ANNUAL REPORT July 1 2021 – June 30 2022

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Hello community and partners,

RVC has had a thriving year, and a challenging one. Externally, there are new opportunities and excitement with our partners coming back to in-person spaces. Internally, our team has grown and is leading the way in modeling shared leadership in a nonprofit. We are proud of our continued journey to grow into new organizational culture practices. We remain steadfast in our commitment to support the self-determination and power of our BIPOC organizations and leaders focusing on our collective growth and opportunity. We are also excited to have launched the Social Justice League, designed to raise funds dedicated to our partners first and foremost. We are excited to continue to support and learn from our partners in transforming how nonprofits lead.

As a partner and co-chair of the board, I couldn’t be more honored to be part of this work.

Beloved community,

Thank you. We deeply appreciate the vibrant love and energy with which our communities continue to do the work and uplift each other.

It has been a year of big changes, of long range plans coming to fruition, of choosing to deepen our current programming. We officially moved to our new shared leadership model with four new co-executive directors, each of whom took on hybrid Executive Director roles and stayed on as a program team member! This also meant a shift into an even stronger model of distributed leadership with the formation of new Team Tenders (the closest parallel is program directors), who are focusing on coordination, communication, strategy, and capacity among our programs and in their teams.

We also launched our Social Justice League this year, providing our first year of $100,000 of unrestricted dollars to every current RVC partner as of March 2022! We have an ambitious goal of providing a similar level of unrestricted funds for for multiple years to come, especially if our experimental model of funders organizing funders gains momentum.

Throughout our transitions, we have repeatedly committed to centering wellness, joy, and investing in our relationships, with each other, our partners, and across the RVC community. Doing so means slowing down, incorporating time to ask for and integrate feedback in our programmatic cycles, and being transparent about our needs and limits. It also means creating even more policies to promote wellness such as additional CoVid related sick leave and changing our use of professional development funds, to include a certain percentage that staff can use for self-care and personal development. This intentional culture building is a work in progress, and includes experiments small and large in true RVC style! But, our commitment to serving our partners and investing in our community with love and integrity remain steadfast.

Along with our partners and many of you, we are facing the effects of the CoVid pandemic and its stresses, the uprisings related to Black Lives Matter, and changing policies around immigration, reproductive rights, and more. We are looking forward to embracing more and more opportunities to gather, organize together, and shift the work once again. Thank you for learning and supporting alongside us, as we continue to build the capacity needed for BIPOC leaders and organizations to thrive in the nonprofit space, and support our collective visions around seeing our communities thrive.

With Love,
RVC Staff
HOW DO WE MAKE AN IMPACT?

RVC works with our partners to identify strategies, goals, priorities, and key elements of their organization. We then provide services that help our partners build systems or infrastructure that allow their organizations to better carry out their mission in sustainable and equitable ways, which can come in forms of strategic planning, fundraising planning, and organizational development.

**Capacity Building (CAP) Team**

Nonprofits need space to grow without being consumed by the administrative details that can distract from their mission. RVC offers partners Model A fiscal sponsorship. We manage several grassroots organizations’ back-end operations including accounting, contracting, human resources, legal, compliance, and payroll.

**Operations Support (OS) Team**

RVC organizes paid Community Impact fellowships for leaders of color who learn and work for two years in nonprofit community organizations committed to equity. Fellows receive leadership training, coaching, mentorship, and work in meaningful roles that strengthen the organization and advance their careers. Over 78% of alumni are hired by their employer or stay working in the nonprofit sector.

**Fellowship Team**

This past year saw a lot of learnings inside of RVC as a response to the structural changes as part of our evolution towards shared and distributed leadership (which we will cover later in the report!). With this transition, there’s been a responsive shift in how we work. We are adapting how the program teams work together…especially when we have overlapping partners who receive multi-layered support. There’s always been a strong resonance between RVC’s programs, but, with distributed decision-making, we are discovering the need to build out new connections that may not have existed before.

This intentional effort to grow our internal communication, transparency, and coordination has led to early successes!

