2021 has been another year we will never forget. We have collectively grappled with ongoing systemic racism, the widening of economic inequality, challenges to our democracy, and the continuation of a global pandemic. Through it all, the Kapor Center family of organizations has remained steadfastly committed to our mission – to build a more equitable tech sector, economy, and society.

We’re proud to celebrate a year of impactful and meaningful work that has touched communities all over the country, from our headquarters in Oakland, CA.

While we began 2021 working remotely, Kapor Foundation continued to mobilize for racial justice through our research, computer science education initiatives, community engagement, and work in diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

We aimed to reimagine K-12 computer science education working with students and teachers, publishing research, providing training/webinars, promoting policy change, and supporting advocates across the education, technology, and nonprofit spaces—all with the goal of expanding equity in CS.

We continued our work expanding pathways into technology jobs by supporting upskilling, reskilling and apprenticeship initiatives, and supporting communities of practice and trainings for expanding diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in tech workplaces.

We launched a new racial justice and tech policy initiative to build awareness and capacity to address, mitigate, and prevent harms of technology in communities of color. And we supported civic engagement efforts and COVID relief for communities of color.

And we continued to contribute to the field by publishing reports on Expanding the Latinx Tech Pipeline, The Black Technology Workforce, Racial Justice In Technology, The Computer Science Teacher Landscape, and the California Computer Science Access report. This year, we developed a statewide data dashboard to track computer science courses in California high schools and provide an actionable tool to advocate for policy change. We also partnered with the Computer Science Teachers Association to develop a dashboard showing the demographics of CS teachers across the nation.

By The Numbers

$2M+ distributed to organizations aiming to protect marginalized communities from the harms of technology

$1M+ distributed in funding across over 40 organizations to address a range of critical issues facing communities of color, including civic engagement, COVID, pandemic relief, economic mobility, and much more.

700+ students engaged in CS programming

90+ diversity advocates, professionals, and educators attended our DEI/EE webinars and trainings

4,000,000+ students engaged in CS programming

2021 AN IMPACTFUL YEAR

KAPOR FOUNDATION

AN IMPACTFUL YEAR

AN IMPACTFUL YEAR

AN IMPACTFUL YEAR
SMASH PROGRAM

At SMASH, we’ve taken a deep and holistic approach with our scholars and alumni to address the root causes of why the underrepresentation of people of color in STEM persists. From SMASH Academy to SMASH Rising, Admit, Persist, and Career Catalyst, we’ve been SMASHing barriers throughout 2021 and are well-positioned to SMASH more next year.

681 SMASH Scholars
1334 SMASH Alumni
1200 Career Catalyst

To make a tangible impact, we adapted our operations to account for the biggest change to every education system in the US: a shift to at-home learning. For the first time in 20 years, all SMASH programming ran virtually, serving over 1700 scholars and alumni with STEM justice education and early career exposure across the nation in California, Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, and Pennsylvania.

On the Academy side, we secured new university partners, planned for our first-ever hybrid model of virtual and in-person learning for our scholars in 2022, and launched our biggest -yet long-term partnership with Raytheon Technologies.

Through our SMASH Rising partners including Meta, Autodesk, IDEO CoLab, Zillow Group, Canary Center at Stanford, Raytheon Technologies, and more, we’ve placed hundreds of students into meaningful tech internships and jobs.

LEADERSHIP MOVES

This past May, Danielle Rose, a fierce advocate for systemic change and an engineer of education equity, was named SMASH’s first woman CEO in our nearly 20-year history.

In her first six months, Danielle has made significant impact across the organization; most notably completing a successful second cycle of virtual programming, winning the 2021 Battery Powered Organization Night Pitch, authoring op-ed’s featured in TechCrunch and Fast Company, building and leading stabilization strategy work groups in response to the pandemic impact on SMASH university partners, expanding SMASH’s presence at HBCUs through new partnerships, and welcoming Alexis Thomas, a dynamic education leader, to SMASH as Chief Operating Officer. Additionally, Danielle appointed Zorel Zambrano to Vice President of SMASH Academy and Sivan Levaton to Vice President of College + Workplace Innovation.

In June, Dr. Hassan Brown joined SMASH to lead our new upcoming STEM career exploration digital platform for underrepresented students of color, Career Catalyst, as its Chief Executive Officer. Dr. Brown has developed a bold direction for Career Catalyst including curriculum, podcasts, and short films featuring surgical oncologists, aerospace engineers, pilots, entrepreneurs, and more set to launch in 2022.

By The Numbers

78% of our SMASH seniors committed to majoring in STEM—compared to the 45% national average.
94% of our SMASH Academy scholars demonstrated significant growth in their mastery of skills essential to thriving in STEM classrooms and the workplace.
85% of our SMASH alumni graduate college within 5 years compared to the national average of 55%.

SMASH recruited, hired and trained over 300 facilitators from across the nation on The SMASH Way, providing a transformative STEM educational experience for scholars rooted in equitable learning practices. Of these facilitators, nearly 100 were educators who were able to take their SMASH learnings to over 10,000 students across 18 states.

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2021 AN IMPACTFUL YEAR
Despite some of the hardship of the COVID-19 pandemic and its continuous aftermath, our portfolio has remained strong and brought us impactful success stories in Ed-tech, FinTeh and Health Tech. Across the board, patients in hospitals, students in classrooms, and communities otherwise excluded from financial services have improved their circumstances with our startups.

By The Numbers

- $21M+ invested in technology-driven companies with gap-closing solutions, a nearly 70% increase from 2020
- 24 follow-on investments, deploying nearly $2 million dollars with over 70% of those founders identifying as underrepresented people of color and/or women
- 13 new investments in 2021, deploying $9.8 million into Health Tech, Climate/Energy Tech, FinTech, Growth, and Social Impact Ventures, with over 92% of the founders identifying as underrepresented people of color and/or women

PORTFOLIO HIGHLIGHTS

Clever

Just two years ago, Clever was 9th in Fast Company’s category of World’s Most Innovative Company. This year, our Ed-tech startup was acquired by Norwegian educational giant, Kahoot! Clever is a digital learning platform that connects students, districts, educators, and parents both in school and at home.

Health Sherpa

HealthSherpa, a Healthcare.gov certified web broker, helps individuals, families, employers, and nonprofits enroll in health plans, with a special focus on underserved communities. This year, HealthSherpa enrolled more than 3 million people in coverage, during the pandemic.

Arcus

In the FinTech world, Arcus, a bill pay solution, was acquired by MasterCard. Arcus gives people access to some of the largest billers and retailers in the U.S and Mexico, connecting more people into the digital economy.

Velano Vascular

The needle-free blood draw company, Velano Vascular was acquired by BD earlier this year changing the way patients have to experience blood extraction when hospitalized. Velano Vascular collects blood painlessly after the initial placement of an IV line and enables filling as many tubes as needed over the course of an inpatient visit.

THE YEAR AHEAD

As we face a new year, with continued national dialogues shaping the way we learn, work and coexist, the Kapor Center, Kapor Capital, and SMASH are doubling down on our work – creating a more inclusive technology sector for all. In 2022, we look forward to impacting more lives, fighting for bigger changes and leveling the playing field for all in tech.

impact.kaporcenter.org