

City of Cincinnati



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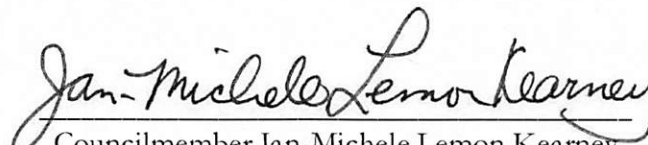
Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney
Councilmember

202101634

April 30, 2021

MOTION

WE MOVE that Cincinnati City Council allocate \$3 million dollars from the American Rescue Plan Act to MORTAR. MORTAR will use \$2.5 million in capital dollar support for the MORTAR Mall, a retail and restaurant space for minority businesses and MORTAR program graduates, MORTAR will use \$500,000 in operating support to build out their online learning platform to expand business development services to more entrepreneurs.


Councilmember Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney

STATEMENT

See attached documentation.

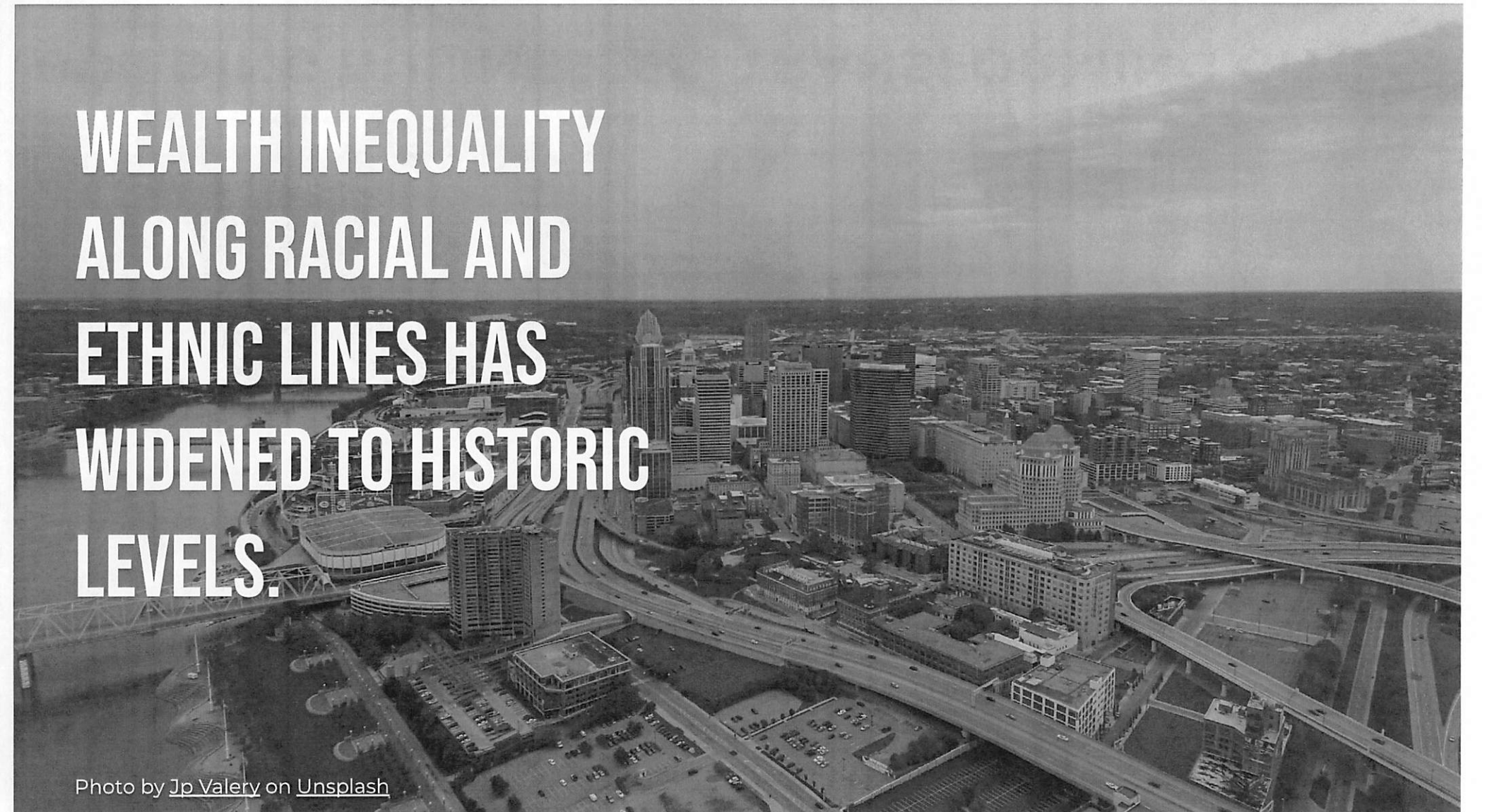


MORTAR

BUILDING BUSINESSES. TRANSFORMING CITIES.

**WEALTH INEQUALITY
ALONG RACIAL AND
ETHNIC LINES HAS
WIDENED TO HISTORIC
LEVELS.**

Photo by [Jp Valery](#) on [Unsplash](#)



ENTREPRENEURS OF COLOR CREATE JOBS AND WEALTH IN COMMUNITIES

But often they don't have access to the resources and culturally-competent training that they need for their businesses to survive and thrive.

Means Cameron owns two downtown Cincinnati shops.
Photo: Maddie Mcgarvey For The Wall Street Journal

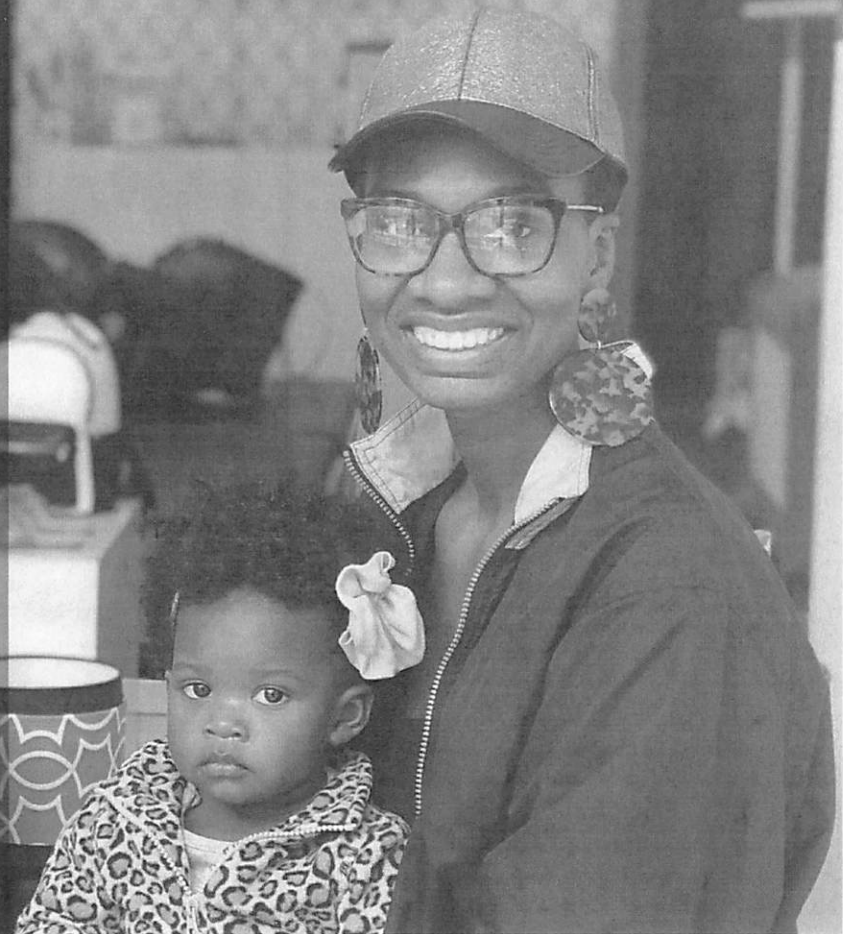
Black Owned
EST 19XX

18.3%

Of businesses in Cincinnati are African-American owned, despite representing nearly half of the city's population

