

Case Study 1

Advancing Business Opportunities for The Black Business Alliance



Client

The Black Business, Inc (BBA)



Project

Capital Readiness Program



Grant Amount

\$2,700,000



Sector

Minority Business Support



Overview

Divine Strategic Solutions (DSS) successfully secured a \$2.7 million grant from the Department of Economic Community Development (DECD) to implement a capital readiness program tailored for minority small businesses across Connecticut. This initiative was designed to provide comprehensive support, including financial literacy, business planning, and access to capital resources, aimed at fostering the growth and sustainability of minority-owned enterprises.



Approach

DSS conducted thorough research into the specific challenges faced by minority entrepreneurs in Connecticut and designed a technical assistance program that provided one-on-one mentoring, business development workshops, and access to financial resources. The proposal emphasized the program's potential to reduce barriers to business success for minority entrepreneurs.



Outcome

The funding obtained has enabled SGF to expand its impact in Georgia, supporting initiatives that promote sustainability, environmental justice, and community empowerment. The ongoing development of a fund development plan will ensure that SGF remains well-positioned to secure future funding and continue its mission-driven work.

Case Study 2

Strengthening Arts Organizations Amid COVID-19



Client

The Shubert Theatre



Grant Amount

\$50,000



Project

General Operations Support



Sector

Arts and Culture



Overview

In response to the financial challenges faced by arts organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic, DSS secured a \$50,000 grant from the Connecticut Office of the Arts. This grant was aimed at providing general operational support to ensure the sustainability of arts organizations adversely affected by the pandemic.



Approach

DSS collaborated closely with the Connecticut Office of the Arts to understand the immediate needs of the sector. We crafted a proposal that demonstrated the critical need for operational funding to maintain essential programs, retain staff, and continue community engagement during a period of significant uncertainty.



Outcome

The funding provided a lifeline to several arts organizations, enabling them to sustain their operations, adapt to new programming formats, and continue serving their communities despite the ongoing challenges posed by the pandemic.

Case Study 3

Innovating Support for Underserved Business Owners

Client

The Black Business Alliance, Inc (BBA)



Project

Minority Business Support Program



Grant Amount

\$90,000



Sector

Business Innovation



Overview



DSS secured a \$90,000 grant from the New Haven Innovation Collaborative to implement an innovative program aimed at supporting underserved minority business owners in Connecticut. The program focused on providing tailored business development services, access to mentoring, and connections to local economic networks.

Approach



Our team developed a strategic plan that emphasized the unique needs of underserved business owners, particularly in accessing critical resources and networks. The proposal underscored the potential for economic impact and community revitalization through targeted support for minority entrepreneurs.

Outcome



The program successfully engaged a diverse cohort of minority business owners, offering them the tools and resources needed to thrive in competitive markets. The program not only facilitated business growth but also fostered a stronger, more inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem in Connecticut.

Case Study 4

Expanding Technical Assistance Services for Minority Entrepreneurs



Client

The Black Business Alliance, Inc (BBA)



Grant Amount

\$75,000



Project

Technical Assistance Expansion



Sector

Minority Business Support



Overview

DSS secured a \$75,000 grant from the US Small Business Administration to expand technical assistance services for minority small business owners in Connecticut. This funding was part of the SBA's Congressionally Directed Spending initiative aimed at supporting underserved business communities.



Approach

DSS conducted thorough research into the specific challenges faced by minority entrepreneurs in Connecticut and designed a technical assistance program that provided one-on-one mentoring, business development workshops, and access to financial resources. The proposal emphasized the program's potential to reduce barriers to business success for minority entrepreneurs.



Outcome

The expanded technical assistance services have significantly enhanced the capacity of minority-owned businesses in Connecticut, enabling them to access new markets, secure additional funding, and grow their operations. The success of this initiative has positioned BBA as a model for supporting minority entrepreneurs through targeted assistance.

Case Study 5

Comprehensive Support for Sustainable Georgia Futures



Client

Sustainable Georgia Futures (SGF)



Grant Amount

\$100,000



Project

Organizational and Fund Development



Sector

Environmental and Social Impact

Overview



DSS has been working with Sustainable Georgia Futures (SGF) to strengthen its capacity-building and grant development initiatives. Our collaboration has led to securing a \$100,000 grant from Drawdown Georgia to support SGF's environmental and social impact projects. In addition, DSS is working on SGF's long-term fund development plan to ensure continued organizational growth and sustainability.

