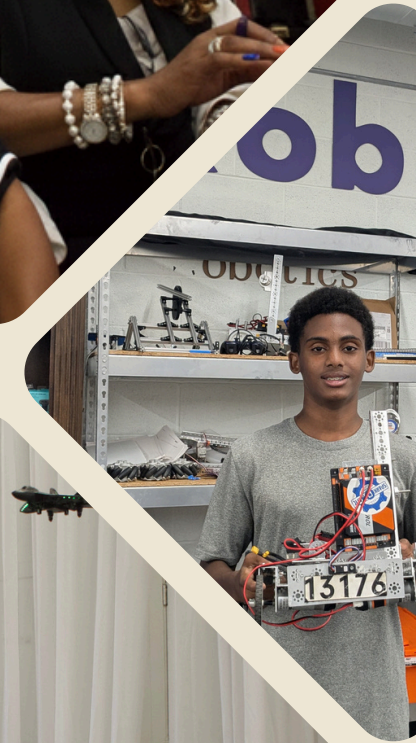


THE
BEANPATHT+
CULTIVATE TO SPROUT. DETERMINE YOUR ROUTE.



**2018-2025
IMPACT
REPORT**

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**TECHNOLOGY SHOULD BE
ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE,
NOT JUST A FEW.**

”

Founder's Message

Seven years ago, The Bean Path began with a simple idea: expand access to technology and create opportunities for people in our community to learn, grow, and thrive. What started with small gatherings in local libraries has grown into a vibrant hub for innovation, learning, and collaboration in Jackson and beyond.

From the beginning, the vision was clear—technology should be accessible to everyone, not just a few. Over the years, we have watched that vision take shape through the people who walk through our doors: young learners discovering coding for the first time, adults gaining new digital skills, entrepreneurs strengthening their businesses, and community members exploring what is possible through technology.

The Bean Path has become more than a place to learn tech skills. It has become a community resource, a gathering space for ideas, and a bridge connecting people to opportunity in an increasingly digital world.

This progress would not be possible without the partners, supporters, and community members who believed in this vision from the very beginning. Your support has helped turn a small idea into a movement that continues to grow and evolve.

As we look ahead, our commitment remains the same: to ensure that innovation, digital literacy, and opportunity are within reach for everyone. The work is far from finished, but the future is bright—and we are just getting started.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

With Gratitude and Determination,

**Dr. Nashlie Sephus
Founder & CEO, The Bean Path**

President of The Board's Message



As someone who works in the technology industry and has helped to evaluate and select rising talent from the college ranks for tech-related opportunities, I see firsthand how quickly the digital economy is evolