

A BRIEF REPORT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ON THE PROGRESS OF PRINCIPAL PROGRAMS OF BUILD HOPE INCORPORATED FOR FY2022



Purpose: Build Hope, Inc. (“BHI”) is funded entirely by grants and the in-kind support of staff at the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (“HACLA”) and centers its work and resources on supporting residents and clients of HACLA. This report provides the Governing Board with a review of the activities and program successes for the first half of 2022.

Issues: With the launch of our website, BHI has created four areas of programmatic focus that guide our focus through FY2022: *Education and Enrichment, Covering the Basics, Pathways to Growth and Healthy Lives*. Additionally, this year Build Hope Inc. has been working on Organizational Growth, which includes the integration of its revised mission into branded messaging, communication tools, and overall organizational capacity building. The following represents our accomplishments in these areas to date and our plans for the next six months of focused work.

Education and Enrichment

Build Hope, Inc. (“BHI”) continues its strategic partnerships with the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Book Rich Environment, HUD, the LA Public Library, LAUSD and service providers at HACLA’s housing developments to promote literacy initiatives to improve third grade reading scores. The premise of the initiative is to provide access to books for youth in K-3rd Grade to increase reading proficiency. In April of 2022, through the Book Rich Environment, **BHI received 7,230 books to distribute throughout HACLA communities**. Books are being distributed to residents at Nickerson Gardens and Imperial Courts during Summer Night Lights (SNL) Program beginning on July 13th. Additionally, books will be distributed at various community engagement events, such as back to school events taking place in July and August, and within the public housing, Section 8 and redevelopment sites within HACLA’s portfolio. HACLA’s strategic partners, nestled in our public housing developments, are planning for the delivery of tutoring and literacy programming during the summer addressing the COVID academic slide that many of our youth are still overcoming.

BHI continues to focus on assisting youth and adults to find paths to higher education. This year, in collaboration with our long-time partner, SoCal CAN, we applied and were **awarded a combined \$325,000 from California Community Foundations Los Angeles Scholars Fund** to progress this goal. BHI will receive \$125,000 directly, with \$75,000 towards scholarships and \$50,000 to support staffing of the scholarship program to encourage improved connection and mentoring of our scholars during their higher education journey. The \$200,000 received by SoCal CAN will continue to ability to mentor and ready students for higher education and provided needed supports to students to continually remove barriers, including transportation, technology, housing, etc. In addition to this award, BHI supported SoCal CAN in successfully pursuing a \$650,000 grant through Representative Gomez and the Community Projects Funding to continue Project SOAR at William Mead and Ramona Gardens and expand the program to Estrada Courts and Pico Gardens in FY2022.

BHI is also working this year to extend its fundraising reach beyond traditional grants to focus on corporate and individual giving. In February, staff began its corporate outreach campaign, selecting seventeen local corporations with a focus reach to join their Employee Match programs and develop a deeper relationship with all facets of their corporate giving. Staff developed campaign materials, sent personal messages and is currently conducting follow up pitch meetings and engagements.

The **BHI Scholarship Program** is designed to support the youth living in HACLA’s communities who are heading to college for their first year or are returning scholars working to finish their college careers. We recognize that two- and four-year college is an important tool for financial and social mobility, not only for the youth themselves but for their families. On Thursday, July 21st, BHI will celebrate the Tenth (10th) Annual Build Hope Scholarship program with a virtual program featuring Nichol Whiteman, CEO of the Dodgers Foundation as the Keynote Speaker. This year BHI received 82 scholarship applications and has raised \$102,000 for scholarships thus far. Since its inception, the program has awarded \$306,250 in scholarships to 273 recipients, attending over fifty (50) colleges or universities.

We attribute our continued success to our partners and staff who conducted direct outreach and promotion, held orientation workshops and supported applicants with technical assistance to ensure the completion and submission of applications. This year BHI builds upon the inaugural success of our Returning Scholars award created in 2021. Last year, thirty-three Returning Scholar applications were submitted and this year almost half of our eighty-two scholarship applications were Returning Scholars. The Returning Scholars award is doing exactly what it was intended to do: ensuring our students do **not just get enter college but complete it**.

Covering the Basics

BHI has continued to focus on **Bridging the Digital Divide**, providing access to computers and devices, and ensuring young learners at our sites can keep up with schoolwork and digital hybrid instruction and seniors are able to access health and services.

In FY2022, BHI continues its work with HACLA’s internet partner, Starry, to bring internet to twelve HACLA public housing sites as well as competing distribution of 1,645 hotspots. Currently Build Hope Inc. is focused on supporting resident adoption of the internet options available to them and ensuring that families are digitally literate. BHI helped internet partners host sign-up events at our public housing sites and is continuing its Digital Ambassador curriculum to training residents to offer peer-to-peer support in their communities. Starry is currently installing the wireless Internet infrastructure at Ramona Gardens, followed by Gonzaque Village. Below are additional stats on adoption rates at sites were Starry is already installed.

