



black arts district

# Annual Report

2023

# A Letter From The Executive Director



Dear Black Arts District Stakeholders,

I am thrilled to present our annual report for the year 2023. This past year has been a period of remarkable growth and an even greater commitment to our beloved district.

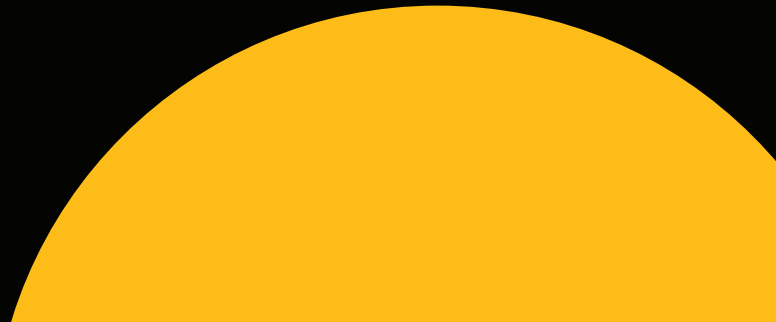
Over the course of the year, we have witnessed significant progress in various areas, which is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our team, as well as the unwavering support from our stakeholders. Our organization has grown in size, scope, and impact, allowing us to serve our community more effectively.

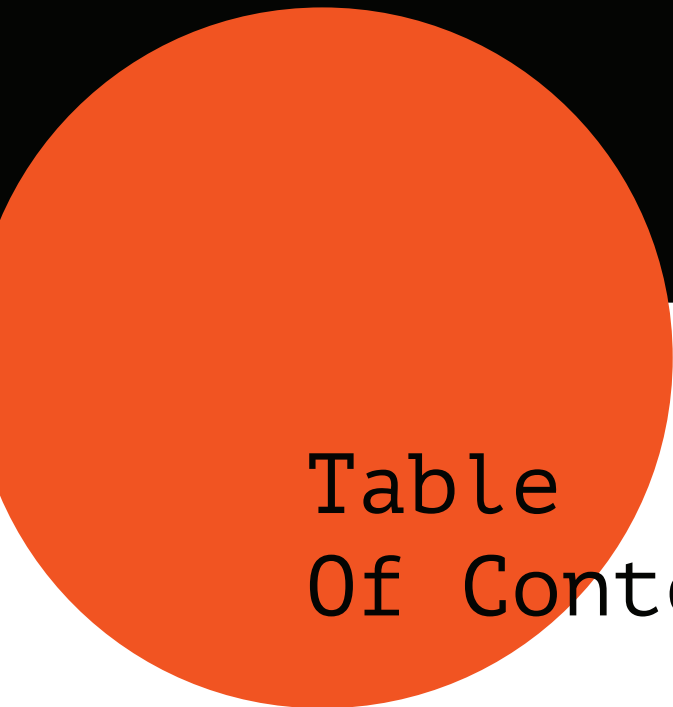
One of the key highlights of the year has been the expansion and diversification of our programs and services, specifically the expansion of Project RestART. We have identified and addressed the evolving needs of the Black Creative Community by launching new initiatives and enhancing existing ones. By doing so, we have been able to reach a wider range of individuals and provide them with valuable resources and opportunities for personal and professional growth.

In addition to program expansion and community engagement, we have also made significant strides in terms of financial sustainability. Through diligent stewardship of our resources, we have been able to secure additional funding, diversify our revenue streams, and build strategic partnerships. As we move forward, we remain committed to the district's prosperity and well-being. We will continue to explore innovative solutions, forge new partnerships, and advocate for the needs of our community. Our focus will always be on creating a district that thrives, where creatives have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Sincerely,

Lady Brion  
Executive Director, Black Arts District





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# About the Black Arts District

## Overview

The Pennsylvania Black Arts and Entertainment District, Inc., known as the Black Arts District is a 501 (c) non-profit organization in West Baltimore. It is Maryland's first A&E district uniquely dedicated to the celebration, support, and promotion of African American cultural production.

## Mission

The Black Arts District through an anti-displacement framework empowers Black creatives and continues the community-based revitalization efforts in West Baltimore through culture, arts, and entertainment.

## Vision

Our vision of the Black Arts District is to be a model of Black creative autonomy.



