



BEAM

BLACK EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH
COLLECTIVE

2020 Annual Report



*Healing is the lifelong art
and practice of relating to
our feelings in a manner
that fosters liberation,
interdependence, tenderness,
and joy.*

—YOLO AKILI—

Black Emotional and Mental Health Collective

BEAM is a national training, movement building, and grant making institution that is dedicated to the healing, wellness, and liberation of Black and marginalized communities.

Background

BEAM's name and work is inspired by HIV/AIDS activist, author, and pro-feminist, Joseph Beam. BEAM envisions a world where there are no barriers to Black healing and centers a healing justice-informed approach in its services and programs.

Mission Statement

BEAM's mission is to remove the barriers that Black people experience while gaining access to or staying connected with emotional healthcare and healing. BEAM achieves this through healing justice-based organizing, education, training, grant making, and advocacy.

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Executive Administrator

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Mental Health and Masculinity Training Manager

Cydney Brown
Black Masculinity Training Coordinator

L'Oréal McCollum
Mental Health Training Manager

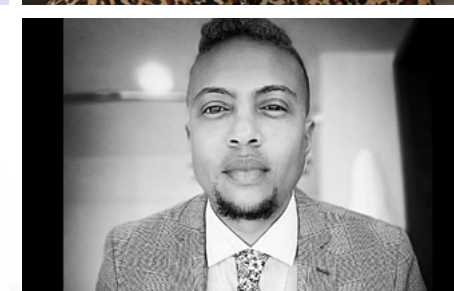
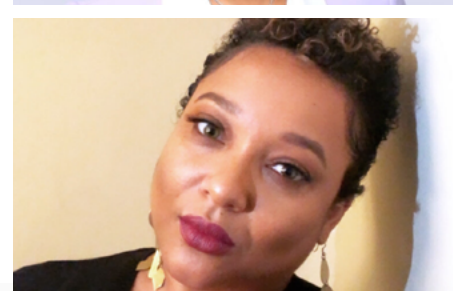
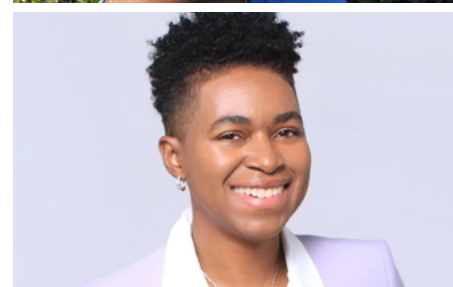
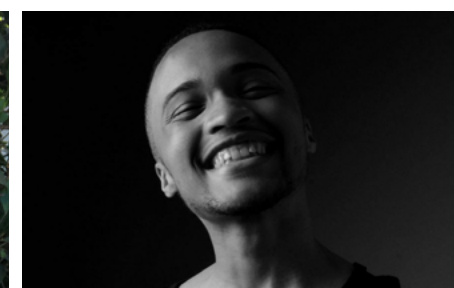
Dionne Bates
Senior Mental Health Advisor

Trainers

Michael A. Chan-Frazier

Natalie Patterson

Holiday Simmons



Letter from the Director

2020 was a year of immense growth and challenge for BEAM. An airborne virus began devastating our communities. Murders of Black folks at the hands of police ignited our rage and we took to the streets to protest in unprecedented numbers. Revenue sources for many of our folks disappeared overnight, public health infrastructures — that were already failing — collapsed; and we watched as white supremacist leadership denied and dismissed the virus' threat, costing us more Black lives.

Amidst all of this, distress among our communities heightened. BEAM was flooded with emails and messages from people seeking support; participants in our current work detailed more intense symptoms, and we had to roll up our sleeves. Black communities and allies started fundraisers to support our small team and help us expand. Mothers, bakers, activists, and artists attended our programs and collected resources to support us. We received generous donations from numerous celebrities, artists, studios and corporations.

So we put those dollars to work: Our programs Black Masculinity (Re)Imagined, HeartSpace Peer Support Group, Black Somatics, Decompress Writing Workshop, and our Black Mental Health & Healing Justice Peer Support program all transitioned to a virtual format. BEAM's Southern Healing Support Fund focused on giving out grocery cards to our vulnerable folks in the South

and we launched the now public Black Parent Support Fund, putting dollars back into the hands of Black parents supporting children living with mental conditions.

