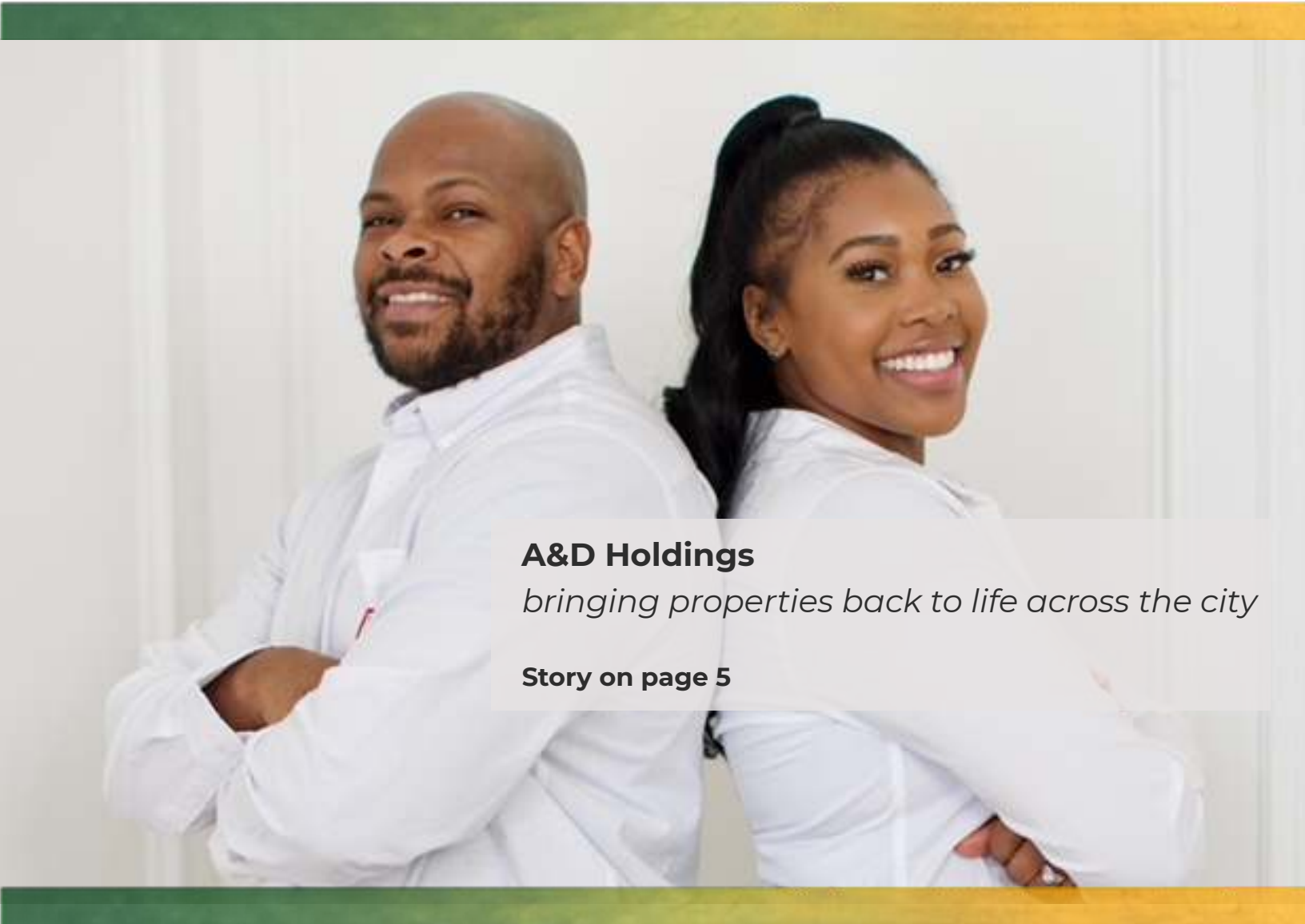




A&D Holdings

bringing properties back to life across the city

Story on page 5

BUILT TO LAST

2025 Annual Report

A LETTER FROM OUR CEO

“Relationships are a form of capital.”

As proud as we are of what we accomplished in 2025—from a historic bike ride to record levels of capital deployed through grants and no-interest loans—we remain grounded in why we do this work.

Detroit’s entrepreneurs—those leading nonprofits and building businesses—need fair access to resources. That need is real. But what makes this work possible isn’t just capital.

It’s relationships.

Black Leaders Detroit was built by people who care—people who give, show up, share expertise, and move this work forward every day.

