

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

**DRIVE
CHANGE**

LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Community,

2025 tested us over and over (and then over again some more!). Rising costs of living, instability across the hospitality sector, and a government shutdown brought already fragile communities to the breaking point. For the people Drive Change serves, that meant more stress and uncertainty around work, food, and basic survival.

But when the need surged, we worked together to show up for each other. When SNAP disruptions and pantry funding gaps left Bed-Stuy families facing empty refrigerators, our team responded by scaling up our fellow-led food distribution programming, delivering consistent groceries and hot meals to families in NYCHA's Marcy Houses. While working to overcome the challenges of the past year, we were also able to celebrate moments of hard-won joy. Throughout, our Fellowship supported justice-involved young New Yorkers to build real skills in the kitchen and classroom, to earn living wages and find stability and then mobility, often for the first time.

In 2025, 72% of fellows graduated, with 71% of them securing jobs in the hospitality industry. Beyond the numbers, fellows felt the care of our community, as they in turn cared for our neighbors in need. We were able to provide our fellows with wraparound support, including legal aid, financial coaching, and healing-centered case management.

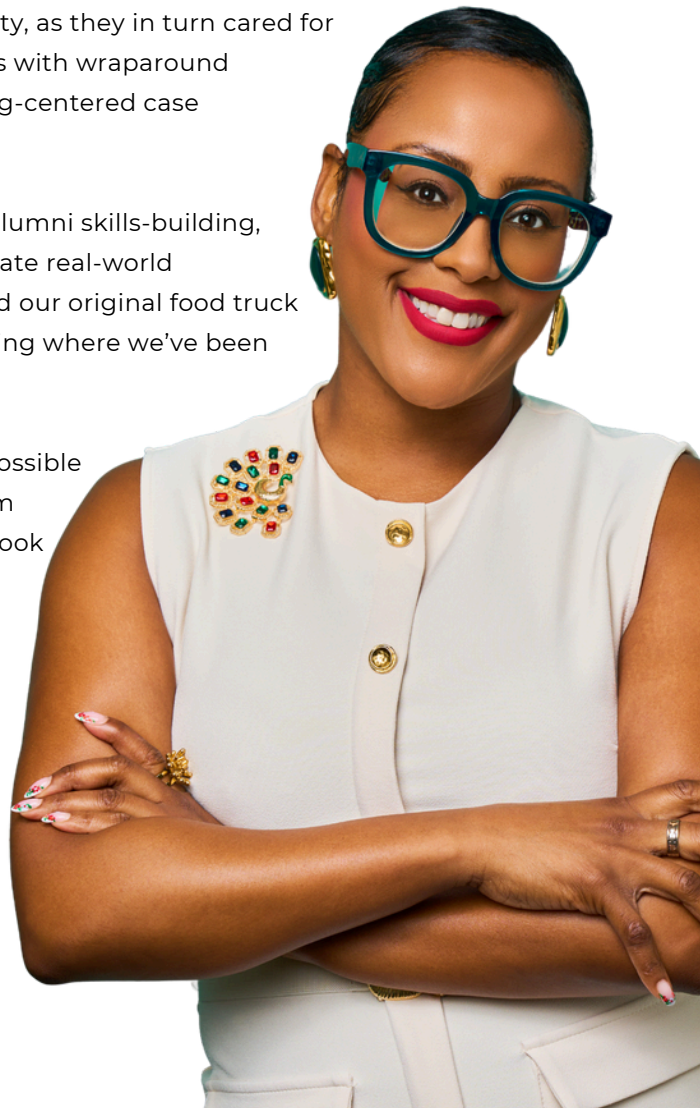
We also expanded employer partnerships, deepened our alumni skills-building, and grew our social enterprise, Drive Change Foods, to create real-world entrepreneurial opportunities for our graduates. We retired our original food truck after 10 years of service and built out our new truck, honoring where we've been while building what's next.

None of this happens without you. Your support made it possible to meet urgent needs without losing sight of our long-term goals to transform the lives of the people we serve. As we look ahead to 2026, we're committed to continuing to center dignity, opportunity, and community-rooted leadership in everything we do.

