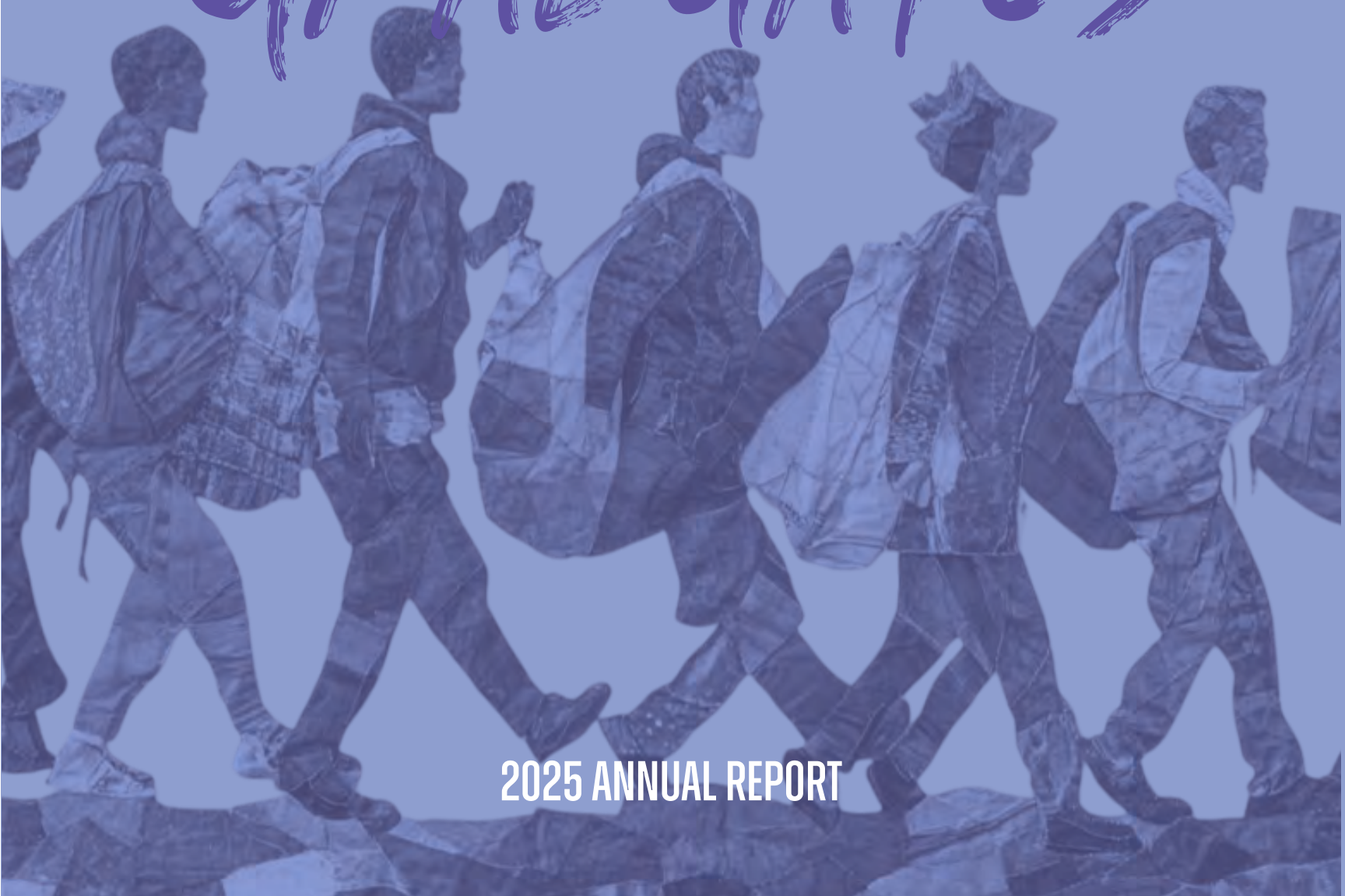




EST. DETROIT 2007

GROWTH NEVER GRADUATES



2025 ANNUAL REPORT



EST. DETROIT 2007

WATCH OUR
EVOLUTION



SAME MISSION. SAME RESULTS

After nearly 20 years of proving what works, our name matches our mission.

