

Annual Report



Dear ABFE Members and Supporters,

I am pleased to share ABFE's 2023 Annual Report with you and offer a few reflections as context about our work last year and moving forward.

ABFE is in a strong position. Facilitated by the success of our 50th-anniversary campaign, we have been able to deepen member engagement to channel resources towards strengthening Black-led and serving organizations and institutions. While the political climate's rife with division, attacks on equity and justice, and violence both within and outside of our borders, we remain focused and steadfast in our efforts to uphold our mission: to promote effective and responsive philanthropy in Black communities. Our strength is fueled by the close to three hundred new foundation and nonprofit sector leaders who joined ABFE in 2023, indicating our continued leadership and relevance in the field.

This report outlines several of our 2023 highlights as well as ABFE's impact and influence in the field. I encourage you to review this document and share your feedback on what resonates with you. Regardless of how we plan our annual work, ABFE is called to respond to current issues and events facing our community. 2023 was no different – the heightened attacks on democracy, racial equity, and justice, fueled by the gutting of Affirmative Action in the Spring of last year, required us to make space and time to organize the field. In partnership with others, we took leadership to design opportunities for the field to strategize and "scenario plan" about ways to navigate the hostile political environment. Most importantly, we fashioned a strategy for the field inclusive of building legal supports for racial justice grantees in

the face of possible lawsuits, a narrative campaign to legitimize racial equity work, and the creation of a knowledge center on strategies to navigate the hostile climate. This work will continue long into the coming years.

We are excited about member engagement to grow investments in Black communities within our new funder networks including the Black Communities Funder Network and the Corporate Community of Practice. We look forward to seeing you all at Harambee in St. Louis for stimulating programming, and we are excited to grow ABFE's Board of Directors by adding three new members this year. In 2024, we will also unveil new partnerships with members to increase investments in Black power-building and serving nonprofits and institutions. We will do this work as we navigate a tough election cycle, as well as continued efforts to dismantle diversity, equity, and justice. Closer to home, ABFE will continue to be a safe place for Black professionals in the field of philanthropy as the "world" happens around us. I encourage all of us to stay alert, informed, and grounded in the strength of those who have come before us. Wishing you peace and progress.

Susan Taylor Batten

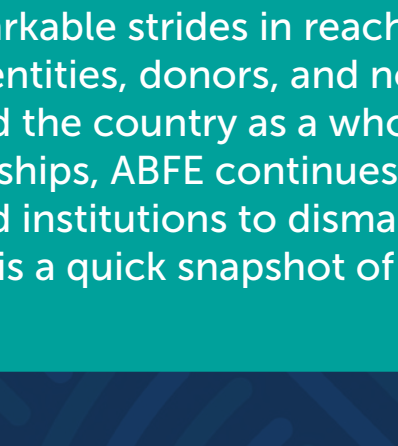
Susan Taylor Batten

ABFE Tribute

It is with deep sadness that we pay homage to our ABFE ancestors and continue to commit our work on the legacy in which they've paved.



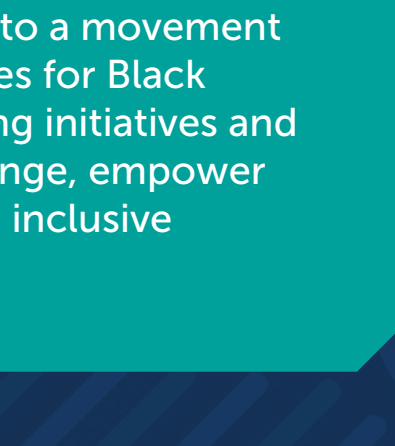
Ambassador James A. Joseph, an ABFE Founder rises from a segregated upbringing in Louisiana to a distinguished career, significantly impacted civil rights, U.S. foreign policy as Ambassador to South Africa, and the Council on Foundations. His legacy, marked by service across four U.S. presidencies, academia, and corporate social responsibility, continues to inspire through ABFE's James A. Joseph Lecture and Awards, celebrating and recognizing Black excellence in philanthropy.



