



# 2020-2021 Annual Report

James Guinn Entrepreneurial Campus  
Fort Worth Business Assistance Center

FORT WORTH®  




## *A Message from the Director*

As the impacts of COVID-19 have continued to resonate across the business community, the past year has been one of repositioning and recovery for the James Guinn Entrepreneurial Campus.

From pivoting in-person programs to online events, to providing grants to help keep many of Fort Worth's small businesses afloat throughout the worst of the pandemic, Fiscal Year 2021 has been all about meeting our small business owners where they are – both metaphorically and through online engagement – and helping them navigate a constantly-changing environment.

Many stories have come out of the pandemic – many losses and challenges, but also quite a few successes. One of our most notable accomplishments during the pandemic was the Preserve the Fort grant program, and this year saw the City of Fort Worth build on its success in 2020 with a second round of grant funding that concluded in October. Together, both phases of Preserve the Fort provided a total of \$54.9 million to 1,640 small businesses in Fort Worth, helping blunt the financial impacts of the pandemic and preserving the livelihoods of business owners, their employees, and the larger business landscape of the city.

While this project was led by the City of Fort Worth's Economic Development Department, the strength of our partnerships with United Way of Tarrant County, North Texas Tarrant Small Business Development Center, the Fort Worth Chamber, the Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce, the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Fort Worth Now were a major contributor to the success of this initiative. More information about those results are included within this report.

Additionally, the collaborative efforts of everyone at the James Guinn Entrepreneurial Campus were critical in allowing us to respond to the ever-changing environment in which we found ourselves and our small businesses. As a result of the pandemic, small businesses were reaching out for guidance more than ever before. Classes moved online – offering more opportunities and better access than ever – and everyone's programming had to evolve to address the current climate, needs and concerns of our business community.

It has been a challenging time. But the City of Fort Worth's Economic Development department and its Guinn Campus partners will continue to address and support the needs of small businesses going forward, as the economic recovery continues.



**Robert Sturns**  
Director, Economic Development Department  
City of Fort Worth

## ***Vision Statement***

To compete successfully on the national and international stage for creative, high-growth businesses and the talented individuals who fuel them.

## ***Business Assistance Center (BAC) Services***

- **ACCESS:** Get access to valuable startup and business growth resources at the James E. Guinn Entrepreneurial Campus and the City of Fort Worth Economic Development Department.
- **COUNSELING:** Get face time with a wide variety of business development counselors. Dig deep into your business plan and business operations.
- **EDUCATION:** The Guinn Campus is focused on your success. We have cutting-edge, topical events that give you what you need to succeed.
- **NETWORKING:** The Guinn Campus attracts passionate, driven entrepreneurs. Create partnerships and relationships that will last a lifetime.
- **WORKSHOPS:** Go from idea, to startup, to success by attending workshops that cover business plans, finance, and marketing.

## James E. Guinn Entrepreneurial Campus Partners

The BAC does not stand alone with the mission of supporting entrepreneurs and growing businesses. The BAC is located on the Guinn Campus, which is a one-stop shop for entrepreneurs and small business owners. The BAC's partner entrepreneur support organizations located in the Guinn Campus include:



### Accelerate DFW Foundation

A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization formed in 1999 to create and implement programs and services that would significantly impact economic growth in Fort Worth. Helping entrepreneurs and advocating for the importance of entrepreneurship in our community has been, and continues to be, Accelerate DFW's key focus.



### Alliance Lending Corporation

A provider of long-term, fixed rate financing for growing businesses. As a non-profit, Certified Development Company (CDC) they are authorized by the U.S. Small Business Administration to partner with private lenders in a co-lending product.



### Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce

Its mission is to promote, assist and enhance economic and business development for its members and to create wealth in the communities it serves.



### PeopleFund

PeopleFund creates economic opportunity and financial stability for underserved people by providing access to capital, education and resources to build healthy small businesses.



### Regional Hispanic Contractors Association

The Regional Hispanic Contractors Association seeks to promote and support the advancement and economic growth of Hispanic contractors in Texas. They are committed to developing programs and facilitating the resources needed to help Hispanic contractors reach their potential.



### SCORE Fort Worth Chapter

Provides free and confidential one-on-one business consulting for interested individuals. They have volunteer counselors with



experience and expertise that can help you grow your current business or pursue your dreams of business ownership.



