



# 2022 Impact Report

42 Years of Serving Milwaukee  
Youth and Families



**You can support us with an online contribution**  
at [runningrebels.org/donate](https://runningrebels.org/donate) OR by sending a check to:  
Running Rebels Community Organization  
225 W. Capitol Drive | Milwaukee, WI 53212

Your financial contributions to Running  
Rebels Community Organization make  
a HUGE impact in our community by  
providing a safe space for Milwaukee  
young people and connecting them to  
caring adult mentors.

## Support Our Mission to Guide Milwaukee Youth Into Adulthood



Running Rebels Community Organization  
225 W. Capitol Drive  
Milwaukee, WI 53212



# Reflecting On 2022

Dear Rebel Community,

As we continue to tell the story of Running Rebels Community Organization, we'll remember 2022 as a year of re-connection and re-orientation, much welcomed after a long period of isolation and rapid, unpredictable change. Rebel youth, families, and staff were finally able to come together again and be present with each other in a real way.

Our work has always been about **keeping young people connected**. We believe that consistent access to a caring and compassionate adult mentor is the most important connection we can provide to a young person. All youth need and deserve these relationships.

**Across all Rebel programs offered in 2022, our professional adult mentors connected with over 2,500 Milwaukee youth.**



Alongside a quality relationship with an adult mentor, what other connections are necessary for youth to thrive? This answer is different for each young person.

*In 2022, we connected Rebel youth to educational support, social-emotional learning and leadership development opportunities, workforce training, and entrepreneurship education. We connected them with resources to explore the arts, celebrate Black history & culture, improve their personal health, and engage in sports & recreation. We created opportunities for our young people to connect with themselves, each other, their community, and a sense of hope.*

We are so grateful for the many partners, donors, and friends who give so generously of their time, talents, and resources to make this work possible. Your support is an absolute gift to us!

We'll never stop fighting to keep young people connected to the resources they need to thrive.

With gratitude,

*Victor Barnett*  
Founder & Executive Director

*Dawn Barnett*  
Co-Executive Director

## CONNECTION IN NUMBERS



**43**

youth in our Community Mentoring Program gained employment



**1,102**

youth were served in our after-school recreation programs across our East & Central locations



**313**

Milwaukee youth were connected to mentorship & advocacy in our juvenile justice programs



**37,063**

intentional, one-on-one conversations were had between a mentor and a mentee



**4,928**

mentor check-ins completed with parents in our CMP and VFZ (Violence-Free Zone) programs



**114**

personal or academic goals completed by youth in our Community Mentoring Program



## Our New Mission Statement

We are the same Running Rebels that we've been since 1980, but this year we recognized our need for a clear & simple way to explain the work we do when communicating with the larger community.

In 2022, we embraced a new mission statement:

***Running Rebels Community Organization guides Milwaukee youth into adulthood through mentoring, positive programming, and community connection.***

This simple, one-sentence statement allows us to easily establish our core identity and provides a great launching point for a more in-depth conversation about the many ways we guide youth into adulthood. Our hope is that this also helps you share the work of Running Rebels with more clarity and ease.

Our previous EPIC mission statement continues to convey our programmatic and philosophical framework and can still be found on [runningrebels.org](https://runningrebels.org).



## Our Best Moments of 2022



### Youth Employment

In our summer employment program, we hired over 43 Rebel youth, who held various positions across our East and Central facilities and engaged in workforce development training.



### Garden Growth

Alongside staff and with the essential help of our community partners, Rebel youth received a hands-on gardening education. Each youth had a chance to plan and care for their own plot over the course of this Running Rebels program.



### Black Excellence

In 2022 we helped launch the first annual Unity Black Excellence Awards to honor the achievements of Milwaukee's Black community, including excellence in youth services, sports, politics, entertainment, and activism.



### Celebrating Unity

2022's EPIC Evening fundraiser was a celebration of unity and represented the first time the Rebel community had gathered all together in person since 2019. That night we raised over \$242,941 for Milwaukee youth.



### Marching for Unity

Rebel youth and staff marched in the first annual Unity March & Rally, a movement to improve the community's quality of life, create equitable opportunities for Black people, and strengthen the Black community.



### Holiday Giving

During 2022's holiday season, we gave away over 400 gifts to Rebel youth and community families.



### Artful Expressions

147 individual youth engaged in our UNITY Arts program and had opportunities to explore a variety of visual, performing, and digital art forms. Rebel youth Jerri says, "I was in depression, I was suicidal, and spoken word got me up out of it and taught me how to express my emotions better, taught me how to communicate."



### College Scholarships

As part of our Higher Education & Learning Program (H.E.L.P), we gave away more than \$13,000 in post-secondary scholarships to 10 college-bound youth.

# Mentoring Matters



**Lay Lay, age 10, is mentored by Kristina through our Community Mentoring Program.**

"I was happy when I found out Kristina was my mentor, that I had someone I felt comfortable talking to. She helped me get out of my shy phase, got me to talk to people, helped me in the tutoring room, helped me become a better person in life. She makes me smile, gets the bad things off my mind, and helps me try new things. Everyone thinks as a mentor you just have to be straight up nice – she is kind, but she tells you when you're doing something wrong too. Last year I sang [at the 2022 Unity Gala], and I was so nervous. She assured me it would be fine, and I felt more confident because I knew she was proud of me."



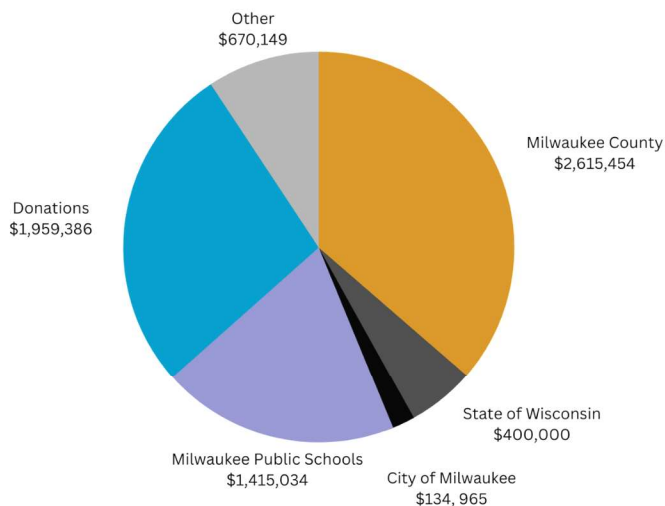
**AJ, age 15, is mentored by RB Vic through our Community Mentoring Program.**

"RB has been my mentor for about a year, but I've known him since I was little ... I've always looked up to him. He's where I get my inspiration to do my music. I've watched him do his own music since he was very young. When we're in the studio together, he gives me tips. He's still doing his music, he's in college, has two jobs ... and he still puts in the time to check in on me. RB is where I get my inspiration."

## 2022 Financials

### Revenue

\$7,194,988



### Expenses

\$6,511,632