Ira Hall, an ABFE Founder and pioneering corporate leader, as IBM's first Black corporate officer leaves a legacy of national service, racial justice, and diversity. From his civil rights activism to his transformative role at the Adkins Center, his enduring impact, felt in roles such as governor of the United States Postal Service and as a Stanford University trustee, inspires ABFE's continued dedication to diversity, equity, and impactful philanthropy.



Carrolle Perry Devonish, a former ABFE Board Member and James Joseph Lecture Award winner, leaves a profound legacy as the first Black woman director at the Philadelphia Foundation, where she significantly shaped community philanthropy. Her dedication to ABFE's mission, influential Perry phase, focused on fostering community partnerships through substantial grants, and her role as a mentor in the philanthropic community, will continue to inspire our commitment to philanthropy and community service.



Hugh C. Burroughs, a revered ABFE Member and former Board Chair, profoundly impacted Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) through his work at the John Hay Whitney Foundation, highlighting funding disparities and directing significant resources to Black higher education. His legacy, stretching from Columbia University to the Berry Gordy Family Foundation, is marked by his transformative contributions to community service and the development of organizations like the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

ABFE's Impactful Journey in 2023

ABFE made remarkable strides in reaching our vision of being central to a movement of grantmaking entities, donors, and nonprofits in improving outcomes for Black communities and the country as a whole. Through our groundbreaking initiatives and strategic partnerships, ABFE continues to catalyze transformative change, empower communities and institutions to dismantle systemic barriers and drive inclusive progress. Below is a quick snapshot of our major impact milestones:

Development of the Racial Equity Advancement and Defense Initiative (READI) in partnership with racial equity partners. READI reflects our dedication to dismantling systemic inequities and ensuring that our work remains at the forefront of driving meaningful change in the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors.

Release of "Philanthropy and HBCUs: Foundation Funding to Historically Black Colleges and Universities", done in partnership with Candid, catalyzed increased support from major foundations and drew attention from the White House and various international media outlets. We believe this report has helped to spark increased funding to many HBCUs since its release.

\$500K

Launch of our first regional funders collaborative strategy taking hold in regions including Missouri, which has spurred increased investment in local Black-led organizations. This effort has already resulted in over \$500K committed to supporting Black-led organizations in Missouri.

\$2B

Launch of the Corporate Community of Practice Network which brought together over 14 corporate foundations representing over \$2 billion in assets, dedicated to increasing capital to Black communities and addressing the impacts of anti-Blackness in corporate giving.

37

Expansion of the Sustainability Development Goals Curriculum empowered 37 philanthropic leaders across 7 community foundations, enhancing their competency in advancing racial equity using the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

“ I am so grateful for the opportunity to participate in the staff track of 2023 Cohort! The opportunities to learn, and engage alongside my peers across the country, far exceeded my expectations. I am eager to share what I learned with my colleagues and apply what I learned to make Greater Seattle a stronger, more vibrant community for all!
— CEDRIC DAVIS, SR PHILANTHROPIC ADVISOR, SEATTLE FOUNDATION PARTICIPANT IN C2-MOTT COHORT.

ABFE + Catchafire

Partnered with Catchafire to offer all of our Black-led nonprofit members free access to their web-based wrap-around services and skills-building support.

“ We are so grateful for the support that we have received from Catchafire. The first meeting we had when we joined ABFE described the benefits of Catchafire and immediately we thought it would help us out. We were able to connect with volunteers who we helped us further refine our mission, vision and values and who are helping us clarify our organizational structure. The folks we have partnered with have been very communicative and helpful. The experience has been incredibly rewarding, we will continue to ask for help from Catchafire volunteers and we would highly recommend Catchafire to any organization looking for support.
— JOSUE PERA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AFROLATIN@ FORUM

In 2020, we launched a strategic plan that centered on ABFE's commitment to promote effective and responsive philanthropy in Black communities. The following four strategic pillars are part of our \$25M campaign priorities. Here's a quick snapshot of the activities and initiatives that ABFE organized in 2024, as illustrated in our strategic framework.

Organize Collective Investments in Black-led Social Change to Build Political and Economic Power.