With gratitude,



KALILAH MOON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



2025 AT A GLANCE

57 FELLOWS
ENROLLED

41 GRADUATED

29 PLACED IN
JOBS

\$19 AVERAGE
STARTING WAGE

RAPID COMMUNITY RESPONSE

- Scaled our food distribution efforts during the federal government shutdown as SNAP disruptions and pantry funding gaps intensified need in Bed-Stuy
- Expanded relief through partnerships with Trinity Church Wall Street and United Way NYC

TEAM & INFRASTRUCTURE

- Launched Drive Change's first-ever 3-Year Strategic Plan
- Grew to a 15-person team
- Customized our CRM for advanced data management

GOVERNANCE & FIELD LEADERSHIP

- Added Muhammad Abdul-Hadi (Down North Pizza) and Natalie Leone (Centerbridge Partners) to our Board
- Convened leaders at Rosemary's Midtown to advance workforce pathways for justice-involved New Yorkers
- Kalilah recognized as a Nonprofit Trailblazer by City & State and Woman of Distinction by Assembly Member Brian Cunningham



FELLOWSHIP IMPACT

Unemployment is one of the greatest predictors of recidivism. Drive Change provides justice-involved young people with the skills to work and the community to build a life. Our recipe works: Drive Change fellows are 89% less likely to return to jail within one year compared to the NYC average, generating approximately \$11 million in annual taxpayer savings.

MEET NAKAYLA

Coming from Brownsville, Brooklyn, Drive Change allowed Nakayla to directly impact her community with grocery and meal distribution.

Through the Drive Change Fellowship, Nakayla was placed at BKLYN Blend, a juice bar committed to nourishing underserved neighborhoods, for her externship, and she was immediately hired there upon graduation.

By having stable employment, she can now take care of herself and her family, including her young son. With the skills Nakayla is learning about hospitality and business, she hopes to open her own boutique hair salon, where people can feel beautiful and taken care of with good food and drinks.



“

Drive Change means opportunity for people who do not have opportunities elsewhere, setting you up for success to work in a real-world environment when others won't. ”

NAKAYLA

'25 GRADUATE

MEET KIDANE

After his arrest in 2024, Kidane was out of work for a year. Drive Change was the only place he could find that didn't care about his record, and gave Kidane a fair chance and platform to work on himself and improve his life.

Kidane was hired by Drive Change in late 2025, and has joined the team as a full-time Culinary Assistant.

“ Drive Change presents people with opportunities when they feel like they don't have any. ”

KIDANE

'25 GRADUATE





COMMUNITY FOOD RELIEF AT SCALE

The need for reliable food sources has reached heights not seen in decades, impacting both low- and middle-income families alike. In NYC, 1.4 million New Yorkers (15% of the city) are food insecure. In 2025, we expanded our traditional grocery distribution program to direct meal delivery through our partnership with the Marcy Housing Community (NYCHA).

To meet our community's needs during these challenging times, our fellows cooked, packaged and delivered 75 hot, fresh, and healthy meals on a weekly basis to the Marcy Housing Community. This high-need community, where approximately 90% of residents receive SNAP benefits, is similar to the communities our fellows come from, bringing their journeys of service and hospitality full circle.



5,050 LOCAL FAMILIES RECEIVED GROCERIES AND HOT MEALS PREPARED AND DISTRIBUTED BY FELLOWS IN 2025.

SHIFTING THE SECTOR

We increased our Hospitality for Social Justice employer partner network from 24 to 48 New York businesses in 2025, ensuring that fellows have access to competitive job opportunities that leverage their strengths and experiences. Partners invest in their career growth through mentorship and continued training, as our staff supports both the fellow and their manager to foster long-term workforce success.