Approach



DSS provided comprehensive services, including organizational assessments, strategic planning, and crafting grant proposals that align with SGF's mission. Our team identified suitable funding opportunities and managed the submission and post-award process to optimize grant utilization.

Outcome



The funding obtained has enabled SGF to expand its impact in Georgia, supporting initiatives that promote sustainability, environmental justice, and community empowerment. The ongoing development of a fund development plan will ensure that SGF remains well-positioned to secure future funding and continue its mission-driven work.

Case Study 6

Advancing Business Opportunities for African Chamber of Commerce Colorado



Client

African Chamber of Commerce Colorado



Grant Amount

\$100,000



Project

Business Development Support



Sector

Minority Business Support



Overview

DSS successfully secured a total of \$100,000 in grants for the African Chamber of Commerce Colorado, including \$25,000 from Milestones Early Childhood and \$75,000 from the City of Aurora. These grants were aimed at enhancing business development support and providing resources to minority entrepreneurs.



Approach

DSS worked closely with the African Chamber of Commerce Colorado to identify funding opportunities that aligned with their mission of supporting minority businesses. We developed and submitted grant proposals that effectively communicated the need for business development services and the anticipated impact of the funding.



Outcome

The grants obtained have enabled the Chamber to expand its support services, offering more resources and opportunities to minority business owners in Colorado. This has contributed to the growth and success of minority-owned businesses in the region, fostering economic empowerment and community development.

Case Study 7

Strengthening Financial Empowerment and Reentry Support

Client



Advancing Connecticut Together, Inc.
(ACT)

Project



Financial Literacy and Returning Citizens
Program

Grant Amount



\$45,000

Sector



Financial Empowerment & Reentry
Services

Overview



DSS successfully secured \$45,000 in funding from Santander Bank to expand ACT's Financial Literacy and Returning Citizens Program. This initiative provides comprehensive financial education, coaching, and empowerment resources for individuals reentering the community after incarceration, supporting long-term stability and economic self-sufficiency.

Approach



Our team crafted a data-driven, equity-centered proposal that demonstrated ACT's success in addressing systemic barriers to financial inclusion. The request highlighted program outcomes from prior years and emphasized the importance of building financial capability among returning citizens through workshops, one-on-one coaching, and access to safe banking products.

Outcome



While the initial request was for \$30,000, the compelling proposal secured \$45,000, exceeding expectations by 50%. The award allowed ACT to enhance its program capacity, reaching more participants and expanding bilingual financial literacy sessions across multiple service areas in Connecticut.

Case Study 8

Launching a Pilot Financial Empowerment Program



Client

Advancing Connecticut Together, Inc. (ACT)



Grant Amount

\$20,000



Project

Financial Empowerment Pilot Program



Sector

Financial Capability - Community Development



Overview

DSS collaborated with ACT to develop and secure a \$20,000 award from the United Way in support of a new pilot initiative focused on financial empowerment for low- to moderate-income households. The program integrates financial education, tax preparation (VITA), and coaching services under one model to promote financial stability and upward mobility.



Approach

DSS identified and articulated a clear theory of change connecting ACT's existing VITA and Beyond VITA services with new opportunities for year-round financial coaching. The proposal emphasized innovation, collaboration, and measurable community outcomes— key priorities for United Way funders.



Outcome

The funding established ACT's first pilot financial empowerment program, setting the groundwork for future statewide replication. Early results indicate high participant engagement, increased savings behaviors, and improved access to mainstream financial tools.

Case Study 9

Strengthening Fund Development and Grant Strategy



Overview

Divine Strategic Solutions partnered with the Parents' Foundation for Transitional Living (PFTL) to strengthen its fund development and grant strategy. Prior to this engagement, PFTL primarily operated on a fee-for-service model and sought to diversify its revenue to ensure long-term sustainability.

Through strategic consulting and hands-on grant development support, DSS helped PFTL refine its funding priorities, create a targeted grant strategy, and identify aligned opportunities for growth. As a result, PFTL secured its first grant in the amount of \$15,000 from the Sidney R. Baer, Jr. Foundation, supporting its Stability, Growth, and Well-Being Initiative.

Client Feedback



"Working with Takiya on our grant funding strategy has been so beneficial for our organization. We couldn't have done it without her."

— Development Director at Parents' Foundation for Transitional Living