## Values

- Love for Black/African Diaspora People
- Observance of African Diaspora Histories and Culture
- Black/African-Centered
- Unity
- Creativity
- Legacy
- Empowerment

## Contact Information

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Email - [info@blackartsdistrict.org](mailto:info@blackartsdistrict.org)

Phone - 667.312.2099

 [@officialblackartsdistrict.org](https://www.instagram.com/officialblackartsdistrict.org)

 Official Black Arts District

 [@officialblackartsdistrict](https://www.facebook.com/officialblackartsdistrict)

 [@The\\_OfficialBAD](https://twitter.com/The_OfficialBAD)

# The B.A.D. Staff



**"Lady" Brion Gill**  
Founder and  
Executive Director



**Meagan Buster**  
Administrative Assistant



**Kenneth**  
Program Director



**Ayo Figueroa**  
Operations Director



**Sola Ekunseitan**  
Marketing and  
Outreach Manager



**Chelsea Sherman**  
Events Manager



**Olufunmike Woods**  
Program Coordinator



**Shawna Rogers**  
Development Coordinator



**Nate Thomas**  
Graphic Artist



**Cameron Snell**  
Marketing and  
Communication Coordinator

## Black Arts and Entertainment District Board of Directors

Title	Name	Affiliation
<b>Board President</b>	Dayvon Love	Leaders of a Beautiful Struggle
<b>Board Vice President</b>	John Harris	Arch Social Club
<b>Board Treasurer</b>	Todd Marcus	Intersection of Change
<b>Board Secretary</b>	Candace Handy	Leaders of a Beautiful Struggle
<b>Director</b>	Candace Chance	The VPI Firm: Baltimore Collaboration Lab
<b>Director</b>	Dr. Kevin Daniels	Morgan State University   St. Martin's Church, Pastor
<b>Director</b>	Kayenecha Daugherty	Creative Nomads
<b>Director</b>	Michael Cornish	Dads United Organization
<b>Director</b>	Alanah Nicole	MICA
<b>Director</b>	Kelli Tubman White	Consultant at Slalom Consulting
<b>Director</b>	Johndre Jennings	Druid Height CDC

Special thank you to the people who helped to get the Black Arts District to where we are today, but have left the organization to pursue other opportunities.

- . S. Rahseem, Board
- . Angela Carroll, Team
- . Candace Handy, Team
- . Cydni Stewart, Team
- . Maya Wright, Team





black arts district

# 2023 Impact Report



**10,397**  
# of Event Attendees




**\$242,080**  
Provided to Black Creatives



**696**  
# Artists Trained



**147**  
# of Events Curated



**769**  
# of artists Supported

**119**  
# of Creative  
Community Sponsorships



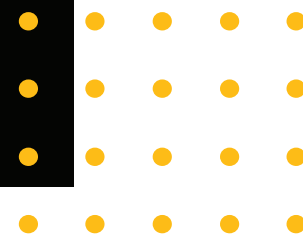
**\$20,000**  
1 Emerging Artist  
Fellowship was Awarded



**2.5M**  
Our Reach

**\$140,000**  
Creative Community  
Sponsorships Funds Dispersed

# Impact of the Black Arts District in 2023



## Introduction

The Black Arts District is thrilled to highlight the significant impact we made in 2023. Through our various programs and initiatives, we have continued to support Black creatives, provide training and development opportunities, curate empowering events, and foster youth programming. Here are some key achievements from the past year:



## Training and Development

In 2023, we remained dedicated to offering resources and opportunities for Black creatives in Baltimore. We provided training and development experiences to 696 Baltimore-based creatives, equipping them with the necessary skills and connections to pursue and sustain careers in the arts.

## Internships:

Our Creative Community Internship program had two tracks: Marketing and Communications, and Programs and Outreach. We were pleased to welcome four interns in 2023 (two in each track). While three interns successfully completed their internships, one intern relocated out of Baltimore and was only able to complete 70% of their term. We are excited to announce that one of our 2023 interns has been hired as our new marketing and communications coordinator for 2024, showcasing the effectiveness of our internship program.

## Fellowship:

In 2023, we launched our first-ever Emerging Artist Fellowship. We proudly supported our inaugural fellow, John Tyler, who received a \$20,000 grant, one-on-one mentorship from TT The Artist, and monthly professional development and technical assistance from our staff. As part of the fellowship, John produced his first outdoor festival, "Love Groove Fest," in the heart of the Black Arts District, showcasing the immense talent and creativity of our community.



