

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

 Building Bridges, Inc.® 

YEAR 2023: IN REVIEW

1952 Youth Served	155 Hours Committed to our Mission
\$54,162 Corporate & Community Funding	68 Events Executed
\$14,590 Donations & Contributions	31 Partnerships

2023 IMPACT NUMBERS

EVENTS

23 Middle School centered	21 STEM Programs Executed	11 STEM Outreach
11 High School centered	9 Speaking Engagements	7 Career Panels
6 Community Outreach	5 College centered	1 Elementary centered

A LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

EQUIPPING MINDS, EMPOWERING LIVES

As we reflect on a very accomplished year at Building Bridges, Inc., I am filled with immense gratitude. I am proud to share the highlights of our journey over 2023 and express our heartfelt appreciation for your unwavering support.



Dear Friends and Supporters,

In the face of unprecedented challenges, we remained steadfast in our commitment to our mission to empower young girls by exposing them to STEM education and self-awareness strategies. Our team, board members, and passionate volunteers worked together to impact the lives of those we serve.

Throughout the year, we achieved numerous milestones that would not have been possible without your belief in our cause. Some of the key highlights include:

- Summer camps with middle and high school students at collegiate institutions
- New undergraduate student interns
- First successful back to school fundraiser

These achievements are a testament to the collective effort and unwavering dedication of our community partnerships. As we look ahead, we are filled with optimism and a renewed sense of purpose.

Thank you for being an integral part of the Building Bridges, Inc. family. Together, we are making a difference, and we invite you to continue this incredible journey with us.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Dr. Shy Brown

Founder, President, & CEO
Building Bridges, Inc.



OUR MISSION

WHY STEM EDUCATION?

The U.S. economy needs more girls and women pursuing STEM degrees and careers, not just because of this vast gender gap, but because innovation is intrinsically tied to diverse human experiences, and a diverse, STEM-trained workforce can be a significant asset to the world.

OUR VISION

Our goal is to be a part of the movement to radically change the gap in racial and gender diversity in STEM. We envision a future where young Black girls intrinsically believe they can be a part of the STEM field because they see examples of Black women in STEM all around them. We want to be a part of this future wave of Black women who feel propelled towards their purpose as empowered women in STEM.

WHY WAS BUILDING BRIDGES, INC. CREATED?

Building Bridges, Inc. was born out of a desire to empower young girls by exposing them to STEM education and self-awareness strategies. This equips them with the proper knowledge and self-confidence to pursue what they are passionate about in the world of STEM and beyond. We believe that it is important to fill in the gaps by “building bridges” that will empower young girls to embrace the endless possibilities.

OUR CORE VALUES

EXPOSE young Black girls to a STEM education and STEM professionals

EQUIP young Black girls with the skills needed to pursue their passion for STEM and beyond

EMPOWER young Black girls through self-awareness to pursue STEM with confidence



NEW

PARTNERSHIPS

New Partnerships with Minority Girl Organizations: Girls Inc of Chicago & Lara Academy Pink Panthers



We solidified new partnerships with minority-serving (Black and Hispanic) girl organizations. Our new partnerships with Girls Inc. of Chicago and Lara Academy Pink Panthers have broadened our reach with low-income communities with minimum access to STEM hands-on experiments and exposure to STEM career opportunities. Through Girls Inc. of Chicago, we've been able to execute our STEM programs and spread positive self-affirmations at school functions and corporate office field trips. With Lara Academy Pink Panthers, our monthly after-school interactions have fostered building relationships with the girls and their adult staff through our hands-on STEM activities, positive self-affirmations, and corporate volunteers.



NEW

PARTNERSHIPS

Corporate Exposure Field Trip: Vital Proteins



Collaborations are essential to spreading awareness and increasing exposure. Our partnership with Vital Proteins and Girls Inc. of Chicago did just that! This collaboration opportunity provided exposure to STEM careers in food science and product development. With skin being the main focus, we presented our "Love the Skin You're In" STEM program where girls learned about the biology of skin, the importance of skincare, and created sugar scrubs. Vital Proteins talked about the importance of collagen, showcased their products, and scientists shared their career paths in food science. Girls even had the chance to be innovative by creating a personalized collagen lemonade drink.



NEW

PARTNERSHIPS

Summer Camps at Chicago State University (High School) & Harper College (Middle School)



Building Bridges, Inc. partnered with Chicago State University Upward Bound (CSU) and Harper College (HC) InZone to deliver two STEM-based summer camps where students were exposed to experiments and concepts relating to biology, chemistry, food science, and circuit engineering. STEM camps with CSU Upward Bound occurred in July 2023 with high school students on the campus of CSU. Eighteen students in grades 9th and 10th met twice a week (six days total) for 1 hour sessions. STEM camps at HC Inzone occurred in August 2023 with predominantly middle school students on the campus of HC. Fifteen students in grades 4th-9th met for one week (five days total) for 3-hour sessions.



