



October 7, 2024

Yvonna Bryant
300 Preston Ave, Suite 206
Charlottesville, VA 22902

Dear Yvonna,

Every contribution you've made to the Community Investment Collaborative (CIC)—whether through donations, time, or support of local businesses—has helped transform dreams into thriving enterprises, hope into opportunities, and potential into real economic growth. For twelve years, CIC has been a catalyst for change in our entrepreneurial landscape, making entrepreneurship more diverse and accessible while building a strong network that connects aspiring business owners to capital, resources, mentors, and one another throughout our community.

Your support has allowed us to exceed our goals over the last three years: we've served over 1,600 entrepreneurs, disbursed \$2.75 million in microloans, and helped businesses access more than \$60 million in capital through our Central Virginia SBDC—doubling our initial target. **These figures represent real people, businesses, and economic impact in our communities.** Thank you for making it happen.

Consider the journey of Renata Miller, owner of Viva La Nosh. After taking CIC's Entrepreneur Workshop, she gained valuable insights into managing her business finances and improving her bookkeeping. With CIC's continued support, Renata is now building the capital necessary to pursue her dream of opening a local tea shop—a welcoming space designed to bring people together and strengthen the community.

Or take Kristen Gardner and Lance Lemon, who, with support from Bridging Virginia and CIC, secured \$100,000 to bring their vision for Penny's Wine Shop to life. This funding not only provided a financial boost but also validated their dream. In February 2023, they opened their shop, creating a space for the community to celebrate wine and connection while contributing to Richmond's vibrant culture and economy.

2024 has been a year of tremendous growth for CIC. We've significantly increased our microlending, empowering more entrepreneurs to turn their ideas into reality.

Our signature 16-week workshop has expanded to Culpeper, bringing vital business education to a new community. We've also taken our first steps into southern Virginia, extending our reach to support even more aspiring business owners.

This expansion represents not just growth but a deepening of our commitment to fostering economic opportunity across our region and state. While we celebrate these achievements, we recognize that our work is far from over. The need for accessible entrepreneurship support continues to grow, especially among our target communities, including low to

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moderate-income individuals, BIPOC entrepreneurs, women, and those returning to the community after incarceration. With your continued support, we're poised to build on this momentum, expanding our reach and deepening our impact.

Another inspiring example is Daryl Rivera, a graduate of our Entrepreneur Workshop who launched Authentic Latin American Soul Food in 2023. With the guidance of his SBDC advisor, Daryl focused on becoming capital-ready and successfully secured a \$30,000 loan to purchase a food truck. Through CIC's invaluable support, he received essential business education and financial counseling, equipping him with the tools he needed to thrive in his culinary venture.

Join us today in empowering local entrepreneurs. Your contribution can change lives and fuel new businesses in our community. Here is how your support can make a difference:

- Help fund a microloan for a graduate of our program with a \$5,000 or \$2,500 donation, providing crucial startup capital to launch a new business.
- Support one entrepreneur in our Financial Management Program (FMP) build essential skills for business success with a \$1,000 donation.
- Support one entrepreneur with a scholarship for our 16-week workshop, with a \$625 donation, to help spread entrepreneurial knowledge and opportunity.
- Help provide mentorship, advising, and networking opportunities for aspiring business owners with donations of \$500, \$250, or \$150.

As we look to the future, we envision a network of thriving, diverse businesses stretching across Virginia, each one a testament to the power of community support and accessible entrepreneurship education. Your contribution today is an investment in that vision—a future where economic opportunity is not limited by your starting point but by your willingness to work smart and hard toward your dreams.

Thank you for being a vital part of this journey. Together, we can continue to transform lives, build businesses, and strengthen our communities through the power of entrepreneurship.

Sincerely,

Stephen Davis

President

P.S. Why wait for Giving Tuesday? At CIC, we believe every day is an opportunity to empower entrepreneurs. Your contribution today will kickstart our Giving Tuesday campaign and immediately fuel the dreams of aspiring business owners. Whether you Give Tuesday or Give Today ([at www.cicville.org/GiveTuesdayorGiveToday](http://www.cicville.org/GiveTuesdayorGiveToday)), you're providing the vital support our entrepreneurs need to turn their visions into thriving businesses.