

## 2025 Q3 Poverty-fighting Report

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 🗓️ Save-the-date for Slingshot's 3rd Annual MPACT Awards, which will take place on Thursday, March 5th at the Scheidt Family Performing Arts Center
- 📅 Invest in the Accelerate Impact Fund before the end of the year to maximize your philanthropy
- 📈 Our projects to scale a healthcare workforce development program at Memphis Medical District Collaborative and to improve postsecondary persistence rates at Southwest TN Community College are now collectively working with over 900 Memphians experiencing poverty
- 📊 We concluded impact studies with EcOp, Community Legal Center, HopeWorks, and Multinational Memphis
- 🌟 We welcomed Virginia Carr Schneider as an Insights Associate

### OBJECTIVE #1: IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS AND OUTCOMES OF POVERTY-FIGHTING ORGANIZATIONS

**Healthcare Workforce Development Strategy.** We helped develop a 5-year strategy for [MMDC's Hire Local](#) program to dramatically expand employment pathways into high-wage, high-demand jobs in the healthcare sector. This year the project has already helped over 100 people enter these new pathways, where they receive evidence-based wraparound support to help them complete training programs and gain employment. Success Coaches and a Job Placement & Retention Specialist have been added to the Hire Local team to provide these services.



MEMPHIS MEDICAL DISTRICT  
COLLABORATIVE

**Postsecondary Persistence.** A key insight from [MemWorks](#) indicated that postsecondary persistence and attainment was one of the most significant employment roadblocks inhibiting economic mobility for Memphians experiencing poverty. In partnership with [MDRC](#) and [tnAchieves](#), we launched MemCOMPLETE and MemACCESS, a 3-year pilot to enhance and expand tnAchieves' comprehensive student support at Southwest Tennessee Community College. This pilot seeks to:

- Increase graduation rates 2x, to reach the national average
- Provide successful coaching to 900 students annually
- Increase average employment rates from 65% to 75%
- Increase average annual income by more than 20%
- Increase expected lifetime earnings for students by \$200k - \$300k



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**Workforce Collective.** We completed a comprehensive evaluation of the challenges young adults face moving through the employment continuum, from awareness through training and job placement to wealth accumulation. Key findings include:

- Few resources exist to help young adults identify and align their aptitudes with jobs that provide economic mobility
- Training program durations and meeting times are often not aligned with young adults' life circumstances
- Insufficient experiential learning and earn-while-you-learn opportunities are available
- Training capacity is constrained by a lack of high-quality instructors

We are now designing specific projects to help address several of these challenges that will launch in early 2026.



**Portfolio Expansion.** We added Family Resilience Initiative (FRI) to our portfolio of poverty-fighting organizations. FRI is a multi-disciplinary collaboration implemented between the [University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center](#) (UTHSC), [Le Bonheur Children's Hospital](#), [UT Le Bonheur Pediatric Specialists](#) (ULPS), and [Methodist Le Bonheur Community Outreach](#) (MLCO). Its mission is to assist families with any health related social needs by providing direct connections with resources, and to build resiliency through addressing ACEs, including mitigating the effects of previous ACEs and preventing future ACEs. A key component of FRI is the ongoing follow-up activities to maintain contact, build relationships, and ensure access to resources.



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## **OBJECTIVE #2: INCREASE THE ALLOCATION OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO THE MOST EFFECTIVE POVERTY-FIGHTING EFFORTS**

**3rd Annual MPACT Awards.** [Slingshot's MPACT Awards](#) will take place on Thursday, March 5th 2026 at the Scheidt Family Performing Arts Center. The MPACT Awards is Memphis' signature poverty-fighting celebration, as community leaders from the private, public, and nonprofit sectors gather to spotlight effective poverty-fighting efforts that are moving our city forward!