In this moment of distress, BEAM had to put into practice what we preached. Our small team was working hard. We provided cash bonuses to our staff for their labor and to help them support their families, while also increasing their salaries. We adjusted our work schedules to provide space for rest, and we increased support internally to process our experiences of holding so much collective grief and distress.

Now, as the dust has somewhat settled, we know the distress has not. Black communities were and continue to be hit hard by COVID. Grief and despair are everywhere. Our team has grown, and we have sharpened our approaches to the work. With a spirit of gratitude, harnessing our power as a community united, we are continuing our commitment to the work of uplifting healing, community care, and our liberation. And we are eternally grateful to you for committing to this journey with us.





How BEAM Works



Training and Peer Support

BEAM trains community members on healing justice-informed mental health peer support practices with an emphasis on everyday community members: teachers, parents, activists, barbers, stylists, and students. We also develop healing justice-informed wellness tools that community members can use to support their circles.



Grant Making and Community Organizing

BEAM partners with and resources grassroots movements and community-based organizations across the country with funds and tools to support Black community wellness.

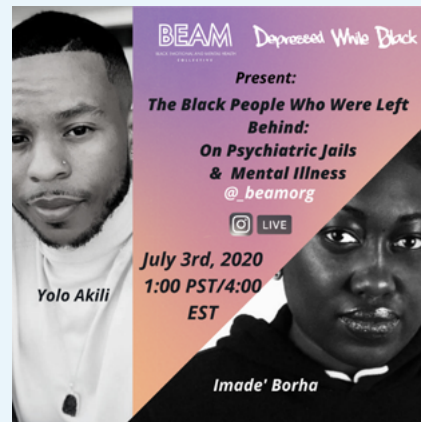


Organizational Wellness and Coaching

BEAM coaches grassroots movements and community-based organizations on how to center healing practices in their leadership, services, and community engagement.

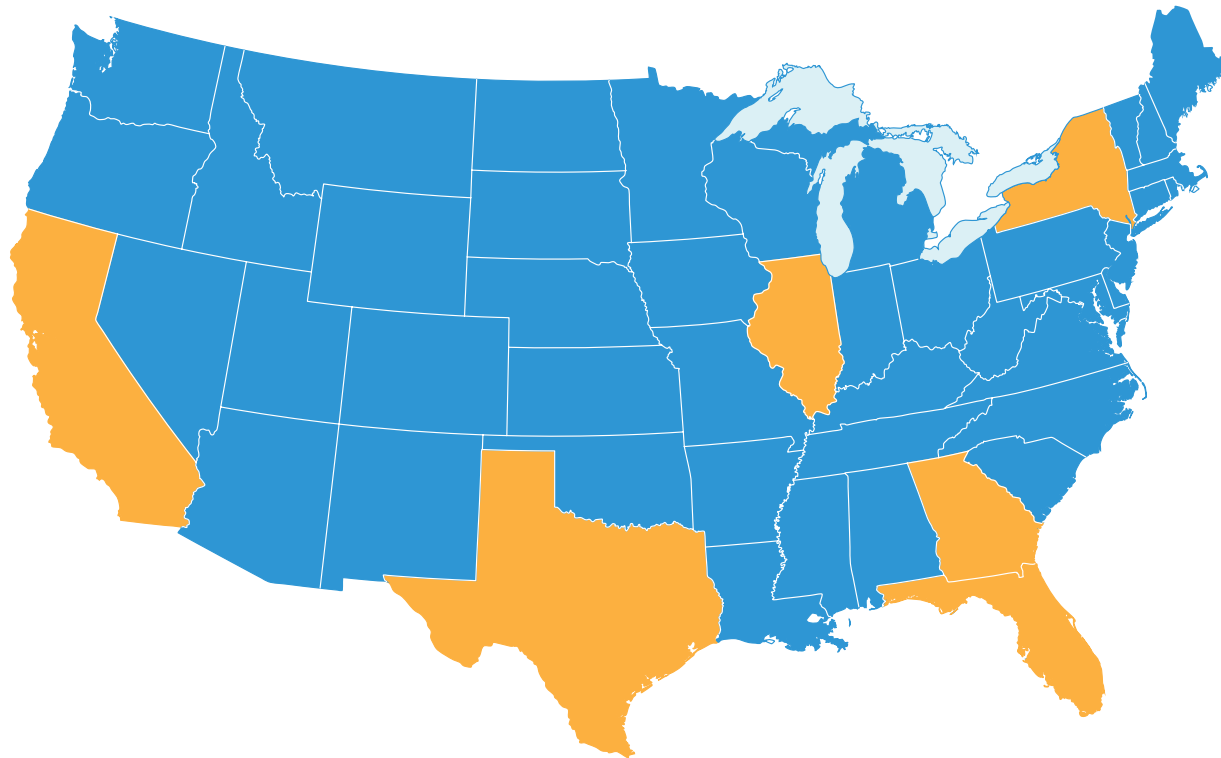
Pivoting to Virtual Programming to Support our Communities