I’m personally grateful for all of it. Every dollar given. Every minute shared. Every mile ridden alongside us. Every post amplified. Every lesson offered along the way. None of this happens without you.

And we will continue to do our part—raising and deploying capital to Detroiters who deserve fairness and opportunity. The way we always have: through strong, intentional relationships.

Because capital alone doesn’t change communities.

People do.

And we’re building this together.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "D Dandridge".

Dwan Dandridge
CEO, Black Leaders Detroit

WHO WE ARE

WE MOVE CAPITAL INTO THE HANDS OF THE PEOPLE BUILDING DETROIT

Founded in 2019, Black Leaders Detroit (BLD) mission is to provide financial resources to social and community impact programs originated and led by Detroiters of African descent.

When capital flows directly into communities—without unnecessary barriers—people are able to build lasting economic power.

Through no-interest loans, unrestricted grants, and asset-building investments, BLD supports leaders as they grow—from early stages to long-term ownership.

SHARED POWER

Community solutions are as valuable as capital.

TRANSPARENCY

Trust is earned through clarity and openness.

WE ARE ALL HEROES

Every contribution matters. Impact is collective.

OUR MODEL

HOW THE WORK WORKS

Black Leaders Detroit deploys capital through a holistic model designed to meet entrepreneurs and organizations where they are—while supporting long-term growth, ownership, and stability.



NO-INTEREST
LOANS

remove the capital roadblocks that often prevent small businesses from scaling. These loans allow business owners to invest in operations, equipment, staffing, and expansion without sacrificing long-term viability to high-interest debt.



UNRESTRICTED
GRANTS

provide businesses and nonprofit organizations with the flexibility to address their most immediate and strategic needs. By trusting leaders to allocate resources where they are most impactful, BLD supports resilience, innovation, and sustainability.



THE BUILDING FUND
(New Program)

supports asset-building initiatives that move beyond short-term operations and into long-term ownership. This includes real estate development, property acquisition, and other investments that help entrepreneurs and organizations establish permanent roots in their communities.

Our approach centers flexibility, trust, and shared power, recognizing that capital alone isn’t enough without systems that allow it to be used effectively.

OUR IMPACT

BY THE NUMBERS

Since our founding, Black Leaders Detroit has worked to move capital where it matters most—directly into the hands of entrepreneurs and organizations of African descent.

\$6.5M+

Lifetime
capital deployed

\$3.2M+

2025
capital deployed

2025 IMPACT BREAKDOWN

\$997K

57 no-interest loans

\$466K

110 unrestricted grants

1st BUILDING FUND COHORT

15

no-interest loans

\$1.78M

allocated

\$770K

deployed

COMMUNITY POWER

6000+

community
funders

\$600K+

collective funding
deployed

900+

grants distributed

3150+

jobs created or
retained

COVER STORY

BUILT TO LAST

How A&D Holdings turned capital into momentum



On Detroit's Eastside, near 8 Mile and Gratiot, Denzel Raines stands inside a home that tells a bigger story than its walls.

This isn't just a rehab project.

It's a case study in what happens when capital actually works the way it's supposed to.

Denzel, co-owner of A&D Holdings alongside his wife, Asia, started his real estate company with his wife about four to five years ago. Since then, they've been steadily building—project by project, property by property.

But like many developers, the biggest challenge hasn't been vision or execution.

It's been access to the right kind of capital.



COVER STORY (CONTINUED)

A DIFFERENT KIND OF PROCESS

When Denzel first engaged with Black Leaders Detroit, one thing stood out immediately: the process felt different.

Not easier in the sense of fewer questions—but more intentional.



The questions were different. It asked for more background than typical lending—but nothing crazy. And the team made it extremely easy. They were helpful, supportive. Overall, it was just a smooth, simple process



Traditional lenders often focus narrowly—scope of work, LLC documents, quick approvals tied to rigid structures. Black Leaders Detroit took a broader view.

More context. More understanding. More alignment with the realities of doing the work.

For this particular property, Denzel purchased the home in cash. That meant the full burden of rehab—contractors, materials, timelines—would normally fall entirely on him upfront.

That's where the difference became real.



COVER STORY (CONTINUED)

“The funding was extremely beneficial,” Raines said. **“First off, it’s a zero-interest loan—something I’ve never seen before in real estate lending.”**

But the structure mattered just as much as the terms.

“The biggest thing was getting that first draw up front. Getting to closing is one thing—but after that, you still need money to get contractors started and buy materials. Having those funds upfront made it easy to get the process rolling.”

That single decision—providing early access to capital—changed everything.

Projects didn’t stall. Work didn’t wait. Momentum didn’t die at the starting line.



