



PHILLY

SPRING 2026 NEWSLETTER

CLIENT PARTNER SPOTLIGHT – TYREE WALLACE

When **Tyree Wallace** sits down for our interview, his demeanor emanates honesty and urgency— an urgency that says he knows the value of time. That’s because Tyree spent 26 years behind bars for a crime he did not commit, and he knows all too well what it means to keep going when the odds say stop.

It wasn’t until a sustained public campaign brought national attention to his case that Tyree was finally released. And when that day arrived in late 2024, Tyree came home not simply determined to rebuild his own life but committed to building power and possibility for others.

The vision he carried with him began long before his release. In 2019, while still incarcerated, Tyree founded *Mann Up*— a program that provides structure, accountability, leadership development, and purpose to men who are routinely discarded by both the prison system and society. And when freedom finally came, he turned that hard-won clarity into **Systemic Reformatory Change (SRC)**.

That’s where a Fountain Fund business loan provided critical access to capital so Tyree could hit the ground running. The loan, Tyree notes, didn’t “save” him. “What The Fountain Fund did was trust in me. And that trust changed single-handedly how I was able to show up every day.” He continues, “It turned my idea into a place. A place where people could walk in, sit down, be respected, be seen.”

With that foothold, Tyree is doing what the loan asked of him: building something that lasts. As Executive Director, Wallace leads SRC with a philosophy forged through lived reality: trust must be earned, dignity must be visible, and reform must be structural. Under his leadership, SRC deploys trained local leadership into neighborhoods, responds directly to community needs, and mobilizes residents to participate in civic life.

As our interview comes to a close, Tyree reflects on the life-changing bonds that he formed with others while behind the wall. One of the things he remembers most clearly is the conversations he had with others like Mike Butler, Fountain Fund Philadelphia Site Director, and Robert Groves, Client Partner Associate. “When we return home,” they asked of themselves, “...what are we going to do to make our communities better, our families better, the world better?”

Wallace’s journey—from wrongful conviction to system-level reformer—embodies one of SRC’s core tenets: not merely helping people survive unjust systems but transforming those systems altogether.



As a coveted speaker, Tyree Wallace shares his story and inspires others to become civically engaged. Shares Tyree, “I am convinced that sunlight is the best disinfectant. When good people know about what’s happening, they act more times than not.”

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS: CREDIT BUILDING BRINGS A BRIGHTER TOMORROW



Client Partner Christopher Green increased his credit score from 485 to 720+ with help from a Fountain Fund loan. Consistent payments and reduced debt strengthened his credit profile and made homeownership possible, allowing him to secure a 6% mortgage interest rate through a traditional bank on his family’s first home.

When Christopher finally held the keys to his new three-room bedroom rancher in hand, he told his children, “*This is your house.*” He told his grandchildren, “*You can go to school and tell them your pop-pop bought a house for you.*” Generational wealth brightens the future... for future generations. Congratulations, Christopher.

PROGRAM PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: SYSTEMIC REFORMATIVE CHANGE

As a referral partner collaborating with **Systemic Reformative Change (SRC)**, The Fountain Fund takes pride in supporting their innovative initiatives. Three ways they are shifting the paradigm:

- First, SRC challenges the limits of traditional charity. As Executive Director **Tyree Wallace** explains, providing resources alone does not change systems; durable reform requires civic engagement and organized political power. SRC therefore operates as both a 501(c)(3) and a 501(c)(4), allowing it to pair direct community work with advocacy aimed at changing laws, policies, and public narratives that sustain mass incarceration and inequity.
- Second, SRC builds reform from the ground up. Through highly visible, disciplined initiatives like its street-level leadership teams, the organization builds trust and accountability in neighborhoods that have long experienced neglect and over-policing.
- Third, SRC brings credibility to reform efforts by centering people directly impacted by incarceration. Wallace and his collaborators are not theorizing reentry—they have lived it. Their insight allows SRC to identify where systems fail and to mobilize public pressure to demand change.



FOUNTAIN FUND TO PRESENT AT NATIONAL CREDIT BUILDERS ALLIANCE SUMMIT

The Fountain Fund is excited to present at the national **Credit Builders Alliance Summit** this June! Through a dynamic, facilitated conversation, our lending leaders Shantel Hopkins (Director of Lending), Sankofa Alkebu-Lan (Loan Operations Specialist), and Jeffrey Beacham (Loan Assets Specialist) will explore how credit can serve as a tool for elevation for the formerly incarcerated. The session will examine how lending systems can honor dignity while still meeting expectations around risk, sustainability, and performance, ultimately helping individuals move beyond barriers toward a future that is “cleared for takeoff.”



Sankofa Alkebu-Lan (left), Jeff Beacham (right), and Shantel Hopkins are excited to share their hard-earned wisdom at this year's CBA Summit taking place June 10-12, 2026, in Arlington, Virginia.



Facilitated by Shantel in a fireside chat format, the conversation will go beyond theory to offer a transparent, real-world view of how credit building can lead to economic growth and financial stability for vulnerable populations. The session will highlight the vital importance of turning a systemic “No” into a life-changing “Yes.”

PHILADELPHIA FACTS

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

95% “Report having achieved their self-determined goals.”
95% “Were not reincarcerated.”

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

- “I can’t wait to pay off my loan because of how invaluable it was to me.”
- “Since I got connected to The Fountain Fund, I literally have had stable housing, stable finances. ... And my health has gotten way, way better. I was very depressed. Now I’m moving forward.”

GROWING STRONG

We’re excited to welcome **Robert Groves, Client Partner Associate**, to our team!

TOTAL LENDING

As of February 28, 2026, Philadelphia’s total lending included 186 loans valued at \$1,647,556.

OTHER SERVICES

Financial Literacy Trainings
Certification Offerings
Housing Referrals
Links to other Services

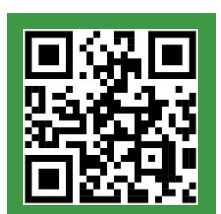
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EXAMPLES OF PHILADELPHIA LOANS

- Housing: First, Last & Security
- Obtain a Driver’s License
- Vehicle Repair & Purchase
- Business Start-Up & Equipment
- Tuition
- Court Fines & Fees



Courageous things are happening at all our sites. Learn more!