To support our communities, all BEAM programming transitioned to a virtual format in 2020. We reached over 6,000 people through our trainings and our website was visited by over 253,000 individuals seeking resources, connections and tools.



Expanding our Reach

Transitioning to a virtual format allowed BEAM to connect with more people across the world than ever before



States highlighted in gold represent where most of BEAM's program participants were located! In addition, BEAM had considerable participants from 🇨🇦 Canada, 🇬🇧 the UK, and 🇿🇦 South Africa!

2020 for BEAM included...



2,500+ Folks

Across the world were directly trained on Peer Support, Mental Health & Emotionally Intelligent Leadership



253,000+ Website Visits

Including our Mobile Crisis Unit listing, Black Wellness Directory, and Toolkit page.



40,000+ Shares

The number of times our social media tools, including our peer support models and affirmations, were shared on social media.



10,000+ Dollars Distributed

Through our Southern Healing Support Fund and Emergency Care Fund, we provided grocery cards for low income families and support for community gardens in rural food deserts under our #FoodJusticeisHealingJustice initiative.

Virtual Programs Feedback

What did you find helpful about Decompress: A Writing Workshop for Wellness?



DECOMPRESS

“The space to be vulnerable and to write, and also be surrounded by like-minded and nonjudgmental people [was helpful]. I felt so free in the space.”

“...It has been so rare for me to make time for myself like this. To focus on self-healing and expression and mindfulness. I **NEEDED** this, needed this [space], I am too grateful.”

What did you find helpful about Heartspace: A Black Only Peer Support Space



“Just to have a space where I did not have to edit or translate my feelings and experiences made me feel less impotent and less alone. There was gold in every statement and huge reminders of how we can show up for ourselves and our community without feeling guilty for the things we can’t do.”

“It was immensely helpful at transmitting feelings of Black community and community healing!”

HEARTSPACE

More Participant Feedback



"I used the peer support tools BEAM shared to be present for this person during their very real suicidal crisis. I had no idea I would be applying what you said the very next day! I messaged with this person off and on throughout the day and they don't seem to be as heightened as before...Thank you! Your work is really making a difference."

"The feelings wheel was super helpful, but the incredible insight from the facilitators around boundaries, enabling behaviors, consent culture, and approach to discussing pronouns (which I will borrow for future facilitations)."

"I love the humor, love the levity. I've even implemented those grounding techniques on my own now!"

"The LAPIS model was very useful for me in my HIV work. I often times want to play the superhero and rescue those who are newly diagnosed. This can help me navigate away from that and better guide my conversations with clients."

Creating Virtual Tools for Education

BEAM believes in making mental health accessible. And so every month, we share tools that break down psychological concepts, offer a reframe of dominant narratives, or that help us process our emotions. Our social media shares for 2020 were over 40K!



BLACK EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH COLLECTIVE

LAPIS Peer Support Model

L

Listen & Assess for Distress or Harm
Listen actively. Assess if there is any danger to themselves or to you. If needed contact a warm-line, local mental health informed responders, trusted community members, or mobile crisis units for support.

A

Affirm Their Experience
Affirm that their feelings are valid without minimizing or refuting them. Reminder: You can affirm feelings without agreeing with narratives or stories.