- Better coordination between OS and CAP has provided ways for both teams to support partners to better understand their finances and prioritize planning that promotes the organization’s sustainability
- 11 of our partners worked with our CAP team to assess their long-term organizational needs and strengthen aspects of their organizational culture, specifically: supervision, work planning, and giving and receiving feedback. This was a direct result of the Fellowship team focusing on these two elements of organizational development in the Fellowship Partner onboarding process. Cross-collaboration between Fellowship and CAP provided an opportunity to have an integrated understanding of each organization and their needs, while also preparing them to have tools ready to support their own onboarding of the incoming Fellow.
- Increased coordination between Fellowship and CAP which has led to monthly and consistent liaison meetings to discuss coordination and communication between the two teams. It led to increased coordination and planning around partner onboarding, getting clear on programmatic expectations and practices, and fellows supports prior to the fellowship start.

ORG-WIDE UPDATES

BY THE NUMBERS

7 YEARS

$2.57 MIL BUDGET

24 STAFF

50+ TOTAL PARTNERS

48 LEADERS OF COLOR
New operations support partners!

Our Operations Support Program centralizes the administrative and operations work for BIPOC-led community organizations. With less time and energy spent on things like financial management, HR, and payroll, our Operations Support Program partners can focus on providing more effective services, building community power, and changing inequitable systems and policies.

Taking a Pause

RVC Operations Support staff, upon receiving feedback from partners through evaluations, decided it was crucial to take a pause to focus on our current partners and how to best serve and support them and future partners rebuild and update systems. Taking this time to build a healthy and sustainable infrastructure was crucial to us anticipating bring on new partners in FY23!

Collective Justice NW
Alphabet Alliance of Color
Ala Garifuna Women

With the shift to the new org structure, Kristine Maramot – alum of 2015-2017 fellowship cohort – is now Operations Support Program Director!

Jess Hartman – alum of 2017-2019 Fellowship cohort, former staff of FOCS, current OS partner – hired as a OS program manager

Celebrating 4 years! We’re in the fourth year of our Operations Support Program, which began in 2018. Since then, we’ve grown to supporting 18 amazing partner organizations.

The current number of employees hired on on behalf of our partners. This means our partners have more capacity to accomplish their mission

Operations Partners held successful events!

- The Good Foot Space Open House/Grand Opening
- Ala Garifuna Gala Event
- Somos:LatinX Pride comeback for FY23
OUR CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM GOES HAND-IN-HAND WITH OUR FELLOWSHIP AND OPERATIONS SUPPORT PROGRAMS. OUR TEAM OF STELLAR CAPACITY BUILDERS WORKS TO MOVE ORGANIZATIONS AWAY FROM THE BURNOUT CYCLE BY SUPPORTING THEM IN BUILDING STRONGER INFRASTRUCTURE, LEADERSHIP, AND PRACTICES SO THAT THEY CAN FULFILL THEIR MISSION AND SERVE THEIR COMMUNITY, WHILE TAKING CARE OF THEIR STAFF’S WELL-BEING. WE OFFER CULTURALLY-RESPONSIVE COACHING, ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENTS, CUSTOMIZED CAPACITY BUILDING PLANS, AND MUCH MORE.

THE WAY OUR CAPACITY BUILDING TEAM WORKS WITH OUR PARTNERS PRIORITIZES BUILDING TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS, AND THE PROCESS IS DESIGNED TO FIT PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS’ SCHEDULES AND PRIORITIES.

THIS PAST YEAR, THE CAP TEAM SUPPORTED:

- Partners with organizational culture processes that focused on workplanning & supervision
- Partners with organizational assessments
- Partners with budgeting processes that included budget forecasting and planning
- Partners with coaching and thought partnership
- Partners with fundraising planning
- Partners with strategic planning processes
- Partners with board development

From 2019 to 2021, our Capacity Building team partnered with Best Starts for Kids (BSK) to provide capacity building support to 12 of their grantees:

- Atlantic Street Center
- Communities of Rooted Brilliance (formerly Coalition for Refugees for Burmese)
- East African Community Services

The way our Capacity Building team works with our Partners prioritizes building trusting relationships, and the process is designed to fit partner organizations’ schedules and priorities.

The CAP team supported:

- 12 partners with organizational culture processes that focused on workplanning & supervision
- 11 partners with organizational assessments
- 10 partners with coaching and thought partnership
- 7 partners with fundraising planning
- 8 partners with strategic planning processes
- 6 partners with board development

Denotes number of partners supported in each category.

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

Atlantic Street Center
Communities of Rooted Brilliance
(East African Community Services)

El Centro
Iraqi Community Center of Washington
Open Arms
Somali Health Board
Centro Rendu Program of St. Vincent & Catholic Community Services
Hope Central
Voices of Tomorrow
ReWA
Korean Community Service Center

WE EXPANDED OUR TEAM! WE NOW HAVE 3 NEW STAFF THAT ARE STILL GROWING & ONBOARDING IN THEIR ROLES AS CAPACITY BUILDERS FOR PARTNERS.

