



Fashioning An **EQUITABLE** Future

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

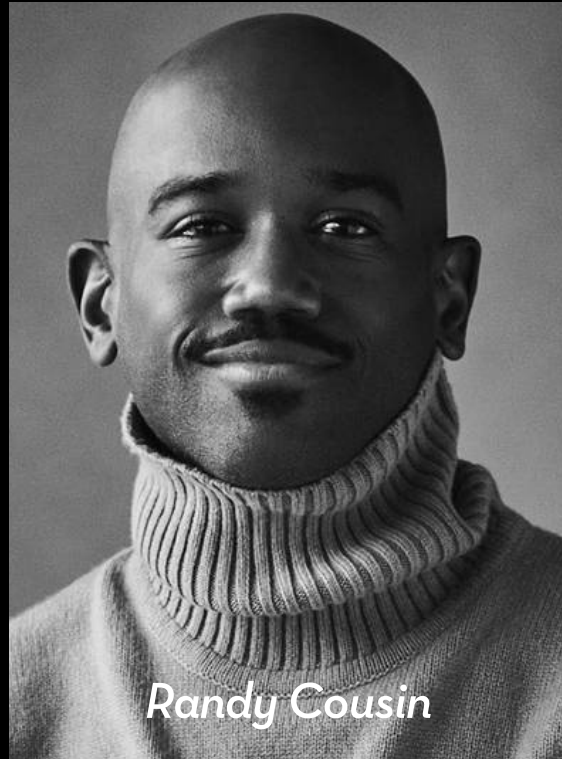


## WHO We Are

**Creatives Want Change (CWC)** is an equity-based platform dedicated to nurturing the next generation of Black designers and thought leaders in the Fashion Industry. We are a **creative incubator** that provides young Black talent with **access to education, mentoring, and professional development**, beginning at the high school level, effectively creating a pipeline for students into the fashion industry.

# Our FOUNDERS

DEDICATED TO THE CULTIVATION  
OF BLACK CREATIVE TALENT



“ The most significant deficit among BIPOC youth is opportunity, the chance to discover what one might love or be good at. So much of that discovery comes only with access. -  
**Matthew Kane, Co-founder, Creatives Want Change**

”

# Our VISION

In 2020, when the amplification of the BLM movement lifted the veil on the systemic challenges in society, **we were driven by a passion for change.** As professionals in the fashion industry, **we wanted to be part of the solution** to create opportunity and access for young Black Creatives, so we can truly see **an equitable Fashion future.**

**Our 1st year was defined by working remotely,** as we established CWC and our first class of 25 students entered their Pre-College Summer Programs at our 7 leading design schools across the country.

**Our 2nd year was defined by a return to being together** and the renewed commitment to sending another 25 students. In addition, half of our students studied in person, a significant increase in our financial investment that yielded such benefits for our students.

**In our 3rd year, this year, we sent 30 students, only 8 of whom were remote, again renewing our commitment to making things in person,** collaborating and learning from one another, and building intimate relationships.

**The work to diversity the fashion industry continues to be a marathon, not a sprint.** It requires time and the engagement of our greater community of donors, mentors, and advocates to yield success.

**We are building a workforce pipeline of students from high school to college to their first job,** and although the response has been resoundingly affirmative, **we need continued multi-year support to keep building the equitable future we want for the fashion industry.**

