



# Annual Report 2021



BRAND Foundation provides support to stabilize Black-led small businesses and startups so that they can focus on and continuously improve their business strategy and growth.



# 2021

## Organization Information & Background

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Est. 2016

[thebrandfoundation.org](http://thebrandfoundation.org)



### Mission

Our mission is to strengthen our existing entrepreneurship ecosystems to become more racially diverse, inclusive, and equitable in the distribution of resources supporting startups and small businesses. We invest our time, talent, and resources to increase equitable access to capital, technical assistance, and social networks for small business owners and startups that are typically underserved due to systemic and institutional racism.

### Vision

We exist to accelerate racial equity in entrepreneurship. We envision a world where entrepreneur success outcomes cannot be predicted by race.

### Service Area

- St. Louis, MO



### Our Program

The Startup League Rewards Program employs a case management strategy that positively impacts entrepreneur engagement and small business stability. Through the support provided by BRAND Foundation, entrepreneurs enroll in the program at little or no cost and gain access to business advisory services and office hours with industry professionals and funders. The program also connects entrepreneurs to technical assistance providers in the St. Louis region and provides mini-grants as the entrepreneur achieves key milestones with the technical assistance providers.





# TESTIMONIALS

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Entrepreneurship is hard and even if you're a seasoned business owner, you're never going to know everything. The Startup League is the perfect place to learn and connect with others on the same journey as you. That path may not look the same for each individual, but we can all help each other along the way and the Startup League provides a platform for us to do that all while earning cash rewards to help grow our business.

**TAMISHIO HAWKINS**  
*MIA'S TREATS DELIGHT*

“

I have enjoyed the programs that are eligible for reward points and their flexibility with the for profit and non profit experience. I was able to make a sound decision to convert to a nonprofit organization.

**STEPHANIA BROOKS**  
*LASTING IMPRESSIONS DAY PROGRAM*

“

Excellent program for gaining knowledge and assisting your business to reach its maximum potential!

**JA'NET MORGAN**  
*SUGARFUL ELEMENTS*

“

This program was simple and had extreme ease of use. The rewards program fit right within my schedule as an entrepreneur to help me gain some information about programs and also get some cash for things I already planned to do.

**CYNTHIA CHAPPLE**  
*BLACK VELVET SPA*

“

I was at a point in my business that I was stuck. What I found that I was missing was a community and active mentors. This program has provided me with the holy grail of information and connections. I know, with this wealth of resources, I will always have a guide. I'm extremely thankful that I was introduced to Chavelle and Phillip. I'm truly appreciative.

**FADRA NANCE**  
*SHE SPIRITS PROMO COMPANY*

“

The Startup League is encouraging and supportive for entrepreneurs building their business. The resources and rewards have helped my business grow and expand over the past 2 years.

**SHANAE CHAPMAN**  
*NERDY DIVA*

## Program Membership At-A-Glance

**21**

TOTAL COMPANIES  
ENROLLED

**9**

NEW COMPANIES  
ENROLLED

**\$13,023**

ANNUAL REVENUE  
(AVERAGE)

**1.5**

NUMBER OF  
EMPLOYEES (AVERAGE)

## INDUSTRIES

Finance  
Social Services  
Transportation & Logistics  
Information Technology  
Professional Services  
Health Services  
Food & Hospitality  
Retail

FUNDS RAISED IN 2021 (TOTAL)

**\$29,525**

**90%**

% OF BLACK-LED  
COMPANIES

**38%**

% THAT LIVE OR  
OPERATE IN THE  
PROMISE ZONE

**76%**

% OF WOMEN-  
LED COMPANIES



## Program Outcomes



Tamia Hawkins started “Mia’s Treats” October 25, 2015, a month before turning 9 years old. During her journey to deliver gourmet cookies, brownies, and cookie cakes, she worked closely with her co-founder and mother, Tamishio Hawkins. Pre-COVID the business was based out of their family kitchen and was able to thrive to reach the 5-year anniversary date that is so difficult for many entrepreneurs to achieve. Part of the success for Mia’s Treats is the ongoing personal stretching despite the organic challenges or roadblocks faced along the way.

Mia’s Treats was referred to BRAND’s Startup League Program when they competed for a grant and did not become finalists for the competition. It is important for entrepreneurs to stay engaged over time and the Startup League has a fun way to do that for active participants. Tamishio noted “I’ve never come across another organization that has done all of the footwork for you. And they pay you to work your own business.” BRAND of St. Louis played a critical part in introducing this startup to different organizations that could help them and gave Mia’s Treats a broader community of entrepreneur peers and business referrals.

[READ FULL CASE STUDY](#) →



Shanae Chapman is the founder of “Nerdy Diva”, and she has over a decade of technical work experience along with her Masters-level education with an MPS in Informatics from Northeastern University. She incorporated her technology business in 2018 with goal of delivering the following core service offerings: understand customer’s needs for building apps and Web sites, research, workshops, design, and prototypes. She is currently working on getting Trademarked Class 42 service for high delivery of her company’s services.

Shanae gained a valuable addition to her community as an entrepreneur when she connected with BRAND of St. Louis. Her active communication with the non-profit’s founders and administrators, Phillip and Chavelle Sangokoya, opened doors for her to stretch and grow her business. Shanae won a \$1,000 grant thanks to the BRAND of St. Louis newsletter. She also applied to a business accelerator that includes a \$50,000 amount equity free and an intern. “I think what Phillip and Chavelle are doing is being a bridge between different resources and sharing that out for different entrepreneurs. And then rewarding entrepreneurs who are going through and applying to these programs, making these connections, presenting about their companies, and participating in the ecosystem with cash dollars.

[READ FULL CASE STUDY](#) →