Vic Vong
Shalom Cook
Harshika Kara

Major takeaways from shared feedback:

- Partner growth and milestones: Partner staff gained new knowledge and skills, showed growth in leadership and supervision practices, and implemented new systems and structures that made their relationships and work more impactful.
- Most impactful supports: Trainings (zoom, supervision) were the most appreciated support named by closing reflection participants, followed by coaching and strategic planning. These supports helped partners gain clarity, build stronger org visions and strategies, and feel supported.
- Examining capacity building support: Partners appreciated RVC’s culturally responsive and relational approach to capacity building work, and named flexible and responsive communication as key to their progress. Partners mentioned timing and lack of clarity as two major barriers to getting the support they wanted.
FELLOWSHIP

Our Community Impact Fellowship Programs place emerging leaders of color in two-year, full-time positions at local grassroots organizations that are led by and serve communities of color. Our programs help build the next generation of leaders in the nonprofit sector, while increasing resources going to these organizations.

Our Fellows bring their talent, passion, and commitment to community, while we provide a livable wage, benefits, and ongoing opportunities for professional development, community building, and a cohort learning experience that centers on transformative and just leadership for themselves and the communities they live, work, play, and serve.

Celebrating the 2019-2021 cohort!

Here are some excerpts & quotes from our ‘19-‘21 Fellow Leadership Report. If you haven’t taken a look yet, check it out!

A regular practice of self-reflection became a key to their growth. Being open to giving and receiving feedback allowed them to think holistically about their work and needs.

A less definable success, but important: we are grateful to have multiple Fellow alums in RVC staff positions... incredible leaders come back around!

Just

Adaptive

Transformational

Collective

Leadership

“I feel like everyone’s confidence has grown in some way. Everyone is learning to love themselves a little bit more and being kinder to themselves. It’s just a really nice thing to see people become who they’re meant to become.”

“Fellows witnessed changes at their organizations, such as stronger org infrastructure & processes, feedback culture, and social justice analyses.”

By the Numbers

11 host organizations joined the cohort for 6 months of onboarding before beginning to host a Fellow!

5 new partner orgs to RVC

• Movimiento Afrolatino Seattle
• Equity in Education Coalition
• STEM Paths Innovation Network
• Na’ah Illahee Fund
• Black Farmers Collective

5 partners also supported by OS

• Creative Justice
• Supporting Partnerships in Education & Beyond
• WA-BLOC
• The Good Foot
• Mujer Al Volante

2 are in their second cycle of the Fellowship program with us:

• Supporting Partnerships in Education & Beyond
• Duwamish River Community Coalition

Building our capacity as a fellowship team, we’ve added Christian Moore to our small yet mighty team!

Adding a new team member soon to ensure the quality of our programs for both fellows and partners are
In order to achieve our collective vision of social and systemic change,

We need to build towards a deep, broad, and shared commitment to equitable distribution and sharing of power and wealth.

The current funding landscape props up historical inequities and racist power dynamics, and continues to fuel a sense of scarcity. This keeps leaders of color from being able to invest in long-term strategies and creative solutions.

The Social Justice League (SJL) is our response to this systemic under-resourcing of BIPOC organizations. Building on years of work in partnership with nonprofit leaders of color, RVC has brought together funders and stakeholders to invest in a pooled fund that can support BIPOC communities over the long-term, building collective community power by getting unrestricted dollars into the incredibly capable and powerful hands of BIPOC organizations.

SJL’s goal is to raise $15 million dollars; $100K in unrestricted operating support dollars per year over the course of 5 years for each of our 24 partner organizations.

SJL acknowledges how power dynamics can play a role in funding relationships, and therefore have partnered with the Social Justice Fund to house and distribute money to our nonprofit partners. SJL (and RVC) do not take any portion of the funds we raise to support our partners.

Powerful change happens when BIPOC organizations are well resourced. With unrestricted funding for multi-year operating support, our partners have been able to ground their work in an abundance mindset. They can move from scrambling to dreaming big; moving towards their visions of thriving communities!

We are so excited by the momentum we are building and the relationships we are able to cultivate. But! We are not done.