Randy Cousin  
Joe Medved  
Matthew Kane  
CO-FOUNDERS

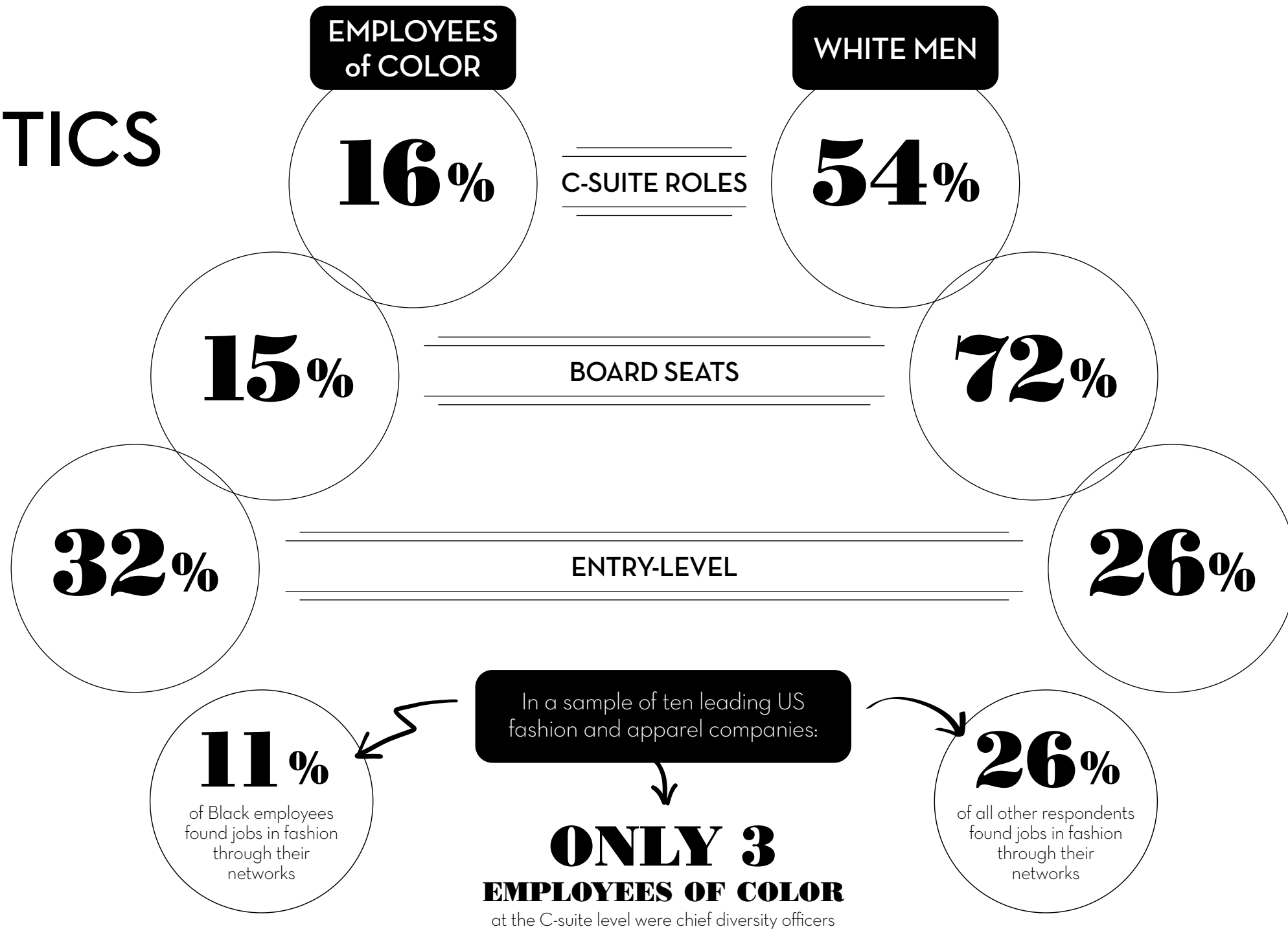




# The **PROBLEM**

In the Fashion industry, there is a **lack of diversity in management positions**, less access to sponsorship for Black talent, and less likelihood for Black candidates to be promoted to managerial roles. A persistent refrain among large fashion companies recruiting talent is the **lack of qualified Black candidates** at a moment when diversity is no longer considered a luxury, but essential to the health of an organization.

# The STATISTICS



# THE SOLUTION: Building an Educational Pipeline

CWC IS DEFINED BY ITS FIVE FOUNDATIONAL PILLARS.

1

## PRE-COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

Since 2021, we have provided 25 Black students **full scholarships to Pre-College Summer Programs** in Fashion Design annually, covering tuition, fees, room & board, travel, and all supplies, in order to give these students early access to college-level education that can set the course for their academic success and in turn their careers.

2

## MENTORSHIPS

Upon completion of their summer programming, students are provided with Mentorships, **matching them with industry leaders** as they work on the portfolios created in their summer programming, further preparing them for college and the workforce.

3

## INTERNSHIPS and APPRENTICESHIPS

Upon entering college, **CWC then matches students with internships and apprenticeships**, allowing the students to apply the skills acquired through coursework in the real working world.

4

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Throughout, students are **provided access to community events** that afford them greater interaction with the industry.

5

## COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

In the long term, our growth as an organization will allow us to **provide college scholarships**, thereby assuring that the high cost of undergraduate education isn't a barrier to entering the field.



# The **OUTCOMES**

CWC's pillars effectively address the continued systemic challenges facing Black youth that preclude them entering into careers in fashion by beginning with early education and nurturing talent at every stage.