P

Partner to Navigate Care & Seek Services
Partner with them to explore resources, services and options to the extent to which they can. Be mindful of your own privilege and identities and their impact on how you behave and are received.

I

Initiate Self & Community Care Plans.
Until mental health help is secured, create plans for care and accountability. Who will check in, bring food, medications, and other care? Identify safe support networks. Be sure to create a care plan for yourself as you care for others.

S

Seek Out Help as Needed
Seek out local support such as trusted community members for insight on how you can help yourself or your friend. Resources, hotlines, and warm-lines can be found at: www.beam.community/talktosomeone

Affirmation Journal Prompts:



Today I give myself permission to feel my _____

I will not allow anyone to tell me my feelings or experiences of _____ are not real

I give myself permission to grieve by _____

I give myself permission to protest, resist and fight back by _____

I give myself permission to not engage with _____

I give myself permission to honor my body, spirit and its needs by _____

www.beam.community



BLACK EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH COLLECTIVE

P.A.U.S.E

Self De-Escalation



P

Pay attention to my body, thoughts, and feelings.
What happens to my body when I get angry? eg. clenched fist, elevated heart-rate? These are messages that I need to pause. Am I breathing? What story am I telling myself?

A

Assess what is activating me
What feelings are being activated? Do I not feel heard? Do I feel misunderstood? Am I upset about what is said or something else that happened to me recently?

U

Understand the roots of my feelings
What values of mine are being challenged? Am I seeking to resolve a disagreement or maintain power and control over something or someone else?

S

Set boundaries, Separate, Ensure Safety
If you are not able to show up in dignity and respect. Step away. Set boundaries. Work with the problem when you are less frustrated. It is important everyone feels safe.

E

Empathize with those involved
Everyone deserves respect. How could the other person be experiencing me? How will my actions impact others? What are others trying to express? How can we create understanding?



See our virtual tools online

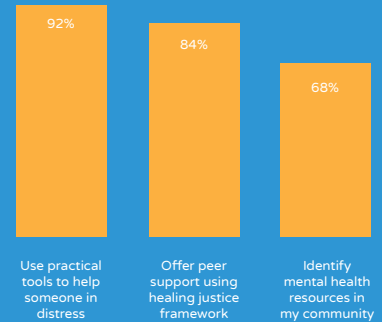
PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Black Mental Health & Healing Justice Peer Support Training

This training equips participants with introductory knowledge of mental health issues, myths and challenges in Black communities, while also providing participants with tools and skills to offer healing justice-informed peer support.

“This training was eye opening and empowering. A reminder that even the parts of us that feel unseen, at some point in time can be noticed, felt, and held.”

Participants feel **confident** using the skills gained in the training



Total number of 2020 participants: **197**



This image was taken pre-COVID

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Black Masculinity (Re)Imagined

A community building initiative that aims to train and work with Black men, boys, and masculine individuals to identify and address the link between toxic masculinity, male privilege, mental health, and sexual and domestic violence.

“This space was extremely helpful. In such a short, I was able to connect deeply with others who share key aspects of my identity and gain new vocabulary and tools that I feel equipped to use to support the healing of Black masculine folks.”

97% OF PARTICIPANTS

of BMR workshops agreed they would use the tools provided in the training to engage their communities