For Denzel, the difference wasn’t just financial. It was clear that the system itself had been built by people who understood what it actually takes to complete a deal.

“You can tell they were familiar with real estate. They put thought into the process. They knew what investors needed to be successful.”



This Eastside project is one of many—but it shows what happens when capital moves with intention. When it removes friction and supports the people doing the work, it leads to faster builds, stronger outcomes, and more ownership staying in Detroit.



HOW CAPITAL MOVES

From early-stage entrepreneurs to scaling businesses, BLD supports growth at every stage, pairing capital with access, visibility, and operational strength

HOW CAPITAL MOVES

ENTREPRENEUERS



Supporting women founders of African descent to grow their businesses and lead with confidence.

8
grants

\$13K
deployed



DETROIT ELEVATE



Funding second-stage businesses with capital to scale in partnership with Tech Town Detroit

1
grant

\$10K
deployed



CO-OPERATIONS GRANT INITIATIVE



Strengthening businesses in partnership with Operations School

20
grants

\$100K
deployed



DETROIT BUSINESS SYMPOSIUM



Curating spaces for connection and shared learning in partnership with the Gilbert Family Foundation

8
grants

\$30K
deployed



\$153,000

deployed across ecosystem
business programming

HOW CAPITAL MOVES

ANNETTE ANDERSON

First Step Healthcare

Two years ago, Annette Anderson left her career as a registered nurse to build something of her own.

With no business background—and no income for the first nine months—she kept going.

“I was broke,” she says. **“But I knew this was mine, and I wasn’t giving up.”**

She passed out flyers across Detroit, showed up everywhere she could, and promoted her vision—before it fully existed.

That vision became First Step Healthcare Training, an accelerated program helping people enter the healthcare field.

Today, her business has Trained over 400 students, Built a team of five, Expanded to CNA, Phlebotomy, and EKG programs

Black Leaders Detroit supported Annette through a **EntrepreneuHERS**, helping her maintain payroll and invest in equipment during a critical moment.

Her impact goes beyond the classroom. Students leave with certifications, confidence, and new opportunities—some even returning to work alongside her.

Next, Annette plans to purchase her own building and expand into nursing programs, with a long-term goal of reshaping healthcare.

“I want to make healthcare a better place—for the people working in it and the people being served.”



INVESTING IN COMMUNITIES

BLACK HISTORY MONTH: GRANT EVERY WEEKDAY



Each February, Black Leaders Detroit marks Black History Month by investing directly in the organizations carrying the work forward—one grant at a time.

The organizations supported through this initiative work across education, housing, workforce development, arts and culture, youth programming, and community health. By placing flexible resources in the hands of trusted leaders, BLD strengthens the nonprofit ecosystem while honoring the legacy and future of Black leadership in Detroit.

20 • **\$100,000**
grants awarded distributed



INVESTING IN COMMUNITIES



MORE MONEY MORE IMPACT

More Money, More Impact is Black Leaders Detroit's fund development seminar for nonprofit leaders, designed to strengthen the long-term sustainability of organizations serving Detroit communities

The seminar brings together nonprofit executives, development professionals, and emerging leaders to explore practical fundraising strategies, donor engagement, and organizational resilience. Sessions focus on real-world application, offering tools and insights that participants can immediately put into practice.

6 Grants Awarded

\$30,000
Deployed



BLACK FRIDAY GIFT CERTIFICATES

The Black Friday Gift Certificate Giveaway is designed to intentionally circulate dollars within Detroit's Black-owned business community during one of the busiest retail periods of the year.

Each November, Black Leaders Detroit partners with local businesses to distribute gift certificates directly to community members, encouraging spending that supports neighborhood-based enterprises and strengthens local economies.

300 \$50 gift certificates

300 \$10 gift certificates

\$18,000
Deployed

INVESTING IN COMMUNITIES

12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS



In 2025, Black Leaders Detroit reimagined its annual 12 Days of Christmas initiative by **awarding all 12 grants in a single day on Giving Tuesday**. This concentrated moment of generosity amplified visibility, urgency, and impact—directing unrestricted funding to nonprofit organizations doing critical work across Detroit. By aligning the initiative with Giving Tuesday, BLD highlighted the power of collective action and demonstrated how coordinated giving can create immediate community benefit.

12
grants awarded

\$60,000
deployed

ANTHONY JACKSON CEO, Emergent Industries Training Institute

BLD's support came at a critical moment—filling gaps that traditional workforce systems often leave behind. The funding allowed the organization to equip students with essential tools and work gear, removing barriers to entering the construction trades. As a result, many trainees are already employed, including placements with union contractors, while the organization continues working to scale its impact and meet growing demand.