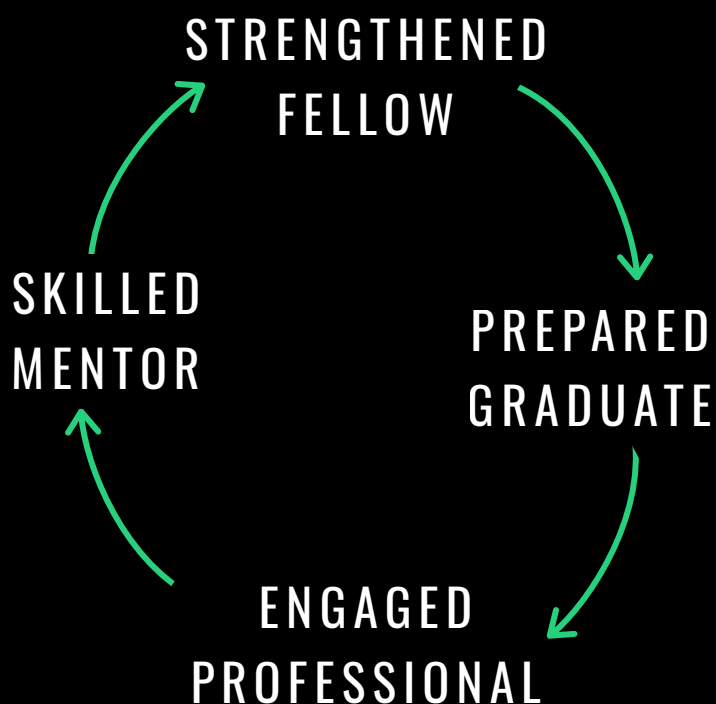
- 2 Girls & a Cookshop
- Aunts et Uncles
- Baby's Buns & Buckets
- Bartleby & Sage
- BKLYN Blend
- Blue Mountain Restaurant
- Bonbite Catering
- Bonnie's
- Caffè Panna
- Cervos
- Coco Bred
- Constellation Culinary (Cornell Tech)
- Daily Provisions
- Dish Food & Events
- Eat Offbeat
- Ebi-Ayo Supper Club
- El Punto Cubano
- FieldTrip
- Filly Luv
- Food As Content
- Gaddy Lane
- Grovehouse Hospitality
- Harlem Biscuit Company
- Lakou Cafe
- Lighthouse BK
- Lost Borough Ice Cream
- Mango Bay
- Melba's Restaurant
- Miznon
- Nowon
- OTG Management
- Porchlight
- Rosemary's
- Safari
- Salad Days
- Shake Shack
- Soul Bites
- Sweet Catch
- Thank You Come Again
- The Good Good
- The Hatch
- The Marlow Collective
- The Meat Hook
- The Sylvia Center
- Therapy Wine Bar 2.0
- Union Square Cafe
- Victoria Hotel
- Yawdie-Q



ALUMNI LEADERSHIP

As our network of graduates grows every year, we want to ensure they have access to continued learning, networking and growth opportunities. In order to do so, we are building a long-term ecosystem of continued learning both at Drive Change and with the other NYC members of the Movement to Organize for Restaurant Equity (MORE) Coalition.

In 2025, our alumni were able to engage in classes about advanced knife skills, wine 101, and had the opportunity to teach culinary classes to our newest fellows.





PURPOSE-DRIVEN GROWTH

In 2025 we expanded our catering and food truck business, Drive Change Foods. With the growth of our social enterprise, we are creating more living wage jobs year-over-year that invest in the long-term career growth of our alumni, while generating unrestricted revenue for Drive Change.



REVENUE + EMPLOYMENT

In 2025 Drive Change Foods:

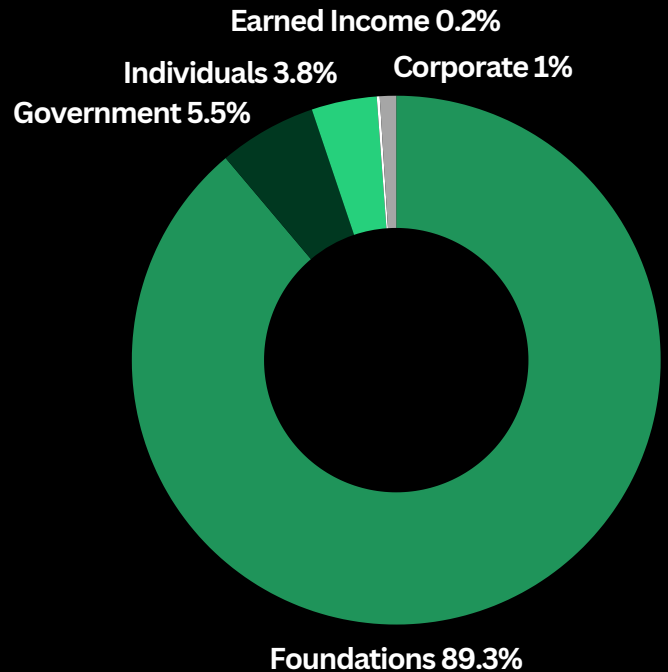
- Purchased a new, fully built-out food truck
- Hired our Director of Social Enterprise
- Catered private, nonprofit, and institutional events across NYC
- Served venues including Jane's Carousel and NYU
- Hired 4 justice-involved Fellowship alumni as Culinary Assistants