We have a strong start at fundraising for the full $15 million for our Partners. We have committed stakeholders, rooted determination, and the vision to see this all come to life.

And we have you.

Join us in this movement to raise the bar for resourcing BIPOC organizations and change the landscape of philanthropy.

Funding partners include Satterberg Foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Group Health Foundation, Seattle Foundation, Expedia Group, as well as support from longtime RVC stakeholders.

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MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

**Intentional Pause + 2022-2024 Community Impact Cohort!**

After hosting back-to-back cohorts of Fellows for 6 years, the RVC Fellowship team took a gap year for the first time. We can all benefit from resisting the Nonprofit Industrial Complex by pausing, reflecting, and leaning into planning and spaciousness in our work. For the Fellowship team, this intentional pause allowed them to reflect on lessons learned and to do a lot of deep strategic planning, and to dedicate 4-5 months of recruitment for Fellows (and host organizations) in a more intentional and supportive way. We also took time to revisit and improve the quality of our curriculum. Finally, it allowed the team to dedicate 6 months to onboard Fellowship host orgs, deepen relationships, and set Fellows and Partner orgs up to thrive.

More context around the pause decision

Fellowship host org onboarding topics
THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Learning in public, sharing what we learn, and building relationships through shared leadership is built into our DNA at RVC. We believe that sharing our decisions, resources, and learning journey is a necessary part of advocating for more equitable organizational and systemic change.

Program Development: Lessons from Green Pathways

We pilot multi-year programs and ideas at RVC as a way to keep fulfilling our mission, but not all of them are converted into ongoing programming. Yet, some of our most fruitful learning and sharing comes from these pilot initiatives. We made the decision to sunset our Green Pathways fellowship, which aimed to create living-wage and entry-level positions for BIPOC leaders in the environmental sector. See our lessons learned here.

Organizational Development: Shared & Distributed Leadership

Our biggest organizational journey this year has been moving into our shared leadership structure of four executive directors.

We are not alone in our desires to explore new leadership structures. In the past year, staff have spoken at several conferences and done over a dozen 1:1 thought partnership sessions with organizations looking to implement or learn from our shared leadership model — and the associated issues that arise with it; from decision making structures, to role clarity, to building a leaderful culture, and more.

Operational Development

At RVC, we know that some of the best ways we can cultivate staff wellness and sustainability is through concrete change in organizational policies, staff compensation and benefits. As part of our commitment to creating equitable compensation, we have continued to refine our equitable salary calculator designed to remove the often inequitable practice of negotiating salaries. Instead, we start with the same baseline salary for all our staff and then incorporate the differing roles people energize, including valuing skills that are not often considered such as emotional labor and using multiple languages at work. We have consistently been able to offer cost of living adjustments and raise our baseline salary so we advance in offering livable wages in the Seattle area. Equitable payroll philosophies is a growing edge for our entire sector. We are refining our calculator based on our organizational and sector-wide learnings.

Check out our shared leadership journey in these two blog posts:

Co-ED Structure Blog Post
RVC's New Org Chart

Green Pathways Final Update
Our Partners

RVC’s strength lies in the sense of community we’ve built with our partners. Through collaboration, we facilitate resource-sharing and foster strategic partnerships, creating the opportunity for local action across diverse communities of color.
RVC was very fortunate to receive a PPP loan and have it forgiven. This was a one-time revenue opportunity giving us the chance to build out our reserves and help stabilize RVC and our Partner Orgs. RVC continues to fundraise in order to support our ever-growing capacity and supports for our partners.
Our Supporters, continued

Jeanie Boawn
Janet Levinger
Jacqueline Westfall
Jacob Lundgren
J Fitzgerald
Holly and Lacie Braun
Heidi Jackson
Heather Carawan
Hannah Lidman
Hannah Lencheck
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Like so many of us building towards liberatory futures, we look to nature to see what deeply resilient ecosystems need for long-term health. Rather than seeding and harvesting year-to-year, we see the importance of prioritizing the health of the soil. We believe our work should be considered with that same lens towards a deeper transformation...as well as funding that work!

This work was made possible through generous giving and commitment from supporters like you. Donate today to ensure that we can sustain this work for years to come!

HOW TO GIVE TO RVC

• ONLINE — rvcseattle.org/donate
• MAIL — Make a check out to RVC Seattle and send it to: 1225 S. Weller St. Suite #400, Seattle, WA 98144.
• BY PHONE — Give us a call at 206-436-9536

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