Community	Launch Date	Units	Net Subs	% Adoption	% ACP Enrolled
Mar Vista Gardens	6/9/20	601	263	44%	52%
Imperial Courts	10/30/20	498	162	33%	63%
Nickerson Gardens	12/11/20	1,066	861	81%	56%
Pueblo Del Rio	1/20/21	670	212	32%	74%
Jordan Downs	2/4/21	535	140	26%	69%
Estrada Courts	6/7/21	414	167	40%	87%
William Mead	6/17/21	449	194	43%	93%
Pico Gardens/Las Casitas	7/15/21	298	181	61%	92%
Avalon Gardens	10/18/21	164	69	42%	97%
Total		4,695	2,249	48%	68%

Most critically, BHI has supported digital connectivity and literacy with the **Digital Ambassador Program**. Initiated as a pilot under the Community Health Worker demonstration grant at Nickerson Gardens, and now in its second year, the Digital Ambassadors promote digital connectivity in a peer-to-peer model. Our partnership with EveryoneOn, an organization based in Washington D.C., is funded to support housing authorities participating in ConnectHome and advance digital equity in communities across the country. Our second cohort of Digital Ambassadors completed their initial training June 6, 2022. Digital Ambassadors meet once a week over a six-week period for 2 hours and receive basic digital skills training and a free computer or tablet upon enrollment.

The first cohort of Digital Ambassadors, represent residents at all public housing developments. Approximately 2-5 Digital Ambassadors are assigned to each public housing development to conduct outreach and promote digital connectivity initiatives after they are fully trained in digital technology tools so that they can teach their neighbors. This year Digital Ambassadors continue the promotion of Starry Internet, hotspot usage, the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) (formerly the Emergency Broadband Benefit program), and broader use of the internet for goods and services.



FCC Commissioner Geoffrey Starks visits

On May 4, Commissioner Geoffrey Starks of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) visited HACLA public housing sites to learn about the Agency's digital inclusion efforts in low-income areas. HACLA staff and resident leaders, and Digital Ambassadors provided information on the CHW program, Digital Ambassador program, Starry Internet partnership, and Learning Pods. At Jordan Downs, the Commissioner additional partners and discussed pairing digital literacy with financial literacy and entrepreneurship. This showcase provided an opportunity to influence national funding for improving digital access & feature some of our best practices.



HACLA & Mayor's Office Press Release: Starry

Expansion to Avalon Gardens On February 18, Douglas Guthrie, HACLA CEO, LA City Councilman Curren Price, Starry, Microsoft, announced the expansion of its affordable, high-capacity internet service to the 164 households at Avalon Gardens. In addition, Starry announced plans with Microsoft to refurbish the Avalon Gardens community computer lab with new WiFi access, new computers, printers and accessories for use by residents.

BHI is focused on creating updated learning and engagement environments for our residents. Upgrading our Computer Labs to **21st Century Learning & Resource Labs** is a significant focus. Between our public housing and asset management portfolios, BHI has identified thirteen (13) existing labs as our initial focus. Once we complete the work to renovate these labs, BHI will focus on creating new fixed mini- or mobile labs throughout our residential portfolio. Three labs funded by Starry and Microsoft are first on the list for transformation but we hope by the end of FY2022 we will also have further developed operating partnerships for technical and program support at the labs and increase funding to match the \$850,000 provided by HACLA to seed this effort. In

January 2022, the Mayor’s Office of the City of Los Angeles confirmed the availability of \$200,000 for three lab renovations. Below is a snapshot of current funding sources, amounts and target sites.

FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT	COMPUTER LAB SITE	PROJECTED TIMELINE
Starry & Microsoft	\$200K	Avalon, Gonzaque, Nickerson	2022
City of LA	\$200K	Mar Vista, Ramona Gardens, San Fernando	2022
Rep. Jimmy Gomez	\$300K	Estrada, Pico, Ramona, William Mead	2023
HACLA	\$850K	Supplemental Computer Lab Funds	2022-2025
EST. TOTAL	\$1,550,000		

In partnership with **Baby 2 Baby**, BHI continues to provide essential baby items for children and families so that parents have the resources they need to ensure the health and wellness of the children are achieved in their formative years. Thousands of items were distributed to households across HACLA’s portfolio and included: **Baby formula**, diapers, wipes, cleaning supplies, and other items such as car seats and play pins. This is also aligned with Build Hope, Inc’s goal of ensuring babies have what they need to thrive and grow and addresses food insecurity for our neediest little ones. Here is a snapshot of Baby2Baby donations distributed between January 1, 2022 and June 10, 2022.



Pathways to Growth

Our non-profit was created to ensure that all residents and clients within HACLA communities and programs have access to the resources and support they need to improve their quality of life. One of the cornerstones of BHI’s programmatic work has been financial advancement, which includes support for HACLA’s Watts/LA Worksource Center and continued pursuit of partnerships to support skill, career and business development. Our first goal for residents is financial stability but the end goal is financial growth and access to asset-building.

In FY2022 BHI continues its partnership with the Watts Gang Taskforce to implement **One Watts**, a program focused on placing reentry, gang-involved or gang-affiliated individuals into career pathways. The program began with the successful award of a three-year grant through California Violence Prevention (CAL VIP) and has completed its second program year with the milestone of meeting its recruitment and placement goals. BHI continues to draw on a \$450,000 grant from the Ballmer Foundation which provides \$150,000 per year to help enhance employment supports and cover staffing and overhead costs.

This year, BHI and the Watts/LA Worksource Center are working with the Mayor’s Office to secure funding to support a new **Hospitality Training Program** for youth ages, 18-30. Funding will provide training and placement opportunities for 100 HACLA residents. Currently, we are looking for kitchens located near our sites for adequate training space and hope the program can launch in the fall.

Additionally, this year BHI partnered with Watts Rising to write a grant application to create economic security through homeownership. Senator Padilla is supporting this request for federal funding which would give BHI \$350,000 to provide a two-year program that consists of two, 10-month, **peer-based Homebuyer Club** cohorts. The clubs will work on financial planning, socioemotional preparedness, and identifying available resources for homeownership for up to thirty residents. Households at Jordan Downs and in the greater Watts neighborhood will be prioritized with the goal of preparing them to purchase the 150 new homes that will be built as part of the Jordan Downs redevelopment.

As we move further into FY2022, BHI will be focused on its ability to serve residents better in this ever-changing job market and manage their households in an economy where the cost of living continues to rise.

Healthy Lives

BHI’s Healthy Lives initiative is a natural progression of our work to give all residents a Path To



BHI Completes Green Alley Pilot

Under our Healthy Lives initiative, BHI received a small \$10,000 grant from the Liberty Hill Foundation and used the grant to fund a community driven, small start project in Watts to green and clean an alley used frequently by students getting to and from Flournoy Elementary School, a feeder elementary for Imperial Courts and Nickerson Gardens students. The funding was used to create a mural, improve lighting and create green planters.

Growth and a reflection of the fact that our families’ lives are influenced by the environment in which they live. This year, BHI is focused on funding opportunities that **bring additional sustainability and resiliency to HACLA’s communities**. To date, this year, BHI has applied for funding to support Watts Rising’s Youth-focused Eco-Clubs that will complement the recent Green Ambassador Program funding provided to HACLA by the State of California. Additionally, BHI is working with Watts/LA WorkSource Center to identify and apply for funding to continue the successful Community Health Worker Program started by HACLA’s Jobs Plus program at Nickerson Gardens as the funding for that program is expected to sunset later this year.

Health is both personal and community-focused. On the personal side, BHI continues to support HACLA’s interest in improving vaccination rates in all its residential communities by supporting education efforts on “VaxFacts” with Charles Drew University and helping support vaccination events and health fairs at our senior and public housing sites.

For the second half of the year, BHI will look for opportunities to provide programs, resources as

well as small capital investments that create empowering environments.

Organizational Growth

This year, BHI continues to establish its branding platform and social presence. BHI has produced two videos that will be used as **marketing pieces** to promote our work to funders and the broader LA community. We are also working on two- to three- short videos specifically for our scholarship program; highlighting current recipients and encouraging donations and support. All of our material aligns with BHI's mission and focus on empowerment and equity.

BHI is targeting audiences who might take an interest in our work and developing donor relationships through **three donation campaigns**. The donation campaigns include: (1) HACLA employee awareness and support for the BHI scholarship; (2) Expanding individual selection of BHI as a donor recipient through AmazonSmile to enlarge fees BHI receives from this shopping option; and (3) Give the Gift of Hope campaign which allows individuals to give a donation to BHI as a gift or remembrance for any occasion. We are working with a graphic design to create the promotion materials and developing the targets and roll out approach for each campaign. We expect to launch all three before the end of the fiscal year.

BHI is working to develop its new **Scholarship Portal** as part of our effort to expand our website content and online capacity. We are completing the mapping of the portal and hope to be able to procure a technical partner by fall. As a fundraising arm, BHI is working hard to develop relationships with individuals in the greater Los Angeles community to diversify access to resources and financial support of our programs. These relationships will be captured and communicated using Monday.com, our selection for a **Customer Relationship Management tool**. In the first two quarters of FY2022, we have begun to build out the system and expect to be fully operational by the end of this fiscal year.

Lastly, the organization is also working on a set of **policies and procedures** to formalize its ability to hire and manage staff as well as create a formal Memorandum of Understanding between HACLA and BHI for services and support. These goals are expected to be reached in the last quarter of FY2022.

Funding: The stated programs receive grant support and in-kind resources from external organizations, a transfer of funds from LA LOMOD as well as individual donations.