Total number of 2020 participants: **554**



This image was taken pre-COVID

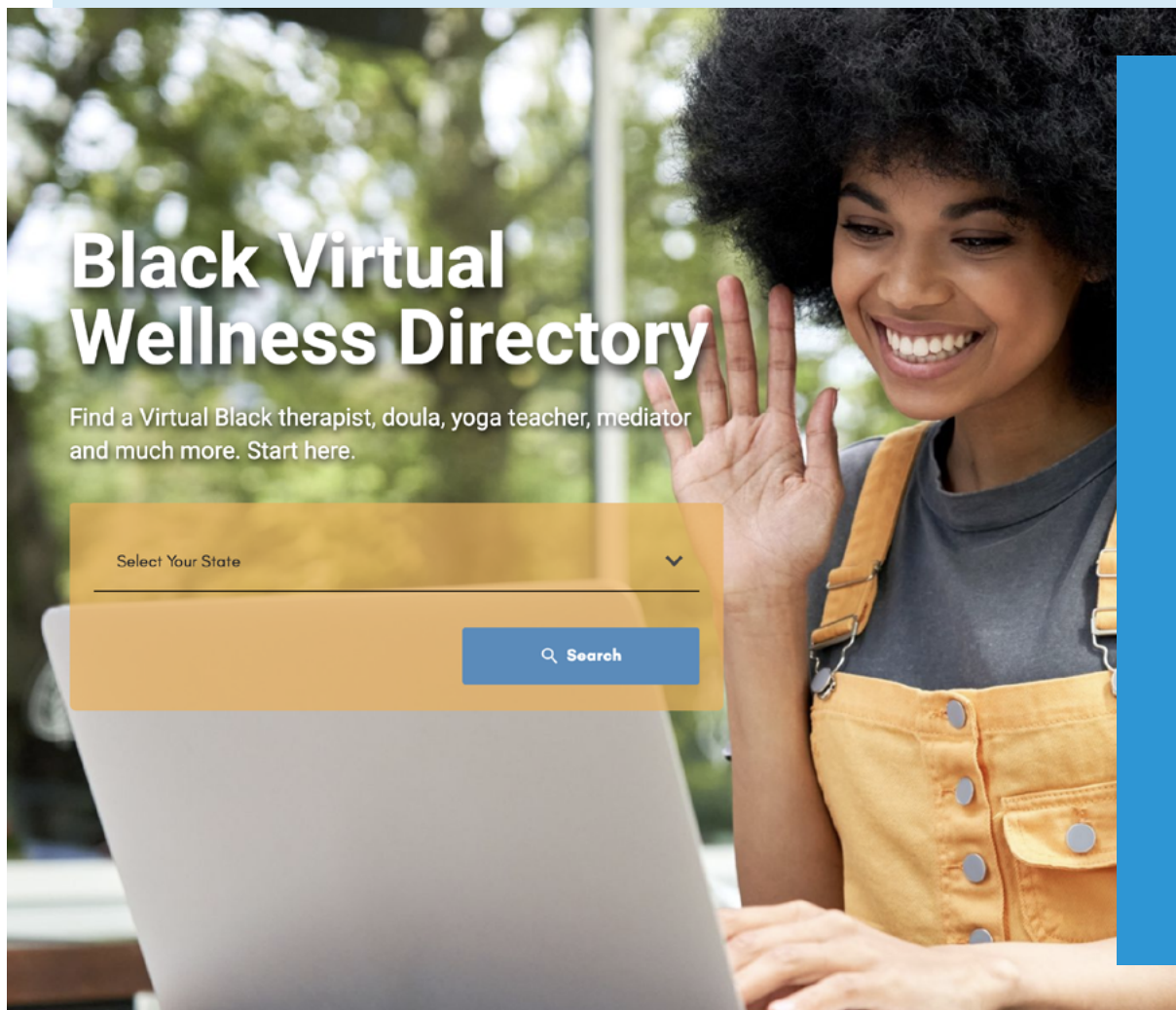


PARTICIPANT TESTIMONIAL

“ BEAM has opened the hidden gates within our community that unleashes the emotional, mental, and psychosocial barriers that systemically exist in intergenerational BIPOC families.”

“I was afforded the opportunity to complete BEAM’s Black Mental Health & Healing Justice training in Atlanta, GA right before the COVID-19 pandemic struck. This training provided a lasting impression during an uncertain time of collective and self-reflection. The Black Healing Justice Framework that BEAM provided articulated areas of psychosocial, emotional, mental, and well-being that encompassed an approach to quarantine life that I was able to assist my family, friends, and clients with. The continual gift of being able to utilize the framework has been an interminable and invaluable treasure and I will be forever grateful to BEAM.”

Cedric Pulliam, Ph.D.
Senior Public Health Advisor
U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)



Black Virtual Wellness Directory

Find a Virtual Black therapist, doula, yoga teacher, mediator and much more. Start here.

Select Your State

Search

Black Virtual Wellness Directory Updated & Redesigned

A database of Black virtual therapists, doulas, yoga teachers, and many other wellness practitioners providing services around the country. To better support the community, we relaunched the Directory with a more interactive, searchable interface.