We began in a single room where young people found safety, structure, and someone who believed in them. What emerged over time was not a gym, or even a program, but a village. A place where young people grow with us, and we grow with them. A place where relationships last, breakthroughs compound, and every person is met with the same promise: **we will do whatever it takes for as long as it takes.**

Students don't outgrow DBG. They evolve within it. They return as mentors, staff, and leaders who lift as they climb. Families shift from seeking support to shaping change. Alumni stay connected five, ten, fifteen years later because they know this community doesn't disappear when the school year ends or when a diploma is earned. **Here, growth is lifelong. Here, Growth Never Graduates.**

This is why our name is ***DRIVEN BY GROWTH.***

Our name reflects what our work has proven: when you build deep relationships, when you track the predictors of success that truly matter, when you stay long enough to witness the arc of someone's life — growth doesn't stop. ***It accelerates. It compounds. It spreads.***

Same mission. Same results.

And with a name and a message that say exactly who we are: **Driven by Growth.** Because Growth Never Graduates.



**HERE'S A GLIMPSE OF THE
IMPACT BEING MADE
AT DBG DETROIT!**

* Graduating seniors



Tested their skills in pilot simulations

* Students presenting at AERA in Denver



Scholars met legends like Barry Sanders

* KLA DBG World Tour Day



Curry motor sports staff training

Held our Annual DBG Spelling Bee. Congratulations to our 9 winners!



2025 HIGHLIGHTS



Traveled to Canton, OH for the Pro Football Hall Of Fame weekend

* Camp Tamarack first time visit

Scholars got to interview an Olympic Champion, Claressa Shields!



Growing new things in the garden



Learned about the art of song making and tried different instruments

Trunk or Treat

* Expanded workforce development programs at DBG development



* Alumni king came back to help teach music class

* Launched stem community day

CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2025



Each spring, DBG gathers to celebrate one of our most meaningful milestones: Senior Celebration. It's a time to honor the journeys of our graduating students, the hours of hard work, the resilience through challenges, and the excitement of stepping into new opportunities. Families, staff, and peers come together to applaud the unique paths each student has carved for themselves and to send them into the next chapter with pride and support.

At DBG, we're committed to supporting our students well beyond graduation. We are with them for life, supporting them through college, helping with job placements and internships, and holding space for them whenever they return to DBG. Graduation is not the end of the relationship; it's the beginning of a new phase of connection and support



IN THE NEWS

All of our seniors shine bright and are on their way to do amazing things, but this year one student in particular made headlines. Harmonie received over 80 college acceptances and was offered more than \$1 million in scholarships. Her remarkable achievement is a testament to her dedication and a reflection of the strong foundation she built at DBG. For younger students watching her journey, Harmonie's success is proof that with hard work, encouragement, and community behind you, the possibilities are limitless.

SCAN TO SEE
FULL STORY



FOX 2
DETROIT

SENIOR CELEBRATION IS MORE THAN A GRADUATION PARTY: IT'S A SHOWCASE OF WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOUNG PEOPLE ARE GIVEN THE SPACE, RESOURCES, AND BELIEF TO THRIVE. EVERY ACCEPTANCE LETTER, EVERY SCHOLARSHIP, EVERY DREAM SPOKEN ALOUD IS EVIDENCE OF IMPACT. AND EVERY CHEER IN THE ROOM WAS OUR COMMUNITY SAYING, *WE BELIEVE IN YOU—FOR LIFE.*

THE WORLD AT THEIR FINGERTIPS



SOMETIMES THE MOST IMPACTFUL LEARNING BEGINS WITH A SINGLE QUESTION

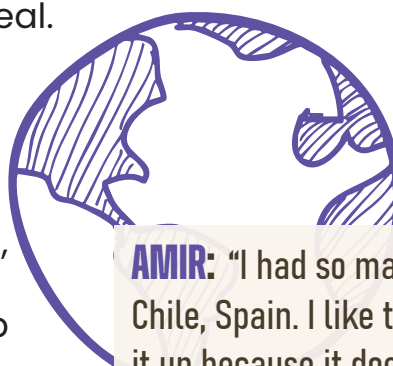
In 2024, while covering the Study Lounge, DBG's Director of Academics, Laura, worked with a student on a worksheet about the Alps, the Andes, and the Appalachian Mountains. Curious, she asked if they had ever been to the mountains. That simple question sparked a virtual field trip, which led them to the large world map on the wall. Suddenly, abstract geography lessons became real.