**Philanthropic Advisory Services.** We continued to scale our philanthropic advisory services to help passionate Memphians amplify their poverty-fighting impact. By leveraging our expertise of the poverty-fighting ecosystem, we help funders align on a strategy, design investment approaches, contribute resources with confidence, and analyze the impact of their investments. We offer this thought-leadership to:

- Individual philanthropists
- Private foundations
- Businesses and corporations
- Government institutions

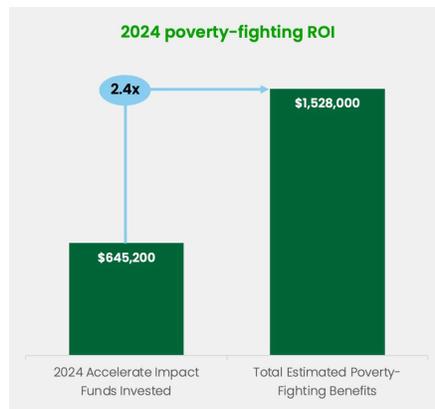
If you are interested in maximizing your philanthropy, reach out to [John Dunavant](#) to learn more.

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**Accelerate Impact Fund.** Whether you're a philanthropist with \$50 or \$50,000, we invite you to use the [Accelerate Impact Fund](#) to fight poverty this season. Here's how it works:

- We conduct impact studies on poverty-fighting nonprofits
- You invest your financial resources into the Accelerate Impact Fund
- We allocate 100% of your contributions based on the results of the impact studies

In 2024, we transformed \$645,200 of philanthropic funds into over \$1.5 million of poverty-fighting benefits.



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### **OBJECTIVE #3: EQUIP DECISION-MAKERS WITH THE INSIGHTS AND TOOLS TO MAKE MORE EVIDENCE-BASED DECISIONS**

**Poverty-fighting Organization Leaders.** The impact team and insights team concluded impact studies with [EcOp](#), [Community Legal Center](#), [HopeWorks](#), and [Multinational Memphis](#).

15 additional impact studies are expected to conclude in Q4. Reports from those impact studies will be published on [Slingshot's website](#) soon.

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**Asset Funders Network.** Jared Barnett was invited to share what is needed to establish an effective workforce ecosystem in Memphis with grant-makers from the Memphis Asset Funders Network (AFN). Jared highlighted the critical components that enable employment pathways and identified strong existing efforts as well as gaps that need to be addressed, such as a lack of a centralized workforce intermediary, insufficient training capacity, and the need for more sector- specific workforce strategies.



**Corporate Community Engagement Leaders.** Jared Barnett and John Dunavant met with community engagement leaders from BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee, FedEx, International Paper, and Sylvamo to share ideas for how local corporations can enhance their poverty-fighting efforts through both financial investments (e.g., grant-making) and non-financial investments (e.g., volunteering, board membership, etc.).

**Southwest Tennessee Community College Administrators.** Josh Gettys and John Dunavant met with leaders from Southwest Tennessee Community College to share [insights about the roadblocks](#) that consistently impede Memphians from accessing educational and workforce opportunities.



## ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES

**Team Summit.** The entire Slingshot team united in August to connect to Slingshot's mission, build community as a team, embrace our people strategy, and advance our strategic initiatives. Pictured below (left to right) is Sanghmitra Tripathy, Jared Barnett, Yoan Anguilet, John Dunavant, and Mark'Quest Ajoku—all wearing green for Slingshot!



**Virginia Carr Schneider joined the team.** We are excited to welcome Virginia Carr Schneider as an Insights Associate. Virginia is finishing her PhD in Public Management and Policy at Georgia State University this year. She will primarily be responsible for performing secondary research and conducting both quantitative and qualitative analysis to help improve the effectiveness and outcomes of the poverty-fighting organizations in our portfolio.



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**Langston Hughes completed internship.** Langston Hughes, a Lausanne Collegiate School alum and current undergraduate student at Harvard University, spent his summer supporting the impact team and learning more about how to revolutionize poverty-fighting effectiveness.

A graphic featuring a quote on a green background and a portrait of Langston Rogers. The quote reads: "Slingshot's mission resonates with me because it treats poverty not as an abstract statistic but as a solvable problem. Being part of an organization that uses rigorous data and thoughtful strategy to maximize impact showed me that real change is possible when compassion meets accountability." Below the quote is the name "Langston Rogers" and the title "Impact Intern". To the right is a portrait of Langston Rogers, a man with a beard wearing a blue button-down shirt, smiling against a brick wall background.

“  
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—  
Langston Rogers  
Impact Intern

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Barnett".

Jared Barnett  
President & CEO