

Impact Report

2021-2023



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A Letter From Our Founder

Since our inception in September 2019, our work and community at Rise In STEM has grown tremendously. It has been an exciting two years of learning and growing, despite the pause and hurdles that came with the 2020 global pandemic. Not only have we expanded our core team with the addition of three new members, but we have successfully pivoted virtually and tested our programs for two years – especially thanks to our funder, The Ontario Trillium Foundation. I could not be prouder of our team’s resilience and innovative dynamic to respond to changes and support our community.



Irene Duah-Kessie
Founder | Executive Director

As of November 2022, we have resumed in-person programming since 2019 and have evolved our programs into a hybrid manner. We have established new leadership, research, and wellness initiatives that have provided a variety of paid roles, professional and personal development opportunities for youth engaged. We have also been able to launch our very first donor-funded student scholarship to support a young person's journey in STEM.

Though we are a young and small organization, the impact created and the community we have built has been mighty and we are so excited and ready for the next phase of our journey. Notably, one of the initiatives we look forward to offering will center digital literacy and capacity building for a broader audience, which will be funded through the Canada Healthy Communities Initiative.

As we wrap up our first three years and reflect on the many learnings, we have established a three year strategic plan (2024 - 2027) to advance our mission, scale our work and transform our community. We could not have reached our success and growth without our youth leaders, mentors, volunteers, funders, and community partners, and appreciate all the support that keeps us pushing. The future is bright and we are ecstatic to be a vessel for young people to shine.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Irene Kessie', written in a cursive style.



RISE↑

STEM

providing resources and opportunities to enhance well being, leadership and technical skills for our youth

Key Milestones

After completing our first full year of program in June 2021, we envisioned expanding our team and enhancing our offerings for the remaining two years of Ontario Trillium Foundation-funded initiatives.



JULY 2021

Expanded with 2 new team members



OCT 2021

Launched our first Youth Action Committee



JUNE 2022

Launched the Rise in Wellness campaign



NOV 2021

Return to in-person program + field trips



JUNE 2023

Hosted first youth leadership event



JUNE 2023

Developed a new 3 year strategic plan

Impact Highlight

Over the past 29 months, Rise and Stem has reached new heights as we continue to crush our goals and achieve our mission. Here's a snap shot of how we did.

160

Youth reached

5

Programs

23

Partners

29

Workshops and Events

45

Wellness Kits

RISE ↑ STEM

Our Mission

We want to **level the playing field** for **Black youth** by **breaking down barriers** to higher education and STEM career pathways.

Our Why

Recognizing the lack of racial diversity in STEM, we strive to **increase the representation of Black youth across STEM fields** and **promote personal growth** within a supportive learning culture.

Our Vision

We envision a **strong and socially conscious STEM workforce**, where youth from **underserved communities** have the opportunity to participate and thrive.

Values That Guide Us



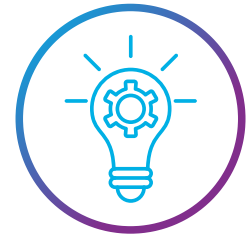
Inclusion

Create a space where youth are encouraged to be their best selves and build strong connections to enrich our community.



Empower

Provide opportunities for personal and professional growth by centering youth well-being and leadership development.



Innovation

Curate non-traditional learning opportunities to foster knowledge and creativity that challenges the status quo.

The Rise in STEM Model: Pillars



STEM Skills & Knowledge Development



Leadership & Career Development



Research and Advocacy



Health and Wellness

Program Highlights

2021-22

Rise Up Program

October 2021 - May 2022

This 20-week program taught youth critical technical skills, assisted in youth's professional development and provided an opportunity to explore different careers in STEM.

Workshops

Attending various workshops in coding, academic and career planning, leadership, and employability helped youth envision their future academic and professional careers in STEM. As part of the coding workshops, the youth participated in a project to design their very own Google web page applying what they learned.

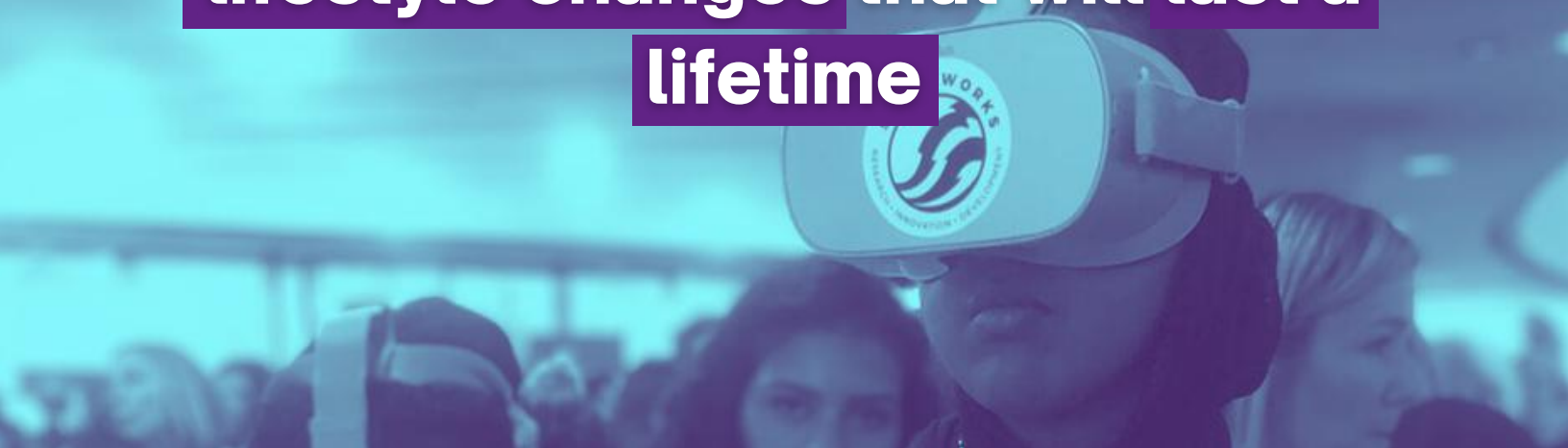
Mentorship

Access to individual mentorship allowed youth to further reflect on their desires in a STEM career, discover their strengths, and streamline the direction of their career goals.





By centering youth wellness, we are solidifying healthy habits and lifestyle changes that will last a lifetime



Program Highlights

2021-22

Youth Action Committee

October 2021 - May 2022

In 2021 we launched our inaugural Youth Action Committee (YAC), a group of 9 Black youth from across the Greater Toronto Area, dedicated to holistically supporting underrepresented youth in STEM.

The YAC was a part of our annual strategic planning process to ensure that youth voices were captured in our programs and initiatives.



Rise in Wellness Campaign

In the midst of the COVID-19 lockdown, the YAC identified wellness as a priority area for youth during this time. With funding support from [x], the YAC initiated Rise in Wellness, a campaign dedicated to enhancing wellness among Black and underrepresented youth.

Movie Night

A screening of the Enola Holmes movie with community members to promote social support.

Self-Care Kits

The YAC carefully and thoughtfully assembled kits containing journals, face masks, and other self-care items to ensure youth are prioritizing wellbeing.

Wellness Resource List

To bring attention to the wellness resources within the Etobicoke and Toronto area, the YAC curated a list of available programs, services, and help lines.

Wellness Circles

In collaboration with Amma Gyamfowa and Kwaku Poku Agyeman, the YAC hosted 4 virtual wellness circles to provide a space for Black youth to gather as a community, de-stress, promote health and wellness, and learn from one another.





Our youth leadership opportunities
prepare the next generation of STEM
innovators and pioneers



Program Highlights

2022-23

Rise Up Series

February 2022- March 2023

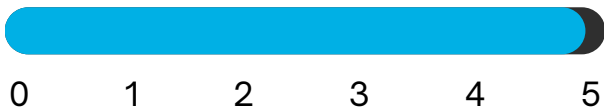
In 2022/23, we revamped our Rise Up Program in response to the feedback and needs of our youth. Thus, the Rise Up Series was developed, three program streams each comprised of three workshops.

Financial Literacy 101

We partnered with The WealtheSimple Foundation to teach youth the fundamentals of financial literacy. Throughout the workshops, youth were able to explore educational and career interests along with their respective projected financial opportunities, build their professional profiles (LinkedIn profiles, resume help), and begin financial planning for their futures.

Youth Satisfaction Rating

4.8



*I've learned that I can in fact **save my money and reach my saving goals.** But it might take some time and effort.*



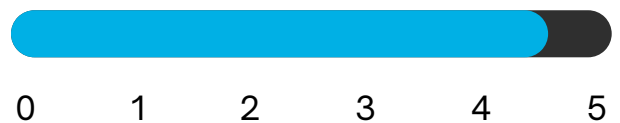
I feel empowered, and grateful to have been part of this series. I feel like what I have learned has set me on a great path to reach my financial goals

Engineering 101

To promote the engineering pathway among youth, we partnered with Venture Academy and the Black Student Success Centre McMaster University to create an unforgettable experience. Youth were introduced to engineering basics and got to practice technical skills. Additionally, they previewed the post-secondary experience at McMaster University by touring the campus and connecting with current students.

Youth Satisfaction Rating

4.4



Before I went to [Engineering 101], a lot of people were like 'I was not interested in engineering like at all.' I kind of had this preconceived notion about what it would be but after going there it actually looks really interesting and I feel like I would learn a lot from that.

