



**Chicago Beyond Invests in 12 Organizations to Strengthen
Community Actions Supporting Black and Brown Lives**
*Backing the Fight Fund Provides Unrestricted Dollars
to Further Critical, On-the-Ground Work*

CHICAGO – July 29, 2020 – Chicago Beyond today announced the Backing the Fight Fund, designed to quickly deploy resources to hyperlocal community organizations taking action and fighting for a more equitable future for Chicago’s youth and communities. The Fund is a direct response to support organizations during the current crises that are having a disproportionate impact on Chicago’s Black and Brown communities.

Key characteristics of the Backing the Fight Fund include:

- Supporting smaller and emerging community-based organizations led by People of Color, with the relevant lived experiences to shape and design innovative approaches to support their own communities
- Providing unrestricted funding, allowing community leaders who best know how to respond in this moment to move freely to do their critical work
- Focusing on organizations that are serving communities in the City of Chicago that are hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic

The initial 12 organizations supported by the Backing the Fight Fund are taking a variety of creative approaches to meet the needs of the communities they serve – including reshaping the narrative of Black Chicago through journalism, increasing neighborhood safety, youth-led organizing, distributing necessities and resources to thousands of immigrants, seniors, young people, and those undocumented, and racial healing circles amongst Black and Brown communities on the South and West Sides. Approximately 75% of the organizations operate with a budget under \$250,000 annually. They have had to pivot their work and respond to what has become a triple pandemic: the spread of COVID-19 across neighborhoods exposed to historic disinvestment, police and gun violence, and a downturn in economic opportunity leading to an even greater loss of resources and jobs.

The 12 organizations receiving Backing the Fight Fund investments of \$205,000 include:

- [Brave Space Alliance](#)
- [Gage Park Latinx Council](#)
- [Girls Like Me Project](#)
- [Good Kids Mad City](#)
- [Jehovah Jireh #1 Outreach Ministry](#)
- [Pilsen Neighbors Community Council](#)
- [Roseland Community Good News Daycare](#)
- [Sista Afya Community Care NFP](#)



- [Teamwork Englewood](#)
- [Telepochacalli Community Education Project](#)
- [The TRiiBE](#)
- [Youth Peace Center Roseland](#)

“To help combat the disproportional impact of this triple pandemic, more funds need to be directed to communities in a way that is flexible and responsive,” said Liz Dozier, Founder & CEO of Chicago Beyond. “The bold action any impact investor, social impact organization, and foundation can take is to actually [step back](#) and let community leaders do their work. Chicago Beyond has always invested in power-building within Chicago’s communities, and now it is even more imperative that we deploy resources to hyperlocal organizations already taking action with leaders who know best for our youth and our communities.”

Since the end of March 2020, Chicago Beyond has been rapidly responding to the COVID-19 pandemic through its *Going Beyond* Initiative, and to-date has deployed more than \$2.5 million in food, hygiene items, and other necessities to communities and individuals in solidarity with community organizations and mutual aid networks. The Backing the Fight Fund builds on these community efforts to impact more Chicagoans.

Because the work of the Backing the Fight Fund recipients is so critical, these organizations did not have to apply for this opportunity, and were nominated through Chicago Beyond’s community network and partners. Other criteria included:

- Ability to connect with young people, communities of color, and relevance of their efforts during this time
- Ability to reach communities with the greatest need during this COVID-19 pandemic and period of civilian demonstrations
- Alignment with Chicago Beyond’s values, mission, and Investment Strategy

“Sista Afya Community Care’s mission is to build sustainable mental wellness communities through providing affordable and culturally-centered community mental wellness care and education,” said Camesha Jones, Executive Director of Sista Afya Community Care NFP. “The Chicago Beyond Backing the Fight Fund will expand our impact by providing free individual therapy for Chicagoans impacted by COVID-19 related stressors, racial trauma, and who experience a lack of mental wellness care and support. Over the next year, we look forward to being a resource and support to Chicagoans experiencing mental health related challenges through providing access to quality mental health care.”

“The TRiiBE goes beyond “news.” We believe that storytelling in **all** its forms can help inform the public, preserve Black narratives, and promote civic engagement,” said Morgan Elise Johnson Co-Founder of The Triibe. “Through community outreach and special projects, we try to reach demographics that don’t usually read the news, and we make the effort to meet them



where they're at. COVID-19 has been a challenge for Black and Brown youth in unimaginable ways, and we want to do our part to empower the youth with the gift of storytelling. With Chicago Beyond funds, we will partner with educators to create a digital Black, Brown and Indigenous Chicago history curriculum for local youth and parents to access for free during remote learning on thetriibe.com.”

Find out more about the Backing the Fight Fund and each investment recipient at ChicagoBeyond.org/BackingtheFightFund.

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About Chicago Beyond

Chicago Beyond is an impact investor that backs the fight for youth equity by fueling organizations, individuals, and ideas. Since its inception in 2016, it has invested more than \$30 million in local nonprofit organizations and community leaders that fight for all youth to achieve their fullest human potential.