**Southeast Fort Worth, Inc.**

SEFWI's economic development mission has been refocused by clearly defining their geographic interests and industry targets; influencing outcomes in public policy to keep sound business policies at the forefront; zeroing in on public education reform, which improves workforce; taking up the area's mantle to help resolve regional issues; and moving interaction with their member investors to a higher level.



**Tarrant Small Business Development Center**

A professional management counseling service funded by Tarrant County College, the State of Texas, and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), with a mission to accelerate the North Texas economy by helping entrepreneurs grow sustainable businesses.



**TECH Fort Worth**

A technology business incubator that encourages the development of the technology business community in Fort Worth by helping entrepreneurs commercialize innovative technologies.



**William Mann Jr. Community Development Corporation**

William Mann Jr. furthers economic development by promoting and assisting in the growth of small businesses in the DFW Metroplex, providing technical assistance and loans to small businesses that might not otherwise be able to obtain funding from traditional lending institutions.

# FORT WORTH BUSINESS ASSISTANCE CENTER ECONOMIC IMPACT: FY 2021

**184** JOBS  
CREATED

**2,903** JOBS  
RETAINED

**34** BUSINESSES  
STARTED

**\$21,924,528**  
OF CAPITAL INFUSION  
TO CLIENTS

**12,497**  
HOURS OF CLIENT COACHING

*Economic impact is calculated based on an aggregate of BAC partners looking at direct and indirect forms of impact.*

*The “capital infusion” information does not include the additional economic impact of this year’s Preserve the Fort grants to small businesses.*

## Performance Measures

The effectiveness of the City of Fort Worth's Office of Small Business, as a division of the Economic Development Department that oversees the activity of the Fort Worth Business Assistance Center, is measured by the reach of BAC education efforts and the ability of those efforts to help create businesses and jobs within the local economy.

**Total Clients Assisted and/or Counseled: 12,497**

*\* Information reported quarterly. Data as of June 30, 2021.*

## FY21 Workshops Offered

There were over 536 workshops offered on the Guinn Campus during the past year.

The workshops were all held virtually by the James Guinn Campus partners, including SCORE, Tarrant Small Business Development Center, the Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce, PeopleFund and Tech Fort Worth. These topical sessions were valuable for all businesses at all levels. Offered multiple times during the year, the topics included the following:

<i>10 Big Franchise Mistakes to Avoid</i>	<i>Creating Your First Facebook Ad</i>
<i>5 Key Actions to Growing Your Sales</i>	<i>Credit Scores and Reports</i>
<i>6 Steps to a Better Business</i>	<i>Crisis Communication</i>
<i>Access to Capital</i>	<i>Cybersecurity</i>
<i>After the Pandemic: How to Buy and Sell a Business</i>	<i>Demystifying SEO (to Get More Visitors to Your Website)</i>
<i>All the Legal Questions You Always Wanted to Ask</i>	<i>Digital Marketing</i>
<i>Angel Interviews</i>	<i>Digital Marketing and Branding</i>
<i>Battling Remote Work Challenges with HR Strategy</i>	<i>eCommerce Beginners Workshop</i>
<i>Big Picture, Visual Language &amp; Problem Validation</i>	<i>Employee Lifecycle: Interviewing, Hiring, and What Comes Next</i>
<i>Brand Creation</i>	<i>Employment Law and Regulations</i>
<i>Brand Story (The Foundation)</i>	<i>Entrepreneurial Journey of a Doctor during COVID</i>
<i>Branding Bootcamp</i>	<i>Entrepreneurial Mindset</i>
<i>Branding: Guiding Principles (Step 3)</i>	<i>EPiCMavs Celebration + Networking</i>
<i>Building a Trusted Brand</i>	<i>Equity Cultures; Finding the RIGHT Investors</i>
<i>Building Bridges of Trust</i>	<i>Everything You Need to Know About Google My Business</i>
<i>Building Your Brand – A Brand New You</i>	<i>Federal Contracting 101</i>
<i>Building Your Circle of Trust</i>	<i>Federal HUBZone Overview</i>
<i>Business Basics for Business Owners</i>	<i>Financial Forecasting &amp; Storyboarding</i>
<i>Business Model Canvas &amp; Pitch Introduction</i>	<i>Financial Statement Analysis: A Banker's Perspective</i>
<i>Business Plan Part 1: It's All About the Customer</i>	<i>Financiamiento Para Pequeñas Empresas</i>
<i>Business Plan Part 2: Building the Financial Plan</i>	<i>Financing Your Small Business – What You Need to Know</i>
<i>Business Planning</i>	<i>Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce Annual Luncheon</i>
<i>Canvas Continued &amp; Competitive Edge</i>	<i>Fort Worth: The Land of Startup Opportunities</i>
<i>Challenging Assumptions</i>	<i>Founder's Lunch</i>
<i>Communicating with Confidence in a Virtual World</i>	<i>Four Digital Marketing Strategies That Improve Your Google Ranking</i>
<i>Confident Conversations in Turbulent Times: How to Create Relationship ROI</i>	<i>From Selling Rabbits &amp; Rocks to Telehealth</i>
<i>Connect with Your Customers by Telling Your Story: 2 Part Series</i>	<i>Funding Panel</i>
<i>Connecting in a Digital World</i>	<i>Funding Your Business with a Home Equity Line of Credit</i>
<i>Contract Basics for Business Owners</i>	<i>Funding Your Tech-Based Start Up</i>
<i>COVID-19 with Fort Worth Neighborhood Services</i>	<i>Getting Started with Google Analytics</i>
<i>Create a Pitch for Funding Your Tech-Based Start Up</i>	<i>Getting to know the Opportunity with Drones</i>