**Starting in college is simply too late,** and the work to change the face of our current industry and applicant pool is not possible without the shared investment of brands. An investment in an organization such as ours ensures a more equitable future and a diverse pool of qualified applicants that the industry currently demands.

**Until we invest in it, it simply will not exist.**



# Our IMPACT

**2020**

**CWC FOUNDED**

in partnership with  
7 leading design schools

**2021 (fall)**

Matched  
**6 STUDENTS**

with mentors

**2022 (fall)**

Matched **23 STUDENTS**  
with mentors

**AND**  
had **8 STUDENTS**

going to undergraduate  
programs in fashion design

**2023 (fall)**

Matched **17 STUDENTS**  
with mentors

**AND**  
have **10 STUDENTS**

going to undergraduate  
programs in fashion design

**2021 (summer)**

Sent **25 STUDENTS**  
to pre-college programs in  
fashion design (all remote due  
to COVID)

**2022 (summer)**

Sent **25 STUDENTS**  
to pre-college programs in fashion  
design (half in-person)

**2023 (summer)**

Sent **30 STUDENTS**  
to pre-college programs  
**AND**  
matched **2 COLLEGE**  
**STUDENTS**  
with internships

**2024 (summer)**

Will send our 4th class of  
**25 STUDENTS**  
to pre-college programs  
**AND**  
match at least  
**3 STUDENTS**  
with internships

# Corporate **PARTNERSHIPS**

**Financial commitments to CWC are paramount to achieving our goals of diversifying the fashion design industry, but our partner brands are more than just donors.**

They are partners in our initiatives to engage young people, providing them with **tangible skills, linking them to greater cultural initiatives, and broadening our profile as an organization.** The following are examples of **successful corporate partnerships** from 2023, demonstrating ways brands can collaborate with CWC beyond donating.

# Corporate PARTNERSHIPS



**SKIMS**

## CAMP SKIMS X CWC

Leaders from SKIMS and CWC co-led virtual workshops on resume building, designing for a brand, career development, and merchandising. These sessions enhanced skills that are not typically addressed in pre-college or any undergraduate curriculum.

SKIMS employees were able to share their skill sets with students directly and educate them about the SKIMS brand.

The most engaged student was awarded a summer internship at the SKIMS headquarters over the summer.

Offering them the opportunity to apply their newly acquired skills and build toward full-time employment.

The student who won the internship was Dayne Thompson.

## DAYNE'S INTERNSHIP

Dayne's internship at SKIMS proved to be a pivotal experience, showcasing the influential impact of corporate connections.

Beyond enhancing her resume, her outstanding work paved the way for another internship opportunity next summer.

Initially hesitant about corporate fashion, Dayne's perspective transformed during her time at SKIMS. The internship exposed her to the aspects of teamwork and the creative atmosphere within the corporate fashion industry.

Her role at SKIMS involved collaboration with the PR/Marketing Team, offering her a behind-the-scenes look into how products reach celebrities and influencers. This exposure added depth to her understanding of the industry's intricate workings.

Dayne contributed to the Lounge and Intimates Department, where she actively participated in organization, cataloging, and fittings before progressing to more advanced tasks, including market research.

Dayne's multifaceted experience at SKIMS not only broadened her skill set but also affirmed the importance of corporate connections in shaping her professional journey. She also became more aware of the significance of having a diverse workplace, emphasizing the importance of seeing people of color in the corporate fashion environment.

# Corporate PARTNERSHIPS

## UO ROUND-UP CAMPAIGN

CWC Partnered with Urban Outfitters (UO) to establish in-store round-up donations at checkout during Black History Month. The round-up campaign raised **\$102,802.60** directly from their customer base at no cost to them, **contributing significantly to new initiatives at CWC, and demonstrating their commitment to the age demographic that is their selling base.**

## DONALD'S APPRENTICESHIP

In January of 2023, URBN announced an Apprenticeship in collaboration with Drexel University; UO is one of their portfolio brands. **One of our CWC Fellows, Donald Whorley, was one of the 6 students selected to be a part of the groundbreaking apprenticeship program.**

The URBN X Drexel Apprenticeship program, based at the URBN brands headquarters in Philadelphia, offers students the unique chance to simultaneously work and pursue free courses at the university. **This program is meant to break down the barriers of getting into the fashion industry, providing students with an alternative method aside from attending a four-year fashion program.**

So far Donald has gained knowledge about the impact of price points on garment costs in the design process. Additionally, he has learned the **collaborative dynamics of large teams, recognizing the resemblance of families within working groups.** He enjoys the sourcing component of his apprenticeship, finding satisfaction in drawing inspiration from diverse designs.