Southern Healing Support Fund

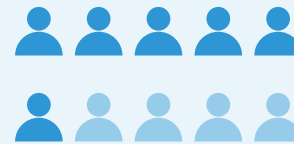
Our communities cannot practice wellness without access to healthy foods

The 2020 Southern Healing Support Fund focused on providing grocery cards and monetary support to Black elders, single parents, disabled folks, people living with mental illness, people living with HIV, trans, queer, and undocumented folks living in the South.

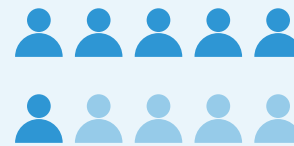
In addition, the Fund supported Historic Mableton Community Garden and the Alliance for African American Health in Texas in an effort to increase access to locally grown green foods.



We gave away over
\$5,000
worth of grocery
gift cards.



63% of grocery card recipients reported living with a mental health condition.



66% of grocery card recipients identified as trans, non-binary, or gender nonconforming.

BLACK HEALING REMIXED

Drive-Thru Self Care Gift Set Giveaway

BEAM hosted a drive-thru self care gift giveaway to promote community wellness and self care during the pandemic. The gift sets included wellness products from businesses owned by people of color, including handmade soaps, body oils and scrubs, herbal tea donated by Lipton® Tea, and mental health resources.

Over 250 self care gift sets were given away to the Inglewood, CA community.

Click for video



Community Partner Spotlight

Depressed While Black

When our people are admitted into mental health institutions, they are often denied basic toiletries and care that can have a direct impact on their mental health and the support they receive. To address this disparity, BEAM partnered with Depressed While Black to raise funds to provide health and beauty supplies for Black people in behavioral health hospitals and psychiatric jails in Charlotte, North Carolina.



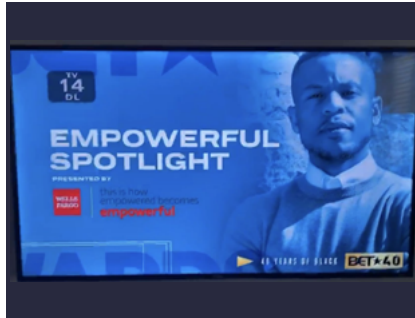
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Imadé Nibokun
Founder,
Depressed While Black