Create the Best Digital Marketing Strategy  
 Global Business Online for Entrepreneurs  
 Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW)  
 Going into Business with Your Family and Friends  
 Grant Writing 101  
 Hiring for Peak Performance  
 How Businesses Obtain Credit  
 How Businesses Use Credit  
 How Small Businesses Obtain and Use Credit  
 How to Buy and Sell a Business  
 How to Complete an RFP & RFQ  
 How to Create Your Capability Statement  
 How to Form an LLC or Corporation in One Day  
 How to Minimize the Risk When Taking the Leap  
 How to Navigate Medicare  
 How to Network  
 How to Start a Nonprofit Organization  
 How to Start a Trucking Business and Grow it to Success  
 How to Write a Focused Business Plan  
 In This Time of Crisis, Now is the Time for Food Trucks, Trailers and Carts  
 Instagram Strategies to Grow Your Business  
 Intellectual Property: Copyright, Patents and Trademarks  
 Interview with Elyse  
 Kickoff – Goal Setting Workshop  
 Kickoff, Entrepreneurial Mindset  
 La Ley y Su Negocio  
 Landing High-Value Clients  
 Launch Your Social Media: Facebook and Instagram  
 Learn the Basics of Google Ads  
 Learn the Ins and Outs of Crowdfunding  
 Let's Get Connected Monthly Virtual Mixer  
 Leverage Contacts & Perfect your Follow-Up  
 Make Your Website Work for You  
 Making a Deal! Mergers & Acquisitions  
 Marketing Analytics Toolbox  
 Marketing of Your Business  
 Marketing Planning for Start-Ups and Small Businesses  
 Mastering Your Social Media Schedule  
 More Google Analytics: Goals and Reports  
 Nielsen Ratings: The Power of The Black Community from Moment to Moment  
 Outsourcing Accounting  
 Path to Market & Go-To-Market Plan  
 Personnel Protection Program with Tarrant SBDC  
 Pitch & Presentations  
 Pitch Deck Protocol

Givers Gain, Building an Effective Networking Strategy  
 Powerhouse Entrepreneur, Mentor, Connector Goes Unscripted  
 PPP Loan Program and Forgiveness  
 Practice Sessions  
 Presenting Yourself + Your Business  
 Pricing Strategy Coming Out of the Pandemic  
 Prototyping to Prove Your Product  
 QuickBooks Online Version: 2 Day Event  
 R&D Tax Credit  
 Rejection, with Feedback, Changes Everything  
 Sales Training – Get Fired Up  
 SBA Guaranteed Bonding  
 Selling on Amazon  
 Selling on Instagram  
 Should I Outsource My Marketing Function (and if so how)?  
 Should You Start a Business Now?  
 Simple Steps to Starting Your Business  
 Social Media Campaigns Made Easy  
 Social Media Marketing  
 Social Media School  
 Starting a Business and Asset Protection  
 Starting Your Business? What you should do before writing your Business Plan  
 Startup Weekend - International Conversations  
 Stress Management/ Workplace Wellbeing  
 Switching Gears from Employee to Entrepreneur  
 Tax Changes with COVID-19 Relief Updates  
 Taxes for Your Small Business  
 Taxes: PPP Forgiveness and Using Business Loans  
 The 60-Minute Website  
 The Good, the Bad + the Messy: Stories of Success and Failure  
 The Next Level Entrepreneurship School  
 The Secrets to Buying a Franchise  
 ThinkLab  
 Time Management/ Productivity  
 Unemployment benefits with Tarrant Workforce Solutions  
 Unleashing Your Sales Superpowers: How to Create Buyer Attraction  
 Use YouTube to Grow Your Business  
 Using LinkedIn  
 Using Project Management Techniques and Tools  
 Utilizing TikTok for Entrepreneurship  
 Value Proposition & Customer Development: Finding Product-Market Fit  
 What Business Structure is Right for You? Startup and Franchising Workshop  
 Women & Wealth  
 Women-Owned Small Business Certification Workshop