NEW

PARTNERSHIPS

Welcoming Undergraduate Interns through our NEW Partnership with the University of Chicago



**MEET OUR
SUMMER INTERN**

Hello everyone! My name is Valeria Guadalupe Guerrero and I am currently a third year at the University of Chicago. I am a Mexican-American originally from Texas. As a young girl growing up in stem, I am thankful to have had the support of many women who nurtured my continued interest in the field, something I would now like to carry on through Building Bridges! In my free time, I also enjoy jogging and catching up with the Marvel Universe!



VALERIA GUERRERO
INTERN

BuildingBridges®



**MEET OUR
NEW INTERN**
Yulissa Luna

Yulissa's early passion for science blossomed at the University of Chicago, where she majored in Chemistry, aiming for a medical career. Her inspiring dedication to making a positive impact drives her forward!

Thanks to exceptional programs in her middle and high school years, she found success as a woman in STEM. Now, through Building Bridges, she's empowering young girls to pursue their dreams in their chosen fields

Building Bridges, Inc.®

We crossed a huge milestone for Building Bridges, Inc. as we welcomed summer interns. This was made possible through our partnership with the University of Chicago and the Odyssey Career Program. Building Bridges, Inc. has joined a global community of employer partners to receive customized recruiting support and benefit from UChicago undergraduate talent. The internship scholars we select are part of the Jeff Metcalf Internship Program. We welcomed aboard two rising juniors: Yulissa Luna and Valeria Guerrero. These phenomenal young ladies decided to continue their internships with Building Bridges, Inc. throughout the Fall and Winter quarters.



BUILDING BRIDGES, INC. SHOWCASING

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AT DISCOVER BMB CONFERENCE

Community Partnership Can Drive Continuous STEM Exposure for Female-Identifying and Non-Binary Youth

Shyretha Brown¹, Jacklyn Carmichael², Margy LaFreniere², Aaron Price², TaAqua Campbell¹

¹Building Bridges, Inc., Nashville, TN and Chicago, IL

²Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago, IL



BuildingBridges[®]

BACKGROUND

- The most engaging science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) outreach events are often those that are planned, integrated, and executed by community partners and stakeholders.
- When creating STEM outreach opportunities for middle school youth organizations, it is necessary to showcase STEM skills that translate to real careers all while providing a STEM experience with a STEM professional.
- The Museum of Science and Industry (MSI), Chicago is one of the largest science museums in the world and home to more than 400,000 square feet of hands-on exhibits designed to spark scientific inquiry and creativity.
- Building Bridges, Inc., a non-profit organization (EIN: 82-5445077), was born out of a desire to empower young Black girls by exposing them to STEM education and self-awareness strategies.
- Both STEM-based organizations partnered together to deliver the 1st Annual Youth Summit at MSI on Saturday, October 8th for middle school female-identifying and non-binary youth.

PURPOSE

- This conference-style event was curated to engage middle school-aged youth in interactive, hands-on activities centered around subjects such as nature-based science, gaming, and health & wellness with STEM professionals.

METHODS

- Building Bridges, Inc. led five sessions titled "Love the Skin You're In"
- Youth were exposed to the biology of skin, skin structure, importance of skin care, and innovation by making their very own sugar scrub to take home.
- Youth were exposed to career paths and self-affirmations.
- Surveys were conducted after each session.

MATERIALS

Figure 1. Session Content



Figure 2. Youth Participating During Session

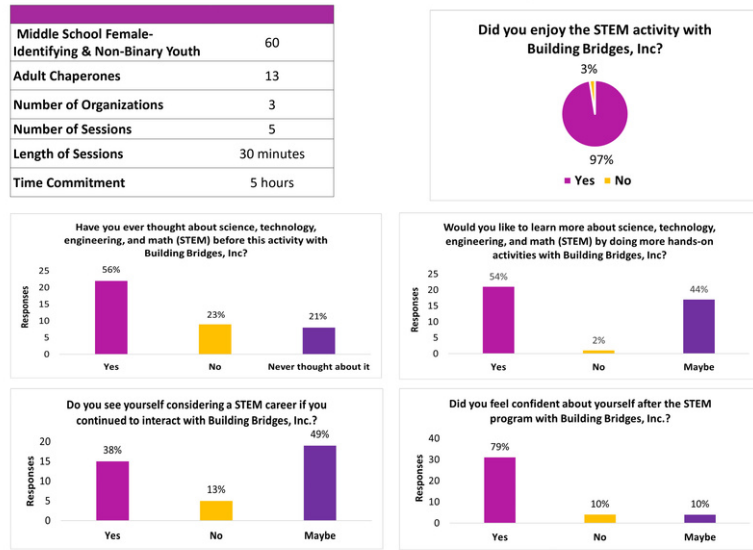


RESULTS

Table 1. Conference Details

Middle School Female-Identifying & Non-Binary Youth	60
Adult Chaperones	13
Number of Organizations	3
Number of Sessions	5
Length of Sessions	30 minutes
Time Commitment	5 hours