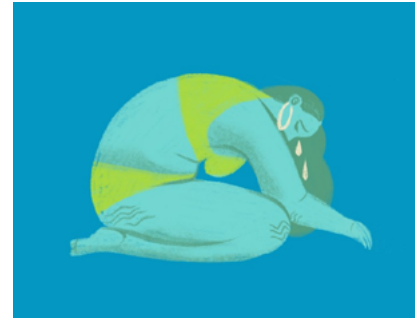
Press Highlights



2020 BET Awards
Empowerful Spotlight



Milken Institute Report:
Philanthropic Action for
America's Mental Health
System



Los Angeles Times



Entertainment Weekly



Talkspace Voice



Robert Wood Johnson
Foundation Culture of
Health Blog



USA TODAY

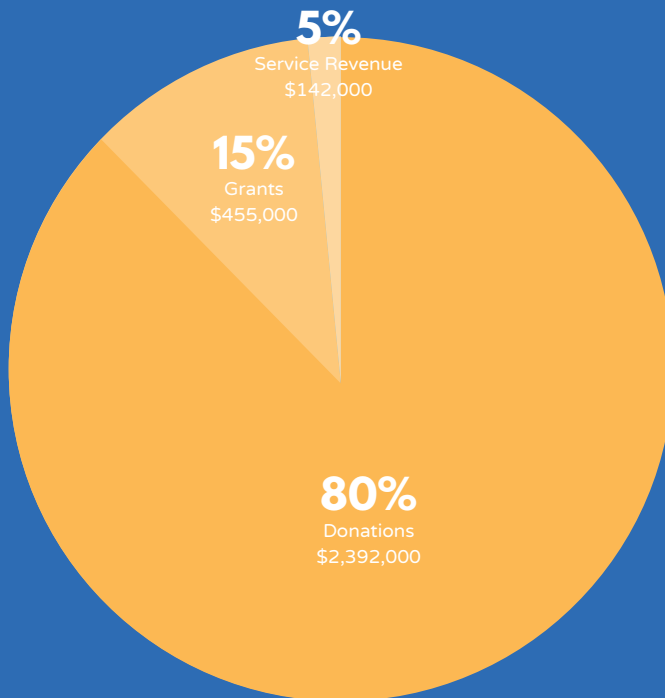


Women's Health

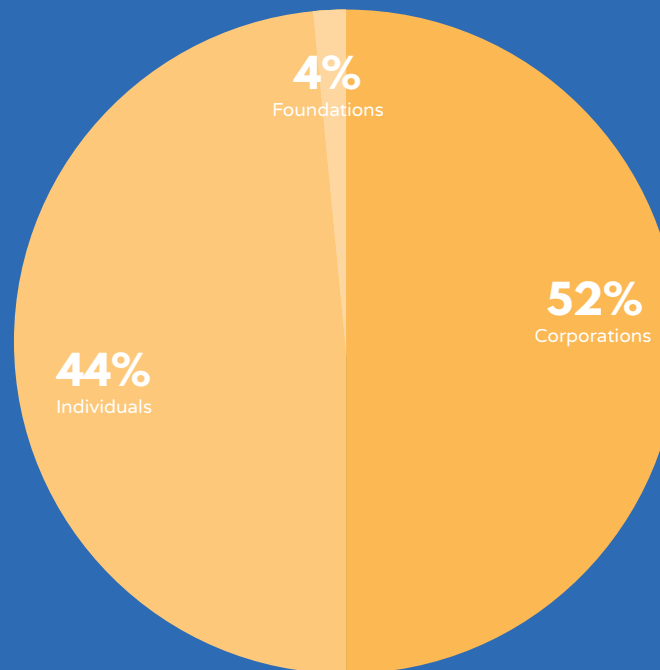
Financial Update

The COVID-19 pandemic and the uprisings for racial justice that dominated 2020 underscored the importance of BEAM's work and generated an overwhelming wave of support and funding from diverse sources that well outpaced our projections

Income



Donations Breakdown



Expenditures

\$713,603

Programs, Staffing & Administration

*These numbers are approximations



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the uprisings for racial justice, BEAM received an overwhelming amount of support and funding that well outpaced our projections. In response to this growth, BEAM has employed the following strategies:

1. Expanding our Grant Making

Black Wellness Innovation Fund

To support national need for private dollars for Black mental health, BEAM is launching a \$20 million initiative aimed at supporting a national effort to create access to and support for Black-led mental health organizations across the United States.

Southern Healing Support Fund

We have expanded our Southern Healing Support Fund to provide grocery cards, as well as monetary support to Southern-based therapists and wellness practitioners to offer free care.

Black Parent Support Fund

In 2020, we privately piloted giving funds up to \$500 to Black parents living with mental conditions or supporting children living with mental conditions. In 2021, we plan on distributing a total of \$40,000 directly to parents.



2. Expanding our Staff

Despite public perception, BEAM is a small team with a big heart. At the beginning of 2020, BEAM only had three full-time staff members and the support of our network. Currently, BEAM has six full-time staff members, and is working to expand the team, within reason, to continue to hold healing justice work.

3. Solidifying our Infrastructure

To effectively manage our growth, BEAM has secured support from accounting, tax, and HR firms to ensure our internal controls & structures are appropriately configured as grow but also in alignment with the values of healing justice.

4. Listening to Black Communities about their Needs and Responding

BEAM has hired Black-owned evaluation firms to help gather robust qualitative and quantitative feedback about our programs and to assess the impact of our work. This will help us build evidence that Black-led healing justice-informed peer support is a sustainable and necessary strategy for our communities to cultivate wellness and respond to mental health crises.



We want to extend a big thank you to all of our supporters. We had so many donations from individuals, organizations, activists, and groups that we could not list you all. We are grateful for each and every one of you! Thank you!



Thank You to our Supporters

Thank you to our philanthropic and corporate partners. On behalf of our Board of Directors and entire team, we appreciate your support.

Philanthropic Partners

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The California Endowment
Blue Cross Blue Shield of CA
Kering Foundation
The New York Women's Foundation
Women's Foundation California
Kresge Foundation
Viiv Healthcare

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