## *The 2020 Business Plan Competition Goes Virtual*

Like many programs during the pandemic, the Fort Worth Business Plan pivoted online during 2020 by partnering with Frost Bank's Business Building Series program.

Twenty-five participants from a variety of industries – hospitality, education, restaurant, retail, tech, health, marketing, bookkeeping, auto sales, and photography – completed four virtual training sessions held during September and October 2020. The finale was also held virtually as part of Global Entrepreneurship Week.

The 2020 winners were Urban Tree Merchants, a woodworking company and furniture designer that specializes in items using trees from the local community as part of their “tree to table” approach. The runner up was Hotel Texas, a budget hotel located in the Fort Worth Stockyards that celebrates the area's Western history. Third prize went to Juju Knits, a yarn store that also serves as a community gathering place for local knitting and crocheting enthusiasts.

**Urban Tree Merchants** won a prize package valued at \$19,200, which included \$7,000 in cash, a one-year membership to The Alternative Board of Fort Worth, and three hours of professional mentoring from Solomon Bruce Consulting.

**Hotel Texas** received the runner-up prize package valued at \$8,800, which included \$5,000 in cash, Tri-Metrix DNA professional assessments from The Alternative Board of Fort Worth, and two hours of professional mentoring from Solomon Bruce Consulting.

The third-place winner, **Juju Knits**, received a prize package valued at \$6,600 which included \$3,000 in cash, Tri-Metrix DNA professional assessments from The Alternative Board of Fort Worth, and an hour and a half of professional mentoring from Solomon Bruce Consulting.

## *Strategic Plan Initiatives*

The City of Fort Worth published its first **Economic Development Strategic Plan** in December 2017, with the goal of identifying strategies to help Fort Worth become a hub for creative businesses, and identifying opportunities to enhance the city's status in the region and the nation over the next five years and beyond.

As a follow up, the City of Fort Worth also completed a **Small Business & Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Assessment & Strategy** in partnership with Camoin Associates and Entrenworks. This report, released in December 2019, pointed out that while Fort Worth's entrepreneurial ecosystem ranking is quite high when compared to the nation's leading metropolitan areas, the local community wants to see greater connectivity and inclusivity among Fort Worth's ecosystem assets. Additional recommendations made as part of this assessment include the following, along with numerous sub-recommendations:

- Enhancing support for Minority Entrepreneurship
- Encouraging Veteran Entrepreneurship
- Introducing programming for Youth Entrepreneurship
- Opening the door wider to businesses

- Connecting and communicating around Fort Worth’s entrepreneurial ecosystem, both internally and externally

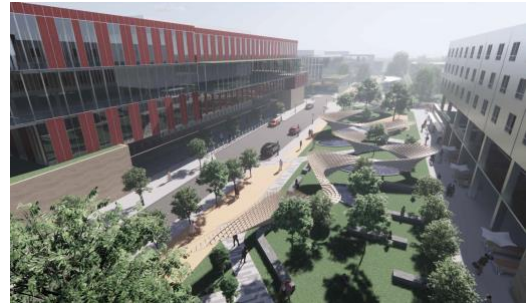
This report includes suggested metrics as well as benchmarking of Fort Worth against ten top U.S. startup communities. Implementation of the recommendations had been delayed due to COVID-19.

Over the past year, the Fort Worth Local Development Corporation (FWLDC) committed \$1 million in funds to support organizations and programs that addressed these recommendations. A Request for Proposal (RFP) will be issued in order to support these efforts.

**Lastly, in light of the global pandemic, the City of Fort Worth has contracted with our partner in producing the original Economic Development Strategic Plan, TIP Strategies, to complete a plan refresh to determine whether any of the recommendations provided in the original plan – including metrics, target industries and objectives – should be revised. This plan refresh should be complete by early FY22.**

## *iter8 Health Innovation Community*

Fort Worth’s growing medical industry is joining forces with its local entrepreneur community to explore new and exciting frontiers in the medical and biotech industries – all in a location that will provide top talent with a variety of places to live, work, play and collaborate on new health advancements.