Figures 3-7. Survey Feedback



CONCLUSIONS

- 65% survey feedback was received from youth.
- 44% had never thought about STEM, and 98% are open to learning more about STEM by doing more hands-on activities.
- 86% could see themselves considering a career in STEM.
- Middle school female-identifying and non-binary youth may benefit from continuous exposure to STEM activities and professionals through organized STEM outreach events from community partners and stakeholders.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

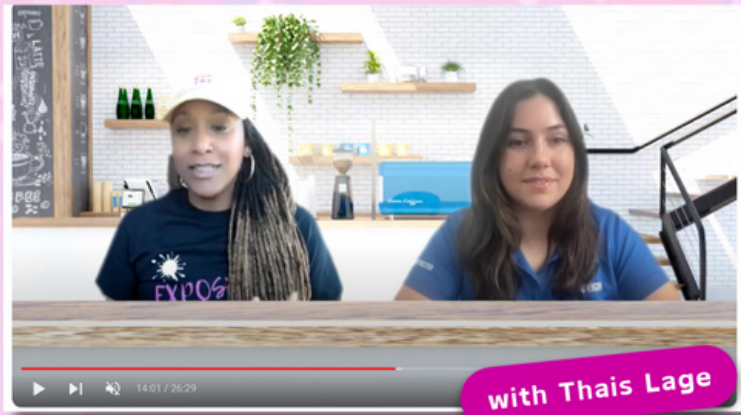
All materials were funded by Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago. The views expressed in this abstract are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Museum of Science and Industry and Building Bridges, Inc.



Since 2022, our team has put in the effort to broaden our reach through conference presentations to showcase our science community outreach. We presented our community partnership efforts at the Discover BMB Poster Session on March 28, 2023. Discover BMB is the annual meeting of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology that brings together researchers in academia and industry, educators, trainees, and students from across the globe. Our Founder/President, Dr. Shy, presented the poster titled "Community Partnership Can Drive Continuous STEM Exposure for Female-Identifying and Non-Binary Youth". This poster was a collaborative effort with the Museum of Science and Industry (Chicago). To view poster, go to visit www.iambbinc.com/our-reach.

BROADENING OUR REACH

Launching of our YouTube Channel with the EXPOSE Live Series



Our core values are EXPOSE, EQUIP, and EMPOWER. In order to provide continuous exposure for youth, we created a platform to provide continuous exposure from various STEM professionals called the “EXPOSE Live Series” YouTube channel. The intention of this platform was to provide 1) exposure for youth to learn about various STEM careers from diverse STEM professionals and 2) exposure for BIPOC men and women to showcase their significant contributions in STEM. Kicking off the series in April, each month we featured a BIPOC woman STEM professional to share her experience growing up and how she uses her STEM degree. We ended the year with 8 episodes. Go to our [YouTube channel](#) to view past episodes.



BROADENING OUR REACH

South Side Girls Explore Science Careers Museum Of Science And Industry's We Run STEM Event



Over 80 girls from youth organizations across the South side of Chicago participated in STEM challenges to build their STEM efficacy and grow their STEM confidence. For our STEM challenge, girls were immersed in a cosmetic chemistry lab where they were able to create and design products such as sugar scrubs, hair conditioners, and lip glosses. Girls even learned the chemical properties and purpose of ingredients with an interactive ingredient detective game. At the end of the day, girls experienced a self-affirmation immersive space which allowed them to reflect on their confidence by crafting vision boards, designing affirmation mirrors, and expressing themselves with photos and props. This partnership was made possible with the Museum of Science and Industry, Building Bridges, Inc., PepsiCo, NeuroMaker, Code Your Dreams, and Current. View [online article](#) for more details.



FUNDRAISING & FINANCIALS

Starting Payroll and Hiring Part-Time Board Members



Building Bridges, Inc.[®]

WE'RE HIRING!

SECRETARY

JOB DESCRIPTION

The Secretary provides pivotal support to our executive leadership, mainly the President and Vice President, and plays a crucial part in the smooth running of Building Bridges, Inc by assisting with organizational operations and team management.