**MORTAR EXISTS TO HELP
HISTORICALLY MARGINALIZED
ENTREPRENEURS BUILD
BUSINESSES AND TRANSFORM
COMMUNITIES.**

We believe that any entrepreneur can thrive - when equipped with the right resources and hustle.





WE ENSURE BUSINESSES SURVIVE & THRIVE

MORTAR works with historically marginalized entrepreneurs to start businesses, generate wealth and transform communities. MORTAR trains and supports entrepreneurs of color with our Entrepreneurship Academy, Alumni Program, Pop-Up Shop Spaces, and The Iron Chest Fund.

MORTAR ENTREPRENEURS THRIVED DURING COVID-19

We are thrilled to announce that 100% of MORTAR Alumni who were operating a businesses prior to COVID-19 are still in operation today!

Just Cookin', Davis Cookie Company, Esoteric Brewing, PAUSE, and Pata Roja even celebrated grand openings in the midst of the pandemic.

MORTAR alumni are specially equipped to handle tough times!





MORTAR STEPPED UP

At the onset of COVID-19 MORTAR activated over \$10,000 in emergency relief grants to our alumni from our Iron Chest Fund.

“I’m so humbled to be a recipient of MORTAR’s Covid-19 Emergency Grant. These funds will allow me to continue to move forward in my business. I’m able to continue to pay my monthly kitchen storage fees, insurance, website fees & give my employees a gift card to cover some of their grocery costs to offset the work they have missed due to the shutdown. We all know entrepreneurship is difficult but I don’t think any of us could have seen this coming. The beauty of it all is, as a small business owner, to know that I have the support of MORTAR leaves me feeling confident that I will get through this trying time successfully.” Crystal Render, Magnificent Morsels Catering

CINCINNATI SUPPORTS MORTAR

The City of Cincinnati has graciously contributed \$25,000 to MORTAR's Iron Chest Fund

Later this Spring the funding will be disbursed as grants ranging from \$250 to \$1,000 directly to MORTAR alumni, proving that the City of Cincinnati truly supports entrepreneurs in meaningful ways.



MORTAR MOVING FORWARD

With small businesses making up 40% of the national GDP we believe that empowering Black and minority entrepreneurs to participate and compete in a post-COVID-19 economic revival will be vital to recovering the small business community in Cincinnati.



INCREASED IMPACT

WITH MORTAR ONLINE LEARNING

An extensive, visually stunning, interactive online and mobile learning experience designed for the entrepreneur on the go.

The MORTAR Online Learning Platform and App will provide minority entrepreneurs with the high-quality training for which MORTAR has become nationally known.

By developing this learning tool, MORTAR will exponentially deepen our impact in Cincinnati by drastically increasing our capacity to reach entrepreneurs who are unable to attend our in-person program.

Photo The Enquirer / Meg Vogel



THE MORTAR MALL

A multi-use space to provide minority entrepreneurs with centralized access to resources such as retail storefronts, a community kitchen/pop-up restaurant, order fulfillment space, warehousing space, training space, and event space.





MORTAR HAS ALREADY DRIVEN OUTSIZED IMPACT

- We've had 306 graduates in Cincinnati alone
- We have maintained an 86% graduation rate
- In 2019, MORTAR businesses added 79 new jobs and \$4.4m in net profit (up from \$1.4m in 2018).

We have expanded our capacity and are offering FIVE cohorts this spring to accommodate demand

**OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH THE
CITY OF CINCINNATI
CONTINUES TO HELP MORTAR
INCREASE OUR GROWTH AND
IMPACT!**