- In response to a pivotal 2023 Supreme Court decision to overturn Affirmative Action, **ABFE launched the Racial Equity Advancement and Defense Initiative (READI)**. This initiative includes the development of a resource bank, aimed to equip the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors with essential tools for navigating legal frameworks while passionately advocating for racial justice.
- ABFE also developed and launched its CHAMA initiative, featuring impactful collaborations that not only amplified funding for Black-led nonprofits but also systematically dismantled philanthropic barriers. CHAMA is ABFE's endeavor to build and strengthen funder collaboratives, expanding the flow of philanthropic dollars to Black-led organizations, while reducing silos, leveraging regional grantmaking dollars, and sustaining investments in high-impact nonprofits.
- Through collective investment in Black-led social change, ABFE continues to cultivate political and economic power, reshaping landscapes for a more just and equitable future.



Sustain and Expand Philanthropic Advising Services to Influence National and Local Funder Investment in Black-led Social Change.

13

ABFE and Allegany Franciscan Ministries' Racial Equity Non-Profit Leadership Program:
A program focused on integrating racial equity principles within 13 non-profit organizations in Florida.

31

Hosted 31 Workshops to 450 Clients:
Providing tools and expert consultants to help funders employ ABFE's Responsive Philanthropy in Black Communities Framework.

101

Conducted Quarterly Racial Equity Training 101 Workshops:
Exclusive to ABFE members, focusing on racial equity concepts and structural analysis.

Strengthen and Diversify ABFE's Membership.

In 2023, ABFE planned a series of impactful events aimed at strengthening and diversifying its membership base. **The Harambee Conference** provided a platform for leaders to convene and engage with ABFE's philanthropic imperatives and policy themes, fostering collaborative conversations crucial to the well-being of Black communities. Following the passing of Ambassador Joseph, the James A. Joseph Lecture and Award Ceremony continued its tradition of honoring luminaries highlighting their profound contributions to progressive philanthropy and underscoring ABFE's commitment to honoring Black excellence.

AWARDEES INCLUDED:
James A. Joseph Lecture: Dr. John H. Jackson, The Schott Foundation for Public Education
Institutional Award: Memphis Music Initiative (Amber Hamilton)
Emerging Leader: Matthew L. Evans, United Philanthropy Forum
Trailblazer Award: Sol Anderson, Evanston Community Foundation.

[Learn More](#)

Celebrating its 10th anniversary against the serene backdrop of St. Croix, **ABFE's Black Women in Philanthropy Annual Leadership Retreat** provided a transformative space for empowerment and connection among Black women leaders.

[Learn More](#)

“ I felt a lot of imposter syndrome and uncertainty about how to be my authentic self as I advance in my philanthropic career. I felt the burden of having my value and worth tied to my productivity. I do feel like I'm moving in the right direction toward liberation and healing.”
— JENNY WRIGHT, BLACK WOMEN IN PHILANTHROPY COMMUNITY HEALING SPACE ATTENDEE

ABFE's dedication to nurturing future leaders was evident as we welcomed 10 dynamic fellows into the 18th cohort of the **Connecting Leaders Fellowship Program**, consistently building a community of changemakers and ensuring a legacy of impactful leadership for years to come.

Webinars and Virtual Sessions

Each of these webinars present a unique perspective and contributes significantly to the discourse around justice reform, educational equity, and the future of philanthropy in Black communities.

- **"Advancing Justice in Jackson"**
This webinar focused on justice reform in Jackson, Mississippi and featured representatives from local organizations like People's Advocacy Group and Mississippi Poor People's Campaign. The discussion revolved around the current state of justice reform and the importance of strategic investments in Black-led organizing efforts.
[Learn More](#)
- **"Power and Possibility: Black Futurist Approaches to Philanthropic Impact"**
An extension of the Annual Harambee Conference session, "There are Black People in the Future," led by Trista Harris, this webinar focused on addressing Black disparities, exploring philanthropic trends, and strategizing for the future of philanthropy in Black communities. The session featured speakers like Pierce Freelon, Founder of BlackSpace, and David Patrick Bickham, Chief Strategist of Bickham Metafutures, discussing innovative approaches to philanthropy.
[Learn More](#)
- **"Philanthropy and HBCUs – A Closer Look at Who's Giving Black"**
Led by ABFE's President and CEO Susan Taylor Batten, this briefing explored the institutional giving gap for HBCUs. Contributions came from various experts highlighting challenges faced by Black institutions and the need for more philanthropic support and prioritization of HBCU giving.
[Learn More](#)