THE MAP GAME

Two students began rushing through their homework each day just so they could stand at the map. They traced borders, guessed countries, and challenged Laura to keep up. What started as a pastime quickly became known as "The Map Game," coined by Darryl, one of the students. Soon, kids were signing up for double Study Lounge sessions just to play.

Recognizing the opportunity, Laura bought Darryl a globe and map cards and encouraged him to build a curriculum for others. With her support, he created a weekly elective where students could lead and learn together through play-based geography. The Map Game grew into a community of its own, students brought maps from home, shared discoveries, and encouraged each other to push further.

Along the way, the students discovered more than facts. They learned persistence, curiosity, and the joy of tackling challenges together. When Laura introduced a flag book, Amir and Michael were so enthralled they feared other kids would "hog it" and begged to take it home.



AMIR: "I had so many favorites—Brazil, Chile, Spain. I like to learn how they built it up because it doesn't look the same everywhere. I felt safe to learn about countries because of the space and being with people who took it seriously."

MICHAEL: "The first time we played, I didn't know that Russia was half snow. The only Siberian I knew was Husky. Chile was my favorite because I learned it's longer than the United States. It was fun to try hard things, and I loved that I had a choice to be part of it. My favorite part was playing geo-guesser where we would try to use clues to guess where on the map did we just get dropped?"

FALL 2025, THE MAP GAME RETURNED AS AN ELECTIVE: ROOTED IN CURIOSITY, FUELED BY CHOICE, AND BUILT ON THE BELIEF THAT WHEN KIDS LEAD, LEARNING STICKS.

FROM STUDENT VOLUNTEER TO BOARD MEMBER

Cedric Mutebi has always believed opportunity should be within reach for every young person. It's a belief that shaped his path through medical school, guided his research on health disparities, and ultimately brought him to DBG, as our newest board member.

At just 25 years old, Cedric is beginning his second year of residency in Internal Medicine at Northwestern in Chicago, with plans to specialize in cardiology. His connection to DBG deepened as he recognized the importance of health education in Black communities and saw firsthand the impact of environmental racism on children with asthma. While studying at Wayne State, Cedric also noticed the low graduation rate among Black men and responded by founding The Brotherhood, an organization designed to change those outcomes. His vision was to build a pipeline into medicine that supported not only college students but also high school and middle school youth. That personal mission kept Cedric coming back to DBG in many roles—tutor, mentor, and organizational partner.



Over the years, he has taught CPR and emergency response, introduced students to physics and biological sciences, and provided training on health-related topics. He remained active with DBG throughout medical school, graduating in 2024 before moving to Chicago for residency. Even after relocating, Cedric continued looking for ways to contribute, ultimately joining the board to help support the organization at a higher level.

HIS COMMITMENT EXTENDS BEYOND DBG

Cedric served as Medical Director of Sneakers to Scrubs, an initiative that helps Black men pursue careers in medicine by using sports as a gateway. His academic journey and lived experiences have also shaped his understanding of health disparities. While studying sociocultural and environmental factors in health, Cedric came to understand how profoundly a zip code can shape outcomes. That realization became personal when one of his DBG mentee's younger brothers, who suffers from asthma, often couldn't participate in physical activities. It was a reminder that health is about more than numbers, it's about real kids and families.

Cedric officially joined the DBG board in Spring of 2025. His long-term goals include supporting fundraising efforts, guiding health-focused programming, and continuing to model leadership for the next generation of young men who, like him, can grow into both community leaders and professionals.

STIRRING CURIOSITY, ONE MEAL AT A TIME

When Lea joined DBG as our Culinary Community Coordinator, she brought more than just recipes, she brought a vision. A Detroit native with roots in Detroit Food Academy and the founder of Lit Vegan Kitchen, Lea sees food as a way to build love, creativity, and connection.

This summer, her cooking classes opened a new world of possibilities for our students. From learning knife skills to tasting foods they'd never tried before, young people were invited to be curious, creative, and bold in the kitchen. For many, these sessions marked the first time they felt empowered to experiment with ingredients, discover new flavors, and realize that food can be both fun and meaningful.

Lea's impact is rooted in exposure. Whether it's introducing kids to the idea that food can be an act of love, or showing them how to prepare a dish they can share with their families, she's planting seeds of confidence and joy. And the results are tangible: our toughest critics leave class smiling, excited, and asking what's next.

Now, the culinary team is working to take this even further—creating resources that help DBG students and their families learn more about food, explore how to put new meals together, and discover ways to connect over cooking. These resources will include recipes, reflections, and ideas that students can use and share at home. The team understands that food is more than sustenance—it's a bridge to creativity, culture, and community.



AT DBG, WE BELIEVE EVERY STUDENT DESERVES THE CHANCE TO FIND THEIR SPARK. WHAT TYPICALLY STARTS FROM PASSION AND HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE OFTEN EVOLVES INTO FORMAL EDUCATION FOR OUR STUDENTS SUPPORTED BY SCHOLARSHIPS AND PAID TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES—AND OUR CULINARY PROGRAM IS NO EXCEPTION.

FROM FEEDBACK TO IMPACT:

Elevating Student Voice at DBG

Over the last three years, DBG has grown in ways we've always dreamed about. Our staff has doubled. Our programming is robust. We've become more efficient in how we operate. But growth also meant we had to pause and ask ourselves a hard question: Is what worked before still working now?

Last year, our annual evaluation revealed an important insight: while our students valued DBG, many felt their sense of purpose was still unclear, and their relationships with staff weren't as strong as they needed to be. Focus groups showed us that these two challenges were connected. When students felt they had little control over how they spent their time, their engagement and trust in staff declined.

At the time, students' schedules were largely determined by school-based extracurriculars and DBG's age-based programming. While they could select their schedule at the start of each trimester, their entire week was locked in for months, leaving little room for exploration or self-directed growth.

WE LISTENED.

In response, we redesigned the student experience in 2025 around agency, exploration, and connection:

SEPTEMBER SAMPLING:

Instead of committing to a trimester-long schedule immediately, students now spend the first month sampling all types of activities, from athletics to broadcasting to poetry, giving them a chance to explore new learning styles and discover what resonates with them.

STUDENT RELATIONSHIP MANAGERS (SRMS):

This new frontline role ensures students have trusted adults guiding them through the process, helping them connect activities to their goals and building deeper relationships along the way.

INTEGRATED LEARNING SPACES:

We evolved our campus layout and programming to create spaces for different age groups, quieter study zones, and opportunities to bridge academics, athletics, and creative pursuits into a unified sense of purpose.

THE RESULT:

Early evaluation results after these changes show statistically significant growth in key areas of social-emotional development:

RELATIONSHIPS WITH DBG STAFF

Trust and connection between students and staff have deepened.

SELF-EFFICACY

Students' belief in their ability to shape their own success has grown.

ADAPTABILITY

Students are better able to navigate change and challenges.

SENSE OF PURPOSE

Students are finding meaning in their daily activities and future goals.

THESE AREAS OF GROWTH TELL A BIGGER STORY:

when young people are given real ownership of their experience, they thrive—not just in academics or athletics, but as whole humans ready to lead in their communities.

BUILD WITH US

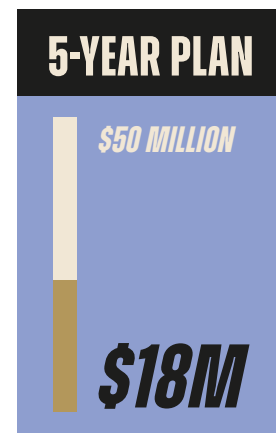


OUR FUTURE VISION

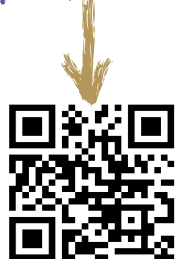
DBG is in the process of raising enough funds to expand our Detroit campus, double capacity, and increase student enrollment to 500. We have a shovel-ready project in the works for a campus expansion, including a STEAM Lab, community space, and DBG Academy for out-of-market partners implementing the DBG methodology in their programs.

The more than 3,000 students on our current waiting list provide a small window into the true demand in Detroit and beyond. DBG is working tirelessly to accelerate our impact and scale support.

OBJECTIVE	AMOUNT
Program Expansion	\$20,000,000
Capacity Building	\$12,000,000
Capital Expansion: STEAM Lab & DBG Academy	\$10,000,000
Sustainability	\$8,000,000
TOTAL NEED:	\$50,000,000



INVEST
IN OUR
FUTURE





EST. **DETROIT** 2007

SMARTER WAYS TO MAKE AN IMPACT

Did you know? Donating stocks or retirement assets can offer greater tax benefits than cash while supporting the students at DBG. Explore smart giving options that work for you.

INVEST HERE



GIVE NOW

