

# Annual Report

2024

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# We strengthen the workforce *from the inside out.*



## Mission

We strengthen the youth and young adult workforce ecosystem through coordinated leadership development, intergenerational mentorship, inclusive pathways into skilled and digital careers, and the integration of creative arts — while intentionally building mental resilience across all initiatives.



## Vision

A resilient and inclusive workforce ecosystem where youth and young adults develop as **Competent, Organizationally Skilled, Responsible, and Ethical (CORE)** leaders who drive sustainable economic and community advancement.

## Our values

01.

### Concern

A genuine care for the wellbeing of those we serve is visible in how we listen, plan, and follow through.

02.

### Communication

Clear, honest, and intergenerational. We move at the speed of trust because trust is the only sustainable speed.

03.

### Commitment

We don't run pilots and disappear. We build relationships and infrastructure designed to outlast funding cycles.



—**Ifeoma Grace-Yvonne Okonji**

Founder & Executive Director,  
Emerging Lives Initiative

— Message from the Founder & Executive Director

When Emerging Lives Initiative (ELI) **was founded in May 2024**, it was built on a simple but powerful belief: communities thrive when people are equipped early with the tools, opportunities, and support systems they need to succeed.

As a newly established organization, our first year focused on laying a strong foundation through meaningful community engagement and leadership development. Through the launch of our CHES initiative and Women's Sports Initiative, we created spaces where youth and women could grow in confidence, build connections, and strengthen their sense of purpose and resilience.

Although we began with limited resources, we were encouraged by the overwhelming support of our partners, volunteers, facilitators, and participants who believed in our vision. Together, we demonstrated that impact is not always measured by size, but by the lives touched and the communities strengthened.

2024 was a year of learning, building, and planting seeds for the future. It marked the beginning of a journey toward creating inclusive opportunities, promoting mental resilience, and empowering individuals to become confident contributors within their communities.

I am deeply grateful to everyone who supported us during this foundational year. Your belief in our mission continues to inspire the work we do.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to building resilient lives through leadership, connection, and opportunity.

# The **CORE** Framework

Four traits we believe define the leaders  
this decade is asking for: Competent,  
Organizationally Skilled, Responsible, and  
Ethical

# How **CORE** shows up in the work

**C**

## Competent

Equipped with relevant, current, and applicable skills — both technical and human. Demonstrated through practice, not certificates.

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Measured by:  
Skill acquisition · Portfolio · Peers

**O**

## Organizationally Skilled

Able to plan, coordinate, and execute within real systems — workplaces, communities, public institutions.

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Measured by:  
Projects · Feedback · Role progression

**R**

## Responsible

Takes ownership of outcomes for self, peers, and community. Sees follow-through as a leadership skill.

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Measured by:  
Attendance · Commitments · Contribution

**E**

## Ethical

Operates from a clear moral compass, especially when no one is watching. Names hard things plainly.

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Measured by:  
Case studies · Review · Self-assessment

# Impact Snapshot

01 – Launch year

**2024**

Federally registered non-profit

02 – REACH

**100+**

Youth and women  
directly reached through  
CHESS and the Women's Sports Initiative

03 – Partnership

**04**

Cross-sector partners  
— food, mental health support,  
sport, advocacy.

initiative 01

**CHESS Program**

initiative 02

**Women's  
Sports Initiative**

# Two Initiatives, *in motion.*

*Built around the CORE Framework, each initiative develops measurable leadership traits through practice*



## 01. **CHESS** Initiative

Critical thinking, focus, and patience — taught through chess and applied to leadership, school, and life.



## 02. **Women's Sports Initiative**

Sport as access to confidence, community, and resilience. Designed with and for women who have been overlooked by traditional athletics.

# Partners

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01. **St. Louis Pizza**  
In-kind meals for cohorts & community events.

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02. **Clarus Psychotherapy**  
Mental health expertise embedded into our resilience programming.

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03. **Peakperfly**  
Start-up and Business Development facilitator

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04. **Warren Creates**  
Leadership development facilitator

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**Open to collaboration**

 [info@emerginglivesinitiative.org](mailto:info@emerginglivesinitiative.org)

# Funding Summary

in-kind donations from

**Louis pizza**

**CA\$100**

Anonymous in-kind donations

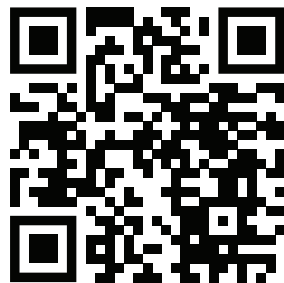
**Microsoft**

**CA\$200**

for trophy - women soccer initiative  
from Councillor Tim Tierney BeaconHill/Cyrville



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Kindly Scan to  
visit our website