ABFE, presented its fifth panel series at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's Annual Legislative Conference. The panel, titled "The Scales of Economic Justice," delved into the collaboration needed for significant shifts in philanthropy, focusing on how funders can promote entrepreneurial opportunities and equitable resource access for Black businesses and organizations.

Member Growth

Welcomed 289 New Members

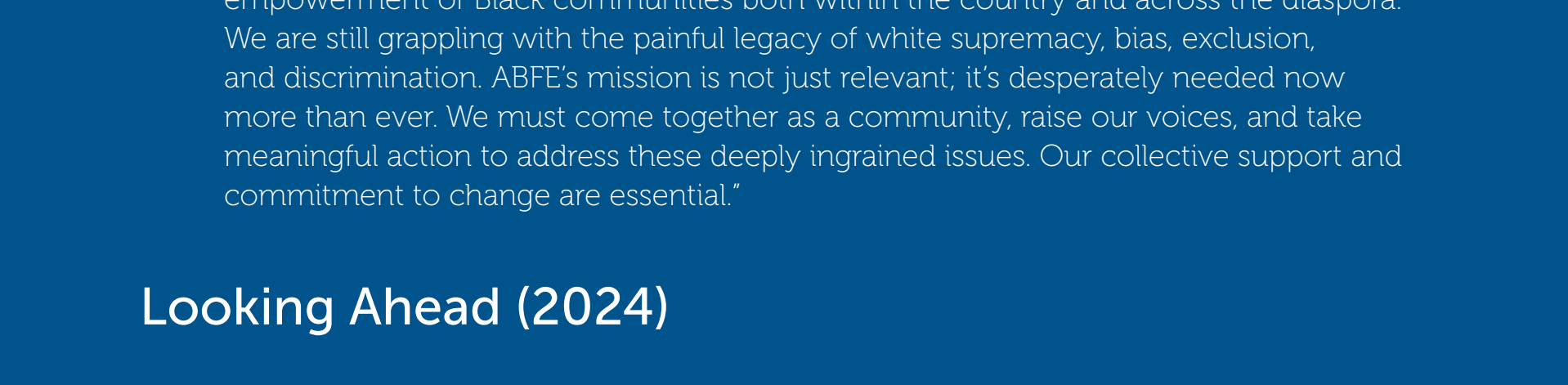
271 Member Renewals

Welcomed the First Institutional Member from Brazil

ABFE's Member Spotlight series, featured monthly on "Membership Mondays", provides a platform to highlight our members. Since 2020, this series has consistently increased the engagement of our membership community. This year, the spotlight featured the following members:

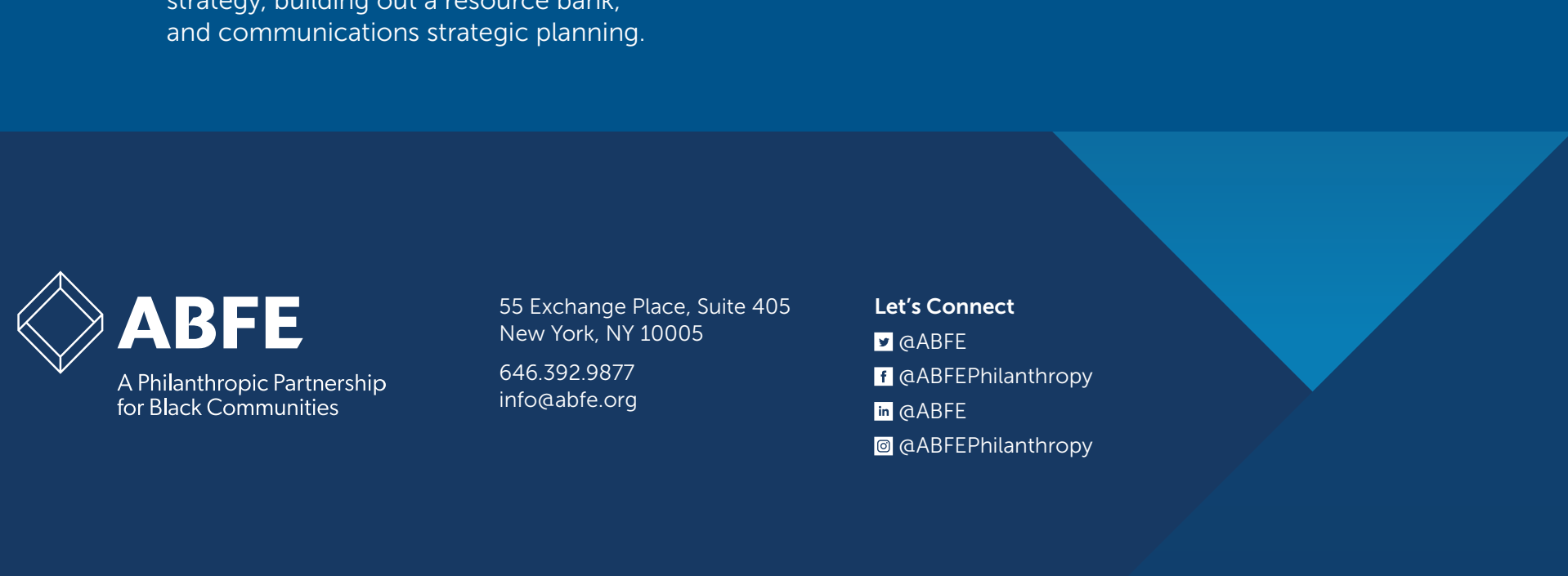
- Catchafire
- Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation
- Walmart Foundation
- JP Morgan Chase
- Fundación Comunitaria de Puerto Rico/Community Foundation of Puerto Rico
- Alterno ROOTS
- VidaAfrolatina

Thank you to our "In Solidarity Circle" members. These members have made donations above and beyond their membership fees.



ABFE Growth Fund to Support Infrastructure and Capacity.

In 2023, ABFE expanded its national footprint with staff positioned across several key states including California, New York, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Texas, Illinois, New Jersey, Florida, Maryland, DC, and North Carolina, enhancing its reach and impact. The expansion also led to ABFE strengthening staff infrastructure in critical areas such as Communications, Funder Networks, Finance, and Administration, with the addition of 7 new team members.



Susan Taylor Batten, ABFE President and CEO reflects on these milestones:

“ ABFE has stood at the forefront of change, advocating for justice, equity, and the empowerment of Black communities both within the country and across the diaspora. We are still grappling with the painful legacy of white supremacy, bias, exclusion, and discrimination. ABFE's mission is not just relevant, it's desperately needed now more than ever. We must come together as a community, raise our voices, and take meaningful action to address these deeply ingrained issues. Our collective support and commitment to change are essential.”

Looking Ahead (2024)

- Events**
- **Harambee 2024 Annual Conference**
St. Louis, MO
April 25th – 27th 2024
 - **11th Annual Black Women in Philanthropy Retreat**
August 2024
(Note, this event is member only)
 - **ABFE Gala**
 - **Connecting Leaders Fellowship Summit**
November 2024

- Engage**
- Continuing to engage with community foundations to address racially equitable practices and funding strategies while introducing the concept of Sustainable Development Goals.
 - **Public launch** of funder organizing efforts.
 - **Evolution of ABFE.org** – a major website re-design aimed at enhancing usability and engaging visitors, coupled with a member portal tailored to the evolving needs of our members and the sector.
 - **Umeja Circle Network** to launch an aligned funder strategy to support long-term sustainability of HBCUs.
 - **READI** – continued leadership on field strategy, building out a resource bank, and communications strategic planning.