This position requires 5-7 hours of weekly commitment. This is an excellent opportunity for someone passionate and enthusiastic about non-profit work and enhancing their professional and leadership skills.

PAY: \$15/HOUR
JOB TYPE: PART- TIME

Apply at Indeed:
<https://tinyurl.com/yyj459cp>

DEADLINE OF APPLICATION: OCT 13, 2023



Building Bridges, Inc.[®]

WE'RE HIRING!

TREASURER

JOB DESCRIPTION

The Treasurer at Building Bridges, Inc. is a key financial role responsible for creating and overseeing budgets, submitting and approving expenditures, and ensuring accurate and transparent financial reporting. This part-time position works closely with executive leadership and board members to uphold the organization's financial integrity.

The ideal candidate will have a strong background in accounting or finance, be skilled in QuickBooks and Microsoft Office, and be able to manage multiple tasks effectively. This role is integral to the organization's success and is perfect for someone proactive and has excellent organizational skills.

PAY: \$15/HOUR
JOB TYPE: PART- TIME

Apply at Indeed:
<https://tinyurl.com/bdhd3vxv>

DEADLINE OF APPLICATION: OCT 13, 2023



Meet our NEW Team Members

Meet our New TEAM MEMBERS



**MARGARET
BOYD**

Margaret is a graduate from Fisk University and Mitchell/Hamline School of Law alumna, brings a wealth of experience from the Chicago Mayor's Office and Cook County State's Attorney's Office.



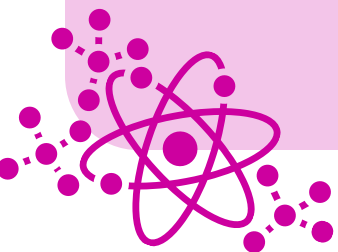
**GERALDINE
SMRCINA**

Gerie, a Chicago native and CPA with degrees from the University of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Phoenix, is deeply involved in philanthropy across multiple countries.

OUR FIRST SUCCESSFUL BACK TO SCHOOL FUNDRAISER



With the support of 15 donors and donations from Target, Blue Origin Club for the Future, and Bolt Printing, we raised \$1473 in funds and supplies to produce 135 drawstring bags to support students in 3 Chicagoland communities. Students in Englewood, Roseland, and Wheaton communities received folders, notebooks, pencils, pens, highlighters, pencil pouches, pencil sharpeners, granola bars, fruit snacks, and much more! We have so much appreciation for the unwavering support of our donors and partners for helping to bring this much-needed initiative to the lives of many students to help start a brand new school year in 2023.



YOY ACTUALS

VS BUDGET

	2022 ACTUAL	2023 ACTUAL
INCOME		
Individual Donations	\$784	\$13,990
Grants/Institutional Gifts	\$0	\$0
Government Contracts & Grants	\$0	\$0
In-kind Donations	\$0	(\$150.00)
Corporate Sponsorships	\$0	\$42,000
Board Dues	\$900	\$600
Program Fees	\$1,945	\$12,162
Special Events	\$0	\$0
Earned Income (Merchandise, Royalties, Etc.)	\$0	\$0
Other (list)	\$0	\$0
Total:	\$3,629	\$68,602

YOY ACTUALS VS BUDGET

	2022 ACTUAL	2023 ACTUAL
EXPENSE		
Accounting / Bookkeeping	\$0.00	\$6,089.89
Advertising & Marketing	\$350.38	(\$28.00)
Celebraton / Team Events	\$0.00	\$300.00
Conference Registration	\$0.00	\$15.00
Fundraising Expenses	\$0.00	\$917.16
Insurance	\$0.00	\$0.00
Legal Fees	\$0.00	\$334.00
Postage	\$0.00	\$251.82
Printing	\$0.00	\$169.44
Bank / Merchant Fees	\$33.65	\$145.24
Supplies and Program Materials	\$4,232.90	\$11,155.31
Storage Rent	\$0.00	\$0.00
Employee Salaries & Taxes	\$0.00	\$10,102.84
Office Supplies & Software	\$264.00	\$960.08
Tax	\$0.00	\$0.00
Telephone	\$0.00	\$0.00
Travel	\$841.79	\$1,821.17
Lodging	\$0.00	\$3,003.42
Licensing Fees	\$0.00	\$0.00
Meals	\$0.00	\$767.39
Professional Fees (Explain If Any)	\$0.00	\$0.00
Legislation Influence	\$0.00	\$0.00
Training	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other (Explain If Any)	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total:	\$5,722.72	\$36,004.76
(Deficit)/Surplus	(\$2,093.72)	\$32,597.24