Product Design 101

Unfortunately, the Product Design 101 Series was cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances.



“The best thing that came out of being a part of the YAC was the

opportunity to plan and then host our own wellness event. We had so

much freedom to just take wellness wherever we wanted to take it”

Program Highlights

2022-23

Youth Action Committee

October 2022 - May 2023

The Youth Action Committee (YAC) developed two important initiatives this year.

The Next Up: Youth Leadership Event

The Next Up: Youth Leadership Event was our largest gathering of youth to date! Spearheaded by the YAC, this event, hosted at the Humber College Barrett Centre of Technology, catered youth in Etobicoke and surrounding regions.

Attendees had an opportunity to network with young professionals in STEM, hear from established panellists and speakers, get their resume reviewed, and engage in fun team building activities.



Youth Satisfaction Rating

4.7



Rise in Wellness Campaign

The YAC team also reimagined the Rise in Wellness into #FridayFundays, a 4-part drop-in series dedicated to fostering community, social connection, and wellness among youth. Due to conflicts with school exams, only two parts of the series was implemented.



I remember - and this is something that was also done again last year - our input is like, very important, like we're valued. Initially, when we started the YAC this year, I remember that we had a meeting, where we all talked about certain standards or certain ways that we want to proceed as a team. We did something where we talked about what we want from each other and then we listed the values and like what that looks like. It's also that's a good thing that like encouraged the connection.



I'm now outspoken and more confident. In terms of the confidence part of it, I think with the event planning and hosting [The Next Up] that gave me like much more confidence that I am capable of hosting an event and it turning out to be successful.



“The most significant think that I learned was speaking up. Don’t be afraid to like, ask questions, and don’t just limit yourself to small opportunities”



Special Events & Activities

Roche STEM Day

On November 19, 2021, we partnered with Roche for a full day of interactive activities, where youth participants learned about the pharmaceutical industry, tools used for decision making and participated in a case challenge with the support of mentors.



Data Science Virtual Summer Camp

From July 18-22, 2022, we partnered with BrainSTEM Alliance and various STEM organizations to provide a virtual data science summer camp, which engaged youth across Canada for a week-long of applied learning.

Student Scholarship

We launched our very first donor-funded student scholarship, which was awarded to a Black student in their 4th year, pursuing a BSc in Health Sciences.



Strength & Structure Project

As a member of the Black To The Future (BTTF) Community of Practice, we were selected to participate in the Strength and Structure Project, a collaborative initiative between the Canadian Council of Youth Prosperity and BTTF. As an organization we informed the development of a toolkit and developed content about our experiences in STEM.

Community Presentations

We were also invited to present at STEM conferences/pro and programs including the Kuumba Conference, Skills for Change STEM Program Launch, the Developing Young Leaders of Tomorrow, Today's Conference, and the Black Youth In Technology Engineering and Science Conference.



Our Backbone

GROWING COMMUNITY PARTNERS

We are greatly for the support of our community – we would not be where we are without the support and encouragement from our funders, organizational mentor, and program partners.

FUNDERS



COMMUNITY
FOUNDATIONS
OF CANADA



TORONTO
FOUNDATION



An agency of the Government of Ontario.
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario.

PROGRAM COLLABORATORS AND SUPPORTERS

Amma Gyamfowa

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Gwenna Kadima

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Justin Abrokwah

Kwaku Poku-Agyeman

Dr. Marty Nyarko

Nero Yalaju

McMaster University's
Venture Academy

McMaster University's
National Society of
Black Engineers

Wealthsimple Foundation

Women's College Hospital

Support & Growth

Rexdale Community Hub

Financial Position

All financial records presented account for July 2021 - June 2022, and July 2022 - December 2023.

	2021-22	2022-23
Revenue		
Grants	\$112,146.90	\$268,834.01
Donations	\$60.00	\$1,225.00
Total Revenue	\$112,206.90	\$270,059.01
Expenses		
Personnel (staff, speakers & volunteers)	\$41,218.56	\$91,376.97
Program Supplies (food, materials, transportation)	\$13,718.04	\$64,646.36
Capacity Building	\$2,801.02	\$4,781.00
Administrative	\$12,700.00	\$26,450.00
Total Expenses	\$70,437.62	\$187,254.33
Net Assets		
Total Beginning of the year	\$112,146.90	\$270,059.01
End of the year	\$41,769.28	\$82,804.68



Join Our Mission

Rise in STEM is in the business of supporting Black youth in STEM through empowerment, advocacy and innovation. If you're interested in supporting our mission, consider making a donation today

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[@riseinstem](https://www.instagram.com/riseinstem)