The **iter8 Health Innovation Community** is on target to become the most livable innovation district in the nation, addressing the health needs of the community while also serving as a center for innovation, discovery and creativity.

The district, which is located in Fort Worth’s Near Southside, is also a key element to making the city a hub for innovative businesses – one of the goals of the City of Fort Worth’s Economic Development Strategic Plan.

**Following the lead consultant’s visit in January 2020, and subsequent recommendations in February 2020, many of the partners turned their attention to COVID-19 response and recovery.**

However, a partnership with the Urban Land Institute (ULI) mTAP program resulted in a proposal for a Med-Tech facility and Innovation Park located in the Near Southside. Discussions continue about how to make that a reality, along with moving forward with other key initiatives associated with the effort.



## Revitalization Strategy Finalized

A Revitalization Strategy was finalized in 2021 to focus on areas of the community that have historically lacked private sector investment. A key component of the strategy is supporting the local businesses and entrepreneurs currently in the targeted neighborhoods, while encouraging additional investment to support and grow the ecosystem.

To further support the effort, the FWLDC established a \$7 million fund to bolster those community investments, with infill and incremental development opportunities being the focus of this program. Additional programs are under development and should be implemented in FY22.

## COVID-19 Initiatives



**PRESERVE THE FORT**  
SMALL BUSINESS GRANTS

The past year has seen Fort Worth's business community continue to recover from the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. As stated in last year's annual report, a big part of that recovery on a local level involved the Preserve the Fort grants, which distributed a portion of the City of Fort Worth's CARES Act funding back into the community in the form of small business grants.

**The first phase of Preserve the Fort grants, which launched in May 2020, provided \$6,157,500 in grant funding to 831 local small businesses.** Almost 95% of applying businesses (94.77%) had less than 10 employees – 71.80% of applicants had less than 5 employees. Additionally, the effort was successful in supporting minority-owned businesses and those businesses located in the city's targeted investment areas.

As the pandemic continued, the city's Economic Development Department once again joined forces with our partners at United Way of Tarrant County, Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the North Texas Tarrant Small Business Development Center to launch a second round of grants in September 2020, building upon the initial effort with another \$9 million in CARES Act funding.

The second phase of Preserve the Fort underwent several changes, many of which were implemented due to earlier challenges faced during Phase I. The first of these changes was a reconfiguration of the grant funding levels based on the long-term impacts of the business shutdown. The original funding levels in Phase I were based on employment numbers, whereas the Phase II funding structure was based on business' pre-pandemic revenues and projected losses over the previous six months.

**As a result, the grants in Phase II of Preserve the Fort involved higher dollar amounts – up to \$150,000 for small businesses and \$100,000 for bars/music venues and performing arts nonprofits.**

Also, it became apparent during Phase I that many businesses had never applied for financial assistance before, and many did not have accountants or CPAs to help them prepare the necessary financial documentation that would allow them to apply for Preserve the Fort grants. This challenge resulted in another major update for Phase II with the addition of Document Assistance Support, which was coordinated with assistance from Fort Worth Now and staffed by volunteers from J.P. Morgan Bank, the Fort Worth chapter of the Texas Society of CPAs, BKD CPAs and Advisors, Lighthouse Fort Worth and other organizations.

The process allowed business owners to go online and schedule 30-minute appointments with these volunteers between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. seven days a week. Business owners would receive email reminders and a follow-up survey after their appointment, and could reschedule if needed.

During the 24 days that applications were open for Phase II, the 12 volunteers took part in 265 total document assistance meetings – 245 in English, and 20 in Spanish – and the program was overall very well received.

**By the time that the second phase of Preserve the Fort had been completed in December 2020, the City of Fort Worth had spent 34.6% of its CARES funding – a total of \$54.9 million – on grants to assist local businesses and nonprofits.** This was the highest percentage of funds allocated towards small business grants out of the nation's 20 largest cities.

A total of 1,640 grants were distributed, with 32% of grants going to minority-owned businesses and another 31% going to businesses located in the city's target areas. Another 35% of grants went to businesses across the city, and a combined total of 3% of funds went towards performing arts nonprofits and nonprofit reimbursement.

This immense undertaking was a team effort, and could not have been accomplished without the partners, volunteers, and community leaders who helped us spread the word, process these applications, and assist with any challenges faced along the way.