

EMERGING ROOTS

2025–2026 Annual Impact Report

"It takes a village to empower endless possibility."

Emerging Roots | Houston, TX • East End Community

501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organization • EIN: 41-4156668

contact@emergingrootstx.org • www.emergingrootstx.org

01 WHO WE ARE

Organization Overview

Emerging Roots is a Houston-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to providing free, year-round entrepreneurship and leadership programming to high school students in Houston's East End community.

We believe that every young person — regardless of zip code, income, or background — deserves access to the tools, mentorship, and community they need to build something of their own.

Our approach centers the whole child. Before we introduce business skills, we invest in identity exploration — getting to know who our students are, where they come from, and what truly matters to them. When we do move into business ideation, the question isn't just what will make money, but what will fulfill them, how they can serve others, and how they can better develop and share their unique gifts with the world.

Our Mission

To empower Black and Brown youth to own their stories, expand their networks, and build economic and creative agency through identity exploration, storytelling, and entrepreneurship.

Our Vision

To create a lifelong, community-driven ecosystem where Black and Brown youth are never navigating their futures alone — where mentorship, collaboration, and economic opportunity expand as they do.

Our Values: The ROOTS Framework

At Emerging Roots, we operate through a values framework we created called ROOTS — guiding every program, partnership, and decision we make.

R	Relationships	We cultivate strong intergenerational connections and mentorship networks because thriving happens in community.
O	Ownership	We empower youth to own their stories, ideas, and futures with confidence and agency.
O	Opportunity	We expand access to economic pathways, creative leadership, and networks that increase long-term mobility.
T	Togetherness	We build collaboratively, strengthening a village where youth grow alongside peers, mentors, and alumni.
S	Sustainability	We are committed to long-term ecosystems of support that extend beyond high school and evolve with our community.

02 IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

2025–2026 Program Year at a Glance

Emerging Roots reaches students at multiple levels — from our intensive summer accelerator to school-based workshops and our year-round mentorship program.

5 Students

Summer Collective

Intensive 6-week entrepreneurship accelerator

300 Students

School Workshops & Community Partnerships

Reached through school presentations, workshops, and community events

3 Students

Year-Round Mentorship & Leadership Program

Paired with industry mentors through monthly meetings, quarterly workshops & family dinners

70%

Student Retention Rate (post-summer)

90%

First-Generation College Students

10+

Community Partners

~\$1,000

Cost Per Student (full program)

\$0

Cost to Students

6

Weeks: Summer Accelerator

All programming is provided at no cost to students or families.

03 OUR PROGRAMS

Program Overview

Emerging Roots delivers programming across four core formats, each designed to meet students where they are and move them toward where they want to go.

PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION	FORMAT
Summer Collective	A six-week entrepreneurship accelerator running from June to July. Students develop a business concept rooted in their own identity and community, culminating in a social media campaign. Final Showcase Day allows students to share and present in front of community members, family, and friends.	Intensive / Summer
Year-Round Mentorship & Leadership	A cohort-based program pairing students with industry professionals in their area of interest. Includes monthly virtual mentor meetings, quarterly in-person workshops, quarterly family dinners, and curated learning opportunities.	Year-Round
School Workshops	Free entrepreneurship and leadership workshops delivered to East End schools in partnership with YES Prep East End, Deedy Middle School, and Sanders Hand. Topics include financial literacy, personal branding, and more.	Year-Round
Community Events & Showcases	Public-facing events that celebrate student work, connect youth to mentors, and build community pride in East End entrepreneurship. Includes tabling at community events and end-of-program showcase celebrations.	Event-Based

Summer Collective Curriculum Highlights

The Summer Collective is our flagship 6-week program built around a clear philosophy: students must know who they are before they can build what they make.

- Week 1 — Business Operations: In-class workshops on business fundamentals; field trip to TechFest Live where students conducted live interviews; introduction to podcast set production.
- Week 2 — Marketing: Guest marketing professional led workshops on SWAT analysis and brand identity; continued podcast set work.
- Week 3 — Content & Campaign Creation: Students began creating their own content, developed campaign schedules, and learned what goes into building a social media campaign.
- Week 4 — Finance & Life Skills: Workshops on budgeting, cost of living, financial literacy, and customer service; attended Mellon and Mines — a mental health conference for people of color; students filmed their origin stories.
- Week 5 — Sales & Production: Students learned how to conduct sales pitches; worked on logo development; filmed tutorials; created content for their campaigns.
- Week 6 — Showcase & Product Development: Public speaking and goal-setting workshops; students created complementary products as additional revenue streams; final presentations to community, family, and friends.

04 COMMUNITY & PARTNERSHIPS

Who We Serve

Emerging Roots serves high school students in Houston’s East End — a historically underinvested community home to one of the city’s most vibrant concentrations of Black and Latino families. Our students are creative, driven, and deeply connected to their community, and face real barriers: limited access to professional networks, entrepreneurship education, and hands-on mentorship.