“*We just love what BLD does. Being a supporter of the ones who may get overlooked—that’s major.*”

RIDE FOR EQUITY 2025

FROM BLACK WALL STREET TO WALL STREET



MAJOR COMMUNITY MOMENTS



In 2025, Black Leaders Detroit completed its most ambitious Ride for Equity to date—a multi-week journey from Black Wall Street in Tulsa, Oklahoma, to Wall Street in New York City.

Spanning from late May through July, the ride served as both a fundraiser and a living narrative about the movement of capital, power, and possibility. Riders crossed state lines and communities, engaging supporters along the way while raising critical funds to support entrepreneurs of African descent in Detroit.

More than a physical challenge, the ride symbolized endurance, commitment, and collective action. It connected historical legacy to present-day economic justice, reinforcing the belief that sustained movement—mile by mile—creates meaningful change.

1700+ miles	28 cities	976 miles	\$147K raised
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MAJOR COMMUNITY MOMENTS

JUNETEENTH JUBILEE



Each June, Black Leaders Detroit joins the community in celebrating Juneteenth—a commemoration of freedom, resilience, and collective progress.

The Juneteenth Jubilee brings together residents, entrepreneurs, artists, and organizations for a weekend centered on education, culture, and economic empowerment. Through programming that includes panels, performances, vendor marketplaces, and family-friendly activities, the Jubilee creates space for both reflection and celebration.



3

grants awarded



\$15K

deployed



40

business supported



3500+

attendees

COMMUNITY FUNDERS

WHERE COMMUNITY BECOMES CAPITAL

Black Leaders Detroit is powered by a growing community of Community Funders—people who believe capital should move differently.

Through a simple model—**just \$1 a week**—they pool resources to create flexible capital that is deployed directly into businesses and organizations led by Detroiters of African descent.

This isn't charity. It's participation.

As this community grows, so does the ability to move capital—faster and with fewer barriers—supporting those shaping Detroit's future.

For Keith King, owner of 3S Catering and Real Game Media, that impact is clear. **“The number one thing in African American business is the funding part,”** he said, pointing to Black Leaders Detroit's approach as a way to meet that need.

Community Funders help power grants, no-interest loans, and programming throughout the year—keeping the work community-driven and responsive.

For Keith, the opportunity is simple:

“The affordability of it... I think anybody in business should be a part of it.”



Black economic development has always been something that should be at the forefront... when I found Black Leaders Detroit, I was happy to be a part of what you guys were doing

**—Keith King,
Community Funder**

5000+
COMMUNITY FUNDERS
and growing



WE ARE BLD

OUR TEAM

Dwan Dandridge CEO	Sharea Ayers COO
Jarod Pratt VP, Communications and Development	Larenz Studavent Senior Loan Officer
Tiana Harris Community & Events Coordinator	Jazmine Johnson Executive Assistant
Anthony Will Sr. Marketing & Communications Manager	

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Quan Neloms Founder, I Am In Demand	Dominique Campbell Founder, Rise Up Higher

ALLY COUNCIL

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Cindy Eggleton Executive Director, Brilliant Detroit	Steve Cato Owner, Integrity Partners, LLC
Jim Tenzillo Venture Capitalist	Chris Lambert Founder/CEO, Next Level Nonprofit
Marcus Lyon British Artist and social entrepreneur	Jack Elsey Partner & CEO/Detroit Children's Fund

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Kathy Morgan President, Flagstar Foundation	Jarod Pratt VP, Communications and Development
Kamilia Landrum Executive Director, Detroit Branch NAACP	Sean Williams CEO, Detroit Vs. Everybody
Jason Barnett Senior VP, Invest Detroit	Aprila Ringo Educational Assistant, Central Detroit Christian
LaTrice McClendon Detroit Director, Knight Foundation	Jason Allen Regional Claim Manager, The Auto Club Group
Sarida Scott VP, Program, Skillman Foundation	Leon Petty Owner, Go Green
Tosha Tabron Investment Officer, Kresge Foundation	Shalece Daniels Entrepreneur, Certified Mindset and Business Coach
Kishon Harbert Broker, President + CEO Evolve Global	Danielle North Founder Executive Director Dream Studios Detroit

PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

Black Leaders Detroit's impact is made possible through the collective support of members, corporate partners, and philanthropic institutions who believe in equitable access to capital and community-led solutions.

We are grateful to every organization and individual who has chosen to invest in this work—helping ensure that resources reach the entrepreneurs and nonprofit leaders building Detroit's future