## Workshops:

The Black Arts District remained committed to providing free, accessible, and high-quality monthly workshops and networking opportunities for creatives in the Black Arts District. Our partnership with Chin-Yer Wright of The Baltimore Scene and Nate Couser of The Artist Exchange, along with the support of The Arch Social Club, allowed us to offer these valuable workshops. Additionally, we collaborated with various organizations, including The Baltimore Scene, The Artist Exchange, The Black Mall, and BCCC, to co-produce the annual Black Artist Fair, which provided networking and training opportunities to over 550 Black creatives in Baltimore. In total, we provided a substantial number of workshop and training opportunities throughout the year.



## Events and Sponsorships:

Curating and sponsoring impactful events was one of our greatest joys in 2023. We recognized the significant role events play in stimulating the creative economy. We sponsored a notable number of events and curated an additional 16 cultural events, including Artivism Day in partnership with DewMore Baltimore, Baltimore Black Artist Fair, The Hype Ball, Womxn of the World Poetry Slam (WOWPS), Black to the Future Monthly Series, and a Food Justice Event in partnership with Tubman House. These events showcased the talent and creativity within our community.

### JAN

- The Baltimore Scene's Track Meet Finals
- Hip Hop House Party hosted by Eze Jackson
- Feel Me Flow
- To Be Honest
- SOS HIPHOP SHOWCASE
- AstroKnot Presents: Freestyle Fellowship
- Creative Nomads presents Parley
- The L.A.B. (Learning & Building)
- Bmore Club Workshop & Cypher
- Elements
- Beats, Bars, & Laughs
- Dskillz Harris
- dopeCASE

### FEB

- FTM Fashion Party
- Water Sign Live Sessions
- Charm City Slam
- Dopecase
- Quilling Basics with Cachet Crafts
- Just a sample
- Candles and Convos: Mommy/Daddy and Me
- Harmonic Living
- Poetry and Locs Academy Art Expo
- #RestEasyBby: BIPOC Yoga and Community Connection
- Bmore Goes to the Black Love Parade

### MAR

- Melanated Mothers
- The Art of Letting Go
- SESSIONS
- Odyssey of Love: Women Edition
- The Way Foward!
- When Queens Meet: the EXPERIENCE
- Salon Talk
- Women's Wellness Retreat
- The Creative Clique Up

### APR

- Joking With Janai and friends
- MORPHING GRID
- Max Legacy Music Industry Mixer
- #trueOGseries
- Dear Black Girl Project
- Climbing 7 Flights
- Charm City Slam
- Nature Hike & Sound Meditation
- WhollyGloss Beauty & Art ExperienceR





## JUL

- The Work/Shop: Youth Edition
- Art in the Park
- Celebrating the Legacy of Carl & Barbara Grubbs
- "CJ's Summer Series: Big Homey Birthday Bash Open Mic"
- Third Wrld: Rap Mania
- Youth Open Mic
- Designing Delicious Fruits
- TranQUILLity at Mondawmin
- Upton community field

## MAY

- The Sounds of Love Experience
- The Victorious Edition Presents "The Soul of a Mother: Pajamas and Pancake Edition"
- Pre Summer Night's Dream
- Yoga in the Park
- A bangle Experience
- Garden Art Party Goes to Park Heights
- West Baltimore Tour
- Action Speaks...
- Clay, Community, and Wellness
- Raw Poetry Productions 5 Year Anniversary
- "RESSURECTION THURSDAYS" SOL Revival of Judahs Juke Joint OPEN MIC

## JUN

- Gun Violence Awareness Fashion Show
- West Baltimore Mural Tour
- Tesehki Music Clothing Drive
- Speak your Soul
- Sound Healing Experience
- The R.O.Y.A.L Coach presents Glow, Sip and Stroke
- Queens Karaoke
- Boundary Block Party
- Open Floor
- A Juneteenth Wellness Morning

## AUG

- KZ Experience Concert: An Independent Hip-Hop and RnB Event
- West Baltimore Mural Tour
- ARThenticity: A Living Installation & SpirARTual Intergenerational Healing Experience
- Step is Life Fall Festival
- Blak August
- Hip hop game night
- Baltimore: An Illustration of Talent
- Podcast Party
- Poetic's Parable Photojournalism experience
- Showdown for Sandtown/Back to School Bash
- The Cleansing Flame: a Community Open Mic Ritual

## SEP

- Nosreme Baltimore - I'm feeling crabby
- Mar & Friends 3
- Bittie City - A Black Queer Meet and Greet
- The Get Down'
- Mirror Mirror Self-Esteem Resin Workshop
- Summer Break With Grace
- That 70's Party
- The Poetry Party Live Youth Open Mic
- With Roots, We Fruit Public Window Installation

## OCT

- Divine Adrogyne Showcase | A Fashion Show + Community Panel
- Dinner with Designers
- Rainbow Skate Night
- Silent Disco
- Blaq Pride Comedy Show
- Gay-Ass Garden Party
- AstroKnot Collective Presents Pride in Black
- Charm City Slam
- Blaque Pride SOS SHOWCASE

## NOV

- Teen Sip and Paint
- Making Our Spaces Sacred
- Loving Yourself Self Esteem Sip & Paint
- Queens Karaoke
- VQA Green Gardens Art Festival
- Poetic Parables Scavenger Hunt Photography Experience
- Fashion for your Mind
- Let's build with woods
- The bomb experiment
- DBU Hair & Fashion Show Honoring Bereaved Parents
- Solidarity Social



## DEC

- I AM SHE Retreat
- Breaking Bread & Mending Souls
- La Baker Revue
- Lunch Party
- "RESURRECTION THURSDAY " SOL Revival of Judahs Juke Joint
- Free Verse Open Mic
- 2023 Holiday Festival at The Urban Oasis
- Poetry Showcase/Book Release
- Hood Arts and Crafts
- Art Soiree
- Nada Average Tuesday
- The Get Down 9
- Ujima (Collective work and Responsibility)
- How shall we engage now?
- Neo Renaissance: The Maroons Agenda

## Youth Programming

In 2023, we had the privilege of supporting youth programming in local schools and in partnership with the Mayor's Office of Employment Development Youth Works Program. We collaborated with five Baltimore City Public Schools (grades 6th-12th) to implement our curriculum, benefiting over 250 students. Additionally, we designed a summer curriculum and managed our first-ever Summer Arts Program, the Summer Youth Mural Program, in partnership with YouthWorks.

## Conclusion:

The Black Arts District's impact in 2023 was significant and far-reaching. We provided training and development opportunities, supported emerging artists, curated empowering events, and fostered youth programming. We are grateful for the support of our community, partners, and funders who made all of these achievements possible. As we move forward,

# Looking Forward 2024

## Introduction

The Black Arts District is excited to share our plans for 2024 as we continue to foster creativity, support emerging artists, and promote cultural experiences in our community. We are dedicated to creating a vibrant and inclusive arts district that celebrates the richness of Black culture. Here are some of the key initiatives we will be focusing on in the upcoming year:



## **Emerging Artist Fellowship:**

We are thrilled to kick off the second year of our fellowship program. In 2024, we will be working with two talented emerging artists, Ali B and Alexis Tyson. Each fellow will receive training, mentorship, and a \$20,000 grant to support their creative practice. Additionally, we will host an end-of-year event in the district to showcase their work and celebrate their achievements.

## **Creative Community Sponsorships:**

Thanks to the generous support from the Mellon Foundation, we will be expanding our creative community sponsorships from \$120,000 to \$150,000. This increase enables us to create a new sponsorship opportunity for curators who organize monthly events. We will offer \$5,000 sponsorships to support their recurring events, fostering a vibrant and sustainable creative community.

## **Emerging Artist Internships:**

Building on the success of our 2023 Internship program, we are excited to expand it in 2024. We will be growing the program from 4 interns to 6 interns, including 4 program and events interns and 2 communication and marketing interns. This expansion will provide more opportunities for emerging artists to gain valuable experience and contribute to the Black Arts District.

## **Black Arts District Events:**

In 2024, we will be taking our events to the next level. We are introducing an incentive program to bring amazing cultural experiences to the district. By collaborating with community partners and established curators, we aim to co-produce over 20 cultural events throughout the year. These events will showcase the diverse talents of our community and create memorable experiences for residents and visitors alike.

## **New Team Members:**

As the Black Arts District continues to grow, we are assembling a team of influential creatives from our community. This team will play a crucial role in shaping the direction of the district and ensuring that our vision is realized. We are excited to welcome our

newest team members, including Olu Butterfly Woods as the Program Coordinator for Community Sponsorships, Ayo Figuero as the Director of Operations, Chelsea Sherman as the Events Manager, Sola Ekunseitan as the Marketing and Communications Manager, Cameron Snell as Marketing and Communications Coordinator, Shawna Rogers as the Development Coordinator and Meagan Buster as the Administrative Assistant

## **Establishing a Baltimore Poet Laureate:**

We are proud to be part of a collective effort to establish a Poet Laureate position in Baltimore City. This initiative brings together artists, educators, organizers, and activists who are dedicated to amplifying the voice and role of artists in our city. The Black Arts District is honored to be at the forefront of this endeavor, advocating for opportunities and equity in Baltimore's artistic landscape.

## **Conclusion:**

As we look forward to 2024, the Black Arts District is committed to nurturing emerging talent, supporting our creative community, and promoting cultural diversity. We are grateful for the continued support of our funders, partners, and community members who make all of our initiatives possible. Together, we will create a thriving arts district that celebrates the beauty and richness of Black arts and culture.





# Sanaa Center Project

The Sanaa Center Project will create a focal point for Black arts and entertainment and nurture creatives across the city and beyond. Sanaa means “art’ or ‘work of art” in Swahili. Using the name Sanaa is a tribute to Africa’s rich tradition of visual arts, music, dance, and literature and embodies creativity and originality, encouraging individuals to express themselves through their unique talents and abilities.

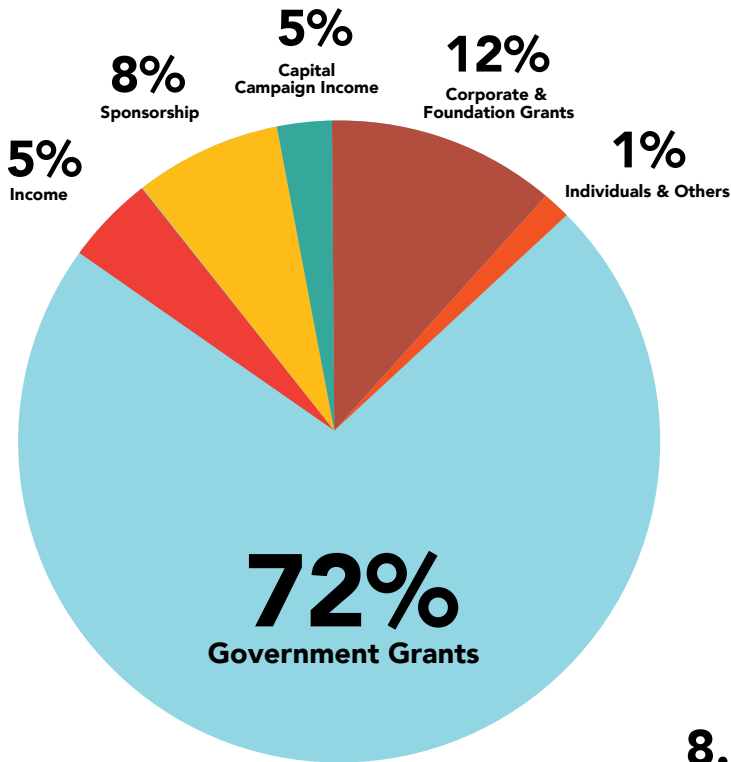
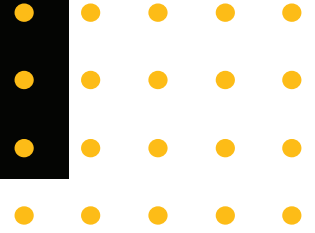
The Sanaa Center Project is a dynamic two-part development project that encompasses (1) The expansion of the Harris-Marcus Center home to successful and growing arts and community development programs, and (2) the creation of The Sanaa Center, a brand-new hub for arts, culture, and community engagement. This is not just a construction project –it's a movement that will help revitalize the heart of Baltimore's historic Pennsylvania Avenue.

In 2023, we launched our community engagement strategy where we engaged with over 200 community members via forums we hosted, events visited and interviews.

To see review our full Community Engagement Report please visit:

[blackartsdistrict.org/press-and-reports](https://blackartsdistrict.org/press-and-reports)

# 2023 B.A.D. Revenue

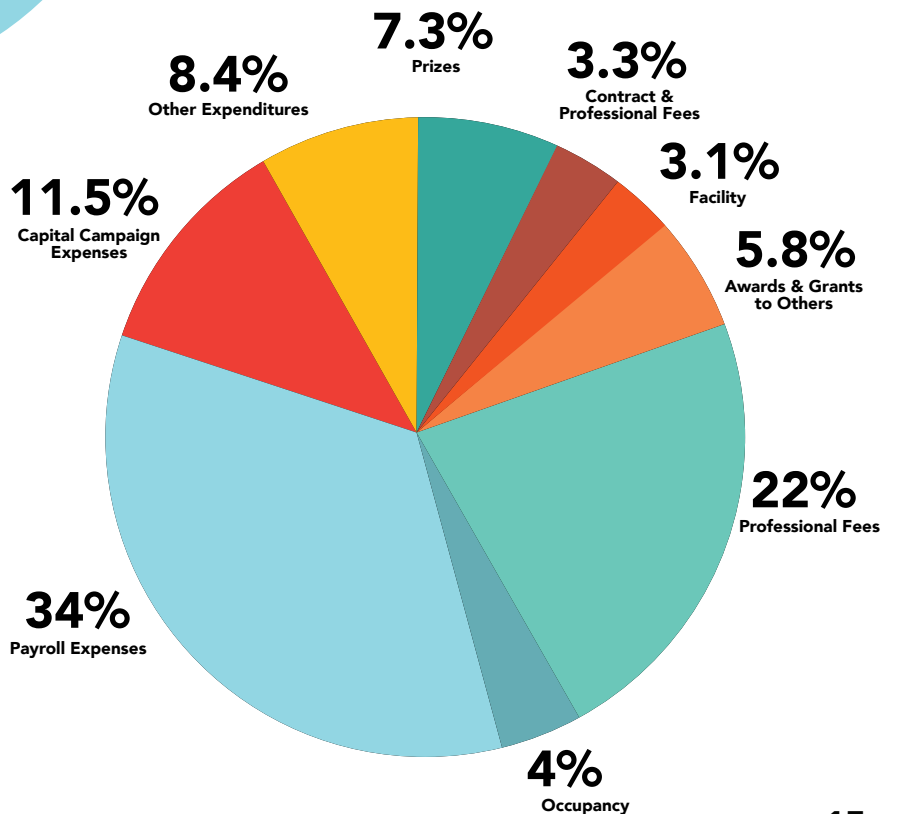


## Income

\$1,061,755.80

## Expenses

\$1,075,796.00

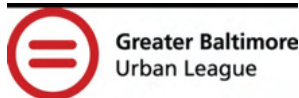
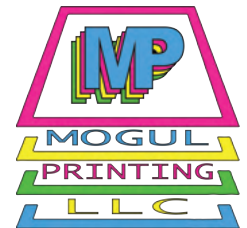






# Thanks To Our Donors

We extend our deepest gratitude to all those that have supported us through grants, sponsorships and donations. We would not be able to play our role in strengthening the arts and culture ecosystem in Baltimore without you.

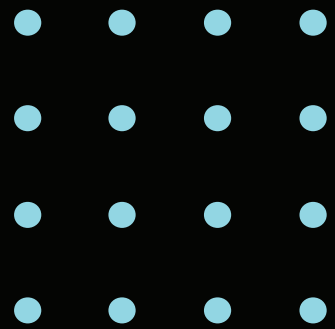


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Candace Chance  
Kayenecha Daugherty  
John Harris  
Sulena Morris  
Ariel Davis  
Ali Ibrahim  
Louis Carlat  
Hannah Rubin  
Bridget Dohony  
Sara Dassanayame  
Julian Morelli  
Shelby Hurt  
Michael Martin  
Nathaniel McClean  
Sheneil Black  
Mary Welliver-Dillon  
Kelli Tubman White  
Shoshana Davidoff-Gore  
Kevin Daniels  
Ray Winbush  
Delaney Cate  
Adia Jones  
Emmanuel Williams  
Rachel Graham  
Amineh Jones  
Ashley Handy  
April Foster

Tiaisha Berry  
Jasmine Hope  
Tiera Hawkes  
Lawrence Grandpre  
Malina Hill  
Renee Stokes  
Brian Lyght  
Tenille Patterson  
Tamara Kumoji  
Sydney Allen  
Harvey Rhames  
Sonja Sohn  
Johns Hopkins University & Medicine  
Tracey Barbour-Gillett  
Dermell Brunson  
Warren Shaw  
Marvin Edwards  
Robin R. Washington  
Michelle McCallum  
Kristyn Rohrer  
A Jay Nwachu  
Shelley Morhaim  
Jason Harris  
Clint Garrett  
Rhonda Lipkin  
Kristina Berdan  
John Henderson



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2023