Our typical student:

- Is a Black or Latino high schooler in Houston’s East End
- Has limited or no prior exposure to entrepreneurship or business education
- Is likely to be the first in their family to attend college
- Qualifies for or utilizes free meal services at school, reflecting real financial need in the households we serve

Our Partner Network

Emerging Roots operates through deep, trust-based community partnerships that allow us to reach students where they already are and connect youth to the broader Houston ecosystem.

SCHOOLS YES Prep East End Deedy Middle School	COMMUNITY ORGS P.E.A.C.E. Houston Young Monarchs Sanders Hand DiscoverU	COMMUNITY PARTNERS & BUSINESSES Alley Theatre Arte Público Press CCN Studios BPM LLP
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05 FINANCIALS & OPERATIONS

Financial Overview

Emerging Roots is committed to lean, mission-aligned operations. We direct the overwhelming majority of our resources toward direct program delivery and student support, and operate with full financial transparency.

COST CATEGORY	AMOUNT
Full program cost per student (Summer Collective)	~\$1,000 / student
Cost to students and families	\$0.00

The approximate \$1,000 per-student cost covers programming materials, food, learning opportunities such as field trips and community events, and transportation support. No student is ever charged to participate.

How We Fund Our Work

During the 2025–2026 program year, Emerging Roots was primarily funded through grassroots efforts and community partnerships:

- Community partners like CCN Studios provided space for student sessions and transportation support at no cost.
- Industry professionals volunteered their time to lead workshops in marketing, sales, finance, and content creation.
- Learning opportunities such as TechFest Live were made accessible through community partner relationships.
- We received \$700 in donations directed toward community outreach and marketing to reach more students.
- Direct student costs including materials and food were covered through grassroots personal investment by our founder and the generosity of our community.

06 STUDENT OUTCOMES & STORIES

What Students Gain

The outcomes of Emerging Roots programming go beyond business knowledge. Students leave with a stronger sense of self, a clearer vision for their future, and tangible skills they can apply immediately.

SKILLS GAINED	LONG-TERM OUTCOMES
✓ Business ideation and market research ✓ Social media marketing & content creation ✓ Financial literacy fundamentals ✓ Public speaking and sales pitching ✓ Personal branding and storytelling ✓ Video and set production ✓ Conducting interviews ✓ Creating social campaigns ✓ Collaboration and group work	✓ 70%+ of students stay connected post-program ✓ 90% are on a first-gen college path ✓ Students gain access to mentors & networks ✓ 2 students received full tuition college scholarships ✓ Stronger sense of cultural identity and pride ✓ More open to different career pathways ✓ More confident in planning for a career ✓ Gained confidence in networking and sharing their stories

Student Voices

“I’m really thankful for this program. It taught me stuff about finances and business that I didn’t know before. It opened my eyes to opportunities I can have after high school.”

— Summer Collective Student

“The highlight of the program for me was selling my cookies at Black Heritage Festival. At first, I was like, how are we going to do this? But with Siena’s help, I tested recipes, went shopping, prepped everything together, making 70+ cookies — and actually selling them was really cool. I didn’t think we’d last, but we did it.”

— Summer Collective Student

07 TEAM & LEADERSHIP

Our Team

Emerging Roots is led by a founder-director embedded in the East End community, supported by a small, specialized team with expertise in marketing, curriculum development, and entrepreneurship education.

Siena <i>Founder & Program Director</i>	Leads all program design, operations, partner outreach, and community relationships. Background in food entrepreneurship and corporate project management. Primary hands-on staff member running day-to-day operations.
Dasia Batiste <i>Marketing Coordinator</i>	Leads brand identity, communications strategy, and organizational storytelling.
Kenneth Scott <i>Curriculum Coordinator</i>	Leads curriculum development and pitch coaching. Rice University professor with deep expertise in entrepreneurship education.

08 LOOKING AHEAD: 2026–2027

What's Next for Emerging Roots

We are entering an exciting growth phase — deepening community partnerships, expanding our reach, and building programming that evolves alongside our students and the world they're stepping into.

Program Goals

- Expand full-year programming in partnership with East End schools and community organizations
- Deepen CBO partnerships to create a more holistic, wraparound approach for students and deepen our community reach
- Grow our mentor and funder network through ongoing relationship development and community outreach
- Develop curriculum that keeps up with technological advancement, AI, and the evolving economic climate — ensuring students are prepared for the world as it is and how it will change
- Host programming that addresses emerging student needs, partnering with organizations to provide more comprehensive support

Our Commitment

Emerging Roots is built for the long game. Our ROOTS framework — Relationships, Ownership, Opportunity, Togetherness, and Sustainability — ensures that every decision we make is grounded in what's best for our students, our community, and the generations that come after them.

Follow the Journey

Stay connected with Emerging Roots as we continue to grow, serve, and empower the next generation of East End leaders.

Email

contact@emergingrootshtx.org

Website

www.emergingrootshtx.org

Instagram

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