FINANCIALS

2025 Revenue

- Foundations: \$2,666,336
- Government: \$165,000
- Individuals: \$113,694
- Corporate: \$32,000
- Earned Income: \$6,784

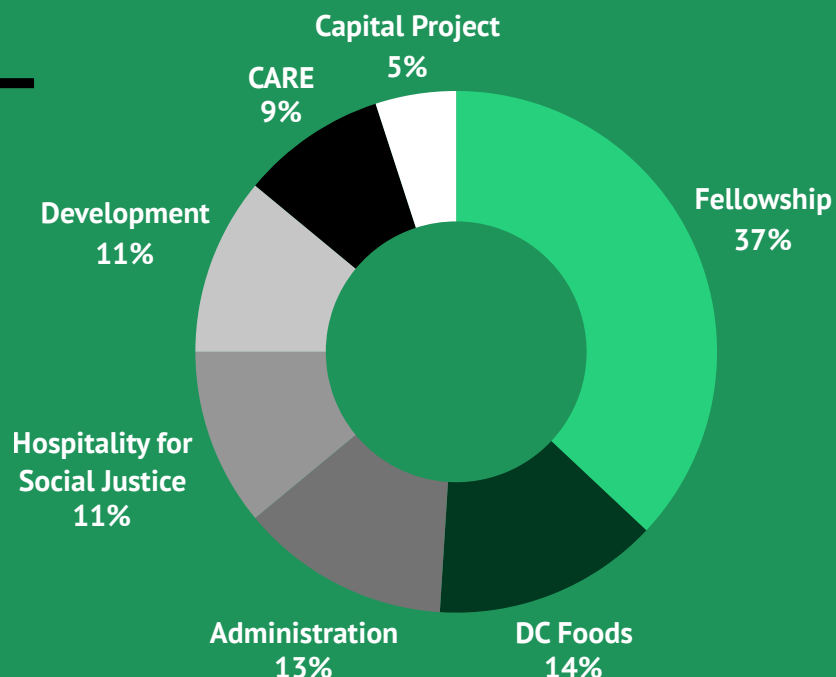
Total Revenue: \$2,983,814



2025 Expenses

- Fellowship: \$1,100,896
- DC Foods: \$416,065
- Administration: \$394,136
- HSJ: \$323,536
- Development: \$316,482
- CARE: \$282,699
- Capital Project: \$150,000

Total Expenses: \$2,983,814



YOUR SUPPORT DRIVES CHANGE

Thank you for making it possible to respond in crisis, create pathways to living-wage employment, and build long-term opportunity for justice-involved young people and under-resourced families.

TOP SUPPORTERS \$5,000 +

- Acumen Capital Partners LLC
- Becker Sisters Fund
- Cabbage Hill Farm Foundation
- Carson Family Charitable Trust
- CD&R Foundation
- Steve and Alexandra Cohen Foundation
- Con Edison
- Empire State Development (ESD)
- Heckscher Foundation for Children
- Hirsch Family Foundation
- Horwitz Family Fund
- Hyde & Watson Foundation
- Ichigo Foundation
- Jacque Pépin Foundation
- Klapper Legacy Fund
- Masson Family Fund
- Mertz-Gilmore Foundation
- Mother Cabrini Health Foundation
- New York Women's Foundation
- New York Community Trust
- Pinkerton Foundation
- Regenerational Roots Foundation
- Robin Hood Foundation
- Scarlet Feather Fund
- Sills Family Foundation
- South Wind Foundation
- Summerfield Foundation
- SupplyCaddy
- Trinity Church Wall Street
- Union Square Cafe - All In Event
- United Way of NYC
- Virtru

IN-KIND SUPPORTERS: Bret Halverson and Orrick





THANK YOU

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