- Nicole Lampley
- Cecilia Williams
- Stacy Rogers
- Christine Mott
- Princess Hickmond

OUR PROGRAMS



Life Skills Mentorship

Our Life Skills Mentoring program allows us to connect with new members. During these programs, participants work with volunteer mentors. These events allow them to gain life skills they can use in their everyday life. The skills include, but aren't limited to, the ability to effectively communicate, network, problem solve, and employ self control. It also allows them to become more conscious about their decision making process. Our speakers tell their stories to inspire and promote empathy. We also have Gang Intervention sessions where we bring speakers in to discuss gang involvement, drug dealing, truancy and more.



Rescue Mission

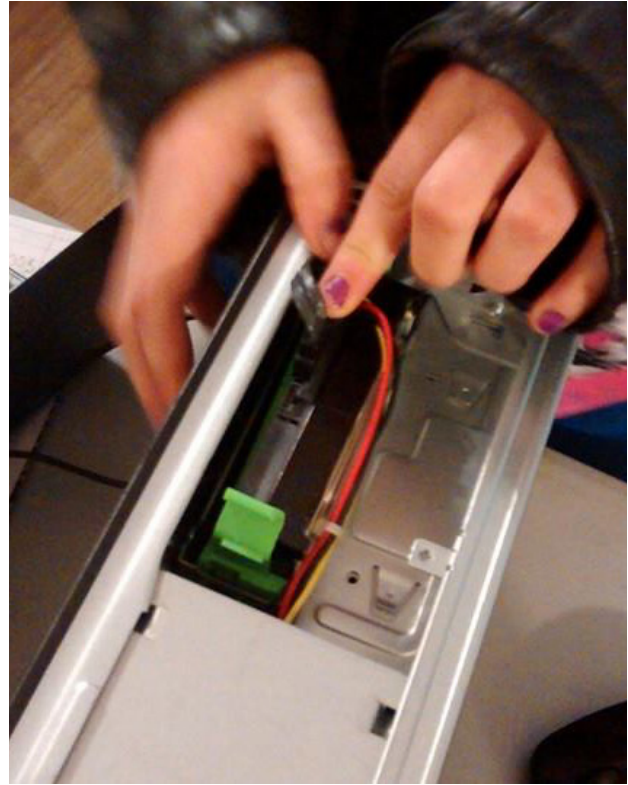
Every Saturday, we give out food to local individuals and families that have been displaced. This weekly event takes place at the Rescue Mission in Trenton, NJ. Sometimes, we also give out other essential items. Some of the people who receive food from us end up attending one of our programs. This allows them to get access to job readiness programs, work opportunities, transportation and more. Citizens with community service hours can also fulfill community service hours during this time. They arrive at 11AM and leave at 5PM. There are multiple breaks throughout the day. This event gives us not only a chance to give back but, it's also an opportunity to uplift and bond with people in the area.



Health & Wellness

Some of our participants come from families who have high risk eating habits. In fact, a great deal of their parents and grandparents suffer from high blood pressure, strokes and diabetes. We have been introducing regular fun, preventative programs and activities like boxing, basketball and visits to the gym. There are also events that educate our youth about their food choices. For example, we plan to visit outdoor markets and teach them how to grow their own herbs and vegetables. We have started teaching them how to help them deconstruct food labels, how to monitor sugar and salt intake and ways to find healthier alternatives when grocery shopping. Along with our other

fitness activities, we plan to use the funds to implement a monthly health class. Self care, discipline and accountability are what we are looking to instill but, ultimately, we want them to know the importance of taking care of themselves both mentally and physically. Our fitness and support programs allow us to teach the importance of teamwork, fitness and confidence. We also teach the children about self defense techniques.



Tech & Entrepreneurship

Our volunteer teacher from Lifebridge Technology provides a free hands-on, technological training class called Computer Entrepreneurship. During his sessions, children learn how to build computers and more. This helps the children gain professional skills and gives them free monitored access to a computer. Some children get an opportunity to take home a refurbished computer after completing the program. We would like to also give children and opportunity to learn about web and app development. There are great opportunities available in the STEM field and we want our youth to be proficient with some of the industry's common technological tools. If not, we'd want them be able to utilize computers for everyday uses such as homework, research and job searches.

We also have entrepreneurial activities where we teach our attendees about marketing, finance management, negotiation skills, research &

development and how to close deals. For example, we have taken the children to New York and let them observe various vendors. From there, we gave them a project where they chose a product to sell, their individual marketing techniques and they enjoyed this project. This is just one of several projects that we've created for our participants. We've also had them observe and assist during our some of our fundraising events.



INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
P. O. BOX 2508
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: FEB 11 2016

MEN FOR HOPE HELPING OTHER PEOPLE
ELEVATE CORP
C/O KELVIN BALDWIN
966 S BROAD ST
TRENTON, NJ 08611

Employer Identification Number:
45-2602255
DLN:
17053287311035
Contact Person:
WILLIAM SCHRODER ID# 31694
Contact Telephone Number:
(877) 829-5500

Accounting Period Ending:
December 31
Public Charity Status:
170(b)(1)(A)(vi)
~~Form 990/990-EZ/990-N Required:~~
Yes
Effective Date of Exemption:
October 7, 2015
Contribution Deductibility:
Yes
Addendum Applies:
Yes

Dear Applicant:

We're pleased to tell you we determined you're exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3). Donors can deduct contributions they make to you under IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under Section 2055, 2106, or 2522. This letter could help resolve questions on your exempt status. Please keep it for your records.

Organizations exempt under IRC Section 501(c)(3) are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined you're a public charity under the IRC Section listed at the top of this letter.

~~Based on the information you submitted with your application, we approved your request for reinstatement under Revenue Procedure 2014-11. Your effective date of exemption, as listed at the top of this letter, is the postmark date of your application.~~

If we indicated at the top of this letter that you're required to file Form 990/990-EZ/990-N, our records show you're required to file an annual information return (Form 990 or Form 990-EZ) or electronic notice (Form 990-N, the e-Postcard). If you don't file a required return or notice for three consecutive years, your exempt status will be automatically revoked.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that an addendum applies, the enclosed addendum is an integral part of this letter.

For important information about your responsibilities as a tax-exempt

Letter 947

OUR BUDGET

ITEM	COST
OVERALL COST OF TRIPS	\$ 18,000.00
FOOD FOR PROGRAMS	\$ 8,840.00
TRANSPORTATION	\$5,200
OFFICE EQUIPMENT	\$ 1,500
GROUP T-SHIRTS	\$ 1,500
MARKETING	\$500

TOTAL **\$ 35,540**

OBJECTIVES

Right now, our organization provides food and other essential items to those in need. Each year, we aim to feed at least 40 families. These food donations are available for program attendants and the public. For example, we feed the homeless weekly at the Rescue Mission. During the holidays, we also make buffet style meals and have outdoor barbecue events. There are some people who may only eat during one of our programs. We want to ensure that we can help as many people in need as we can with our resources.

We want our program attendance to grow by 50% each year. We want more people to know about our program and the partners we work with. We are working towards increasing brand awareness by increasing our social media efforts. Over the years, we have also purchased billboards and wraps for our automobiles. Internally, we are producing strategies to get families more involved in our programs. That way, they can be active participants not only in the program but in their child's academic and career pursuits.

As explained earlier, we get state and court appointed youth recommendations. The adolescence we are referred are usually considered at-risk. We'd like to be able to provide them with more mental health resources. As a result, we would like to partner with more mental health professionals and guidance counselors. We evaluate our participants regularly. If we see a child struggling with behavioral issues, or simply in need of counseling, whether it's individual or family counseling, we'd like to build a network of professionals that we can recommend them to. We'd also like to network with business owners in the area to create a work program for our participants.

Three of our officers own their own businesses. Kelvin Baldwin, Damon Norman and Britton Thomas provide students with opportunities to work with them post graduation. Our organization also provides internship opportunities to local teens and young adults. We've seen them flourish in these roles and we'd like to expand their access to professional opportunities by building a work program. We plan to create a system with local business owners where high school seniors can be referred to work with them based on their career interests. That way, they can enter the workforce with some form of professional experience once leaving high school. Plus, this would assist in achieving our larger goal of having all of our graduates either working or enrolled in a postsecondary educational program.

We aim to have least 60% of our graduates enrolled in college or engaged in a postsecondary education program. During the school year, we take our participants to tour different colleges and have them interact with professors and students. That way, they can figure out what schools and majors they may be interested in. However, not all of our participants may want to go to college. Some may want to go to trade school, start their own businesses or even enlist in the army. We want them to start working towards their career aspirations as soon as they graduate from high school. If they don't, they run the risk of becoming distracted by negative influences that may encourage them to engage in illegal activities for money instead.

EVALUATION



We will continue to measure percentages and the amount of development we see in the children we mentor, and the development of the people we serve in our communities, via questionnaires, surveys, video interviews, & more. We track the amount of supplies we distribute to our communities. We already have standing databases, as well as, evaluation forms for participants and mentors. All data is used to shape our programs and to see whether we are making an impact on those involved. However, we will begin track how many volunteers we attract through social media.

References

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