# Corporate PARTNERSHIPS



## TOMMY HILFIGER X MERCEDES FORMULA ONE

Three CWC Fellows attended the Miami Formula One Grand Prix weekend sponsored by Tommy Hilfiger (TH) in May 2023. Meeting with Awake NY founder Angelo Baque and Lewis Hamilton, Fellows learned how corporate brands develop a capsule collection for the Grand Prix.

Students were afforded insight into the interaction between new collaborations and brand partnerships, **working directly with leading talent to understand the collaboration process from concept to creation and amplification.** The weekend also allowed them to meet with TH leadership, including CWC Co-Founder, and head of the TH collaborations, Randy Cousin. **Students were given the ability to network and develop their interpersonal skills.**

## DANAE'S INTERNSHIP

One of the CWC Fellows who went to Miami, DaNae Harrison, earned an internship opportunity at Centric Brands in New York City (NYC).

Although most companies pay their interns, they do not pay for housing, CWC paid for half of her housing costs, which can be very expensive, especially in cities like Los Angeles (LA) or NYC.

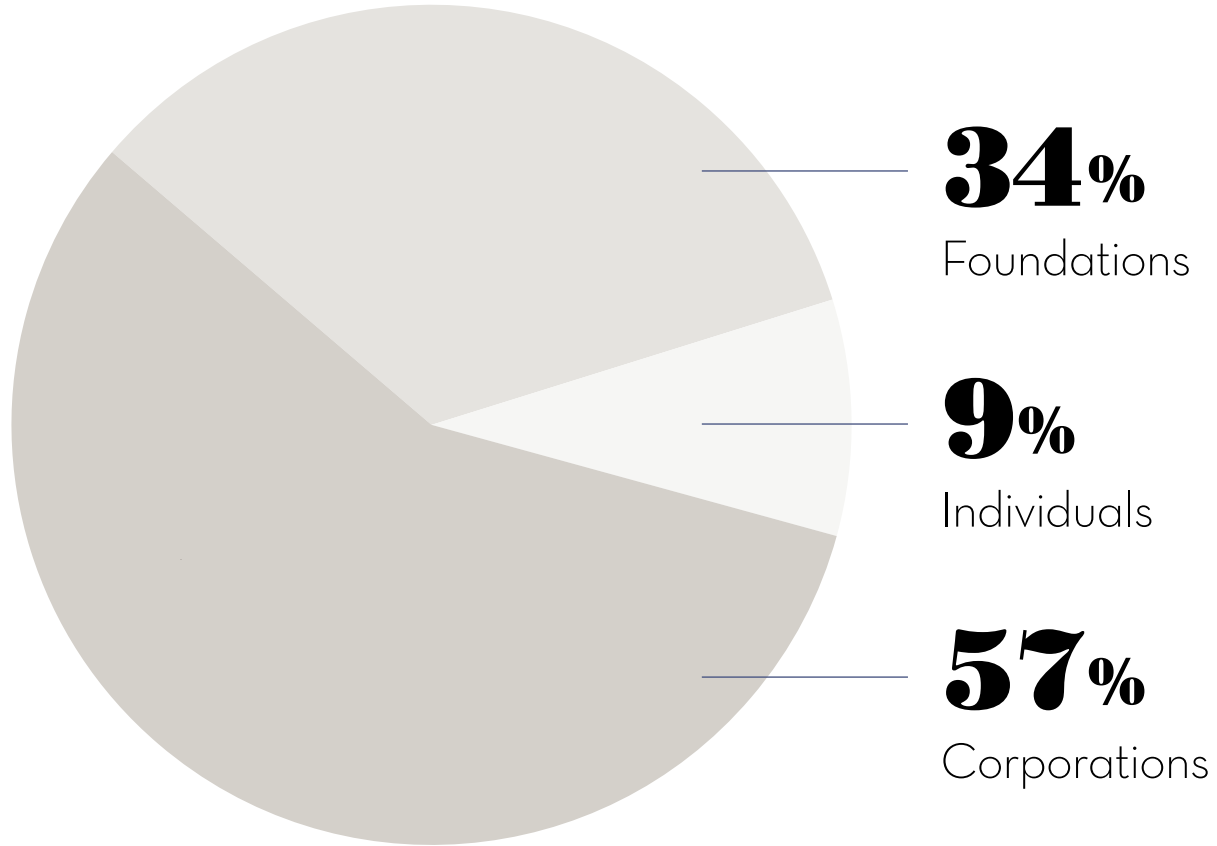
Danae was a Product Development Intern and acquired insights into the inner workings of the corporate fashion industry. In addition to learning fashion terminology, she delved into details about the product life cycle. She also gained experience navigating corporate spaces and insight into what her future could look like, crucial exposure for all our Fellows.



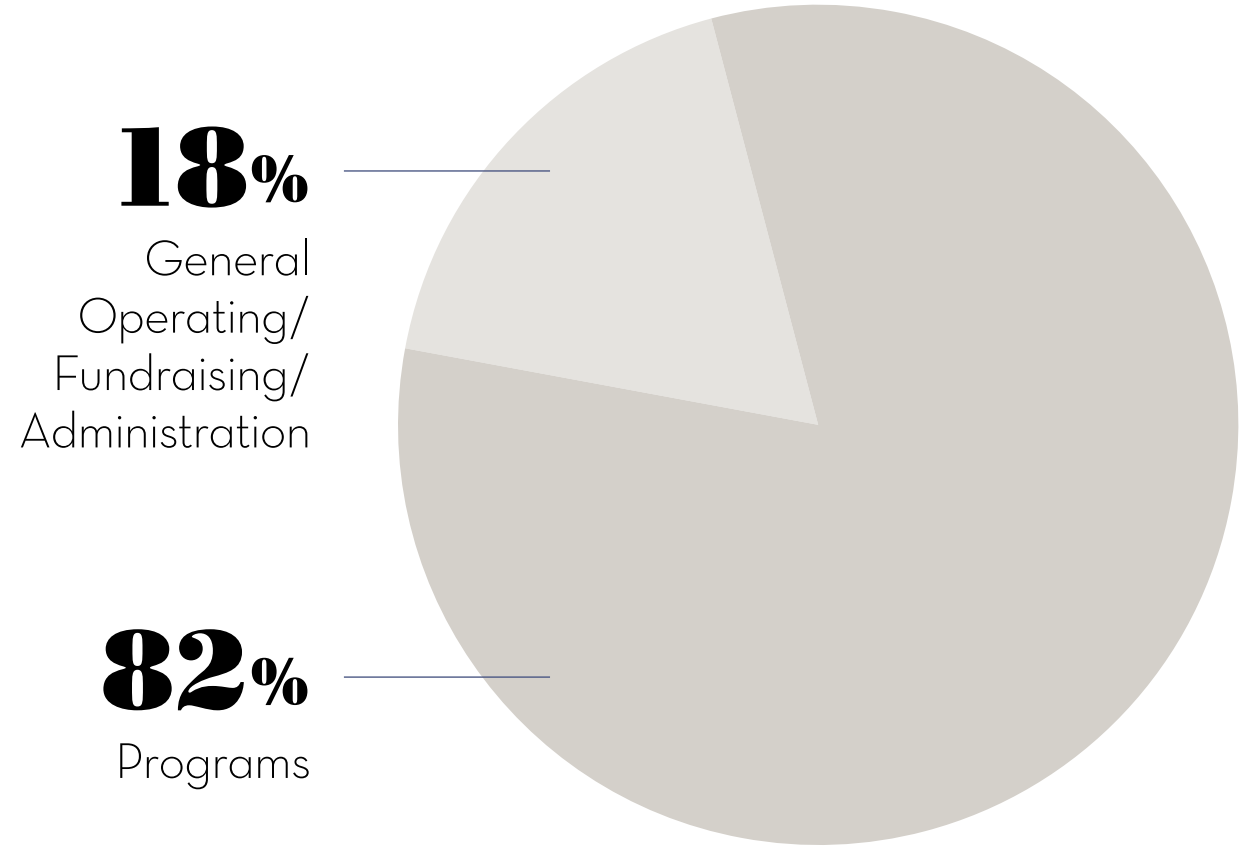
TOMMY  HILFIGER

# FINANCIAL Overview

**REVENUE: \$447,621**



**EXPENSES**





# Our SPONSORS



*SKIMS*



THE VF FOUNDATION

J.CREW

**Ref**



**DÉCOR**

“

I see myself in these young creatives' faces because I was once one of them. As a Black man, I am so grateful to have the opportunity to drive a program that will truly increase representation and change young lives and the fashion system for the better. – **Randy Cousin,**  
**Co-founder, Creatives Want Change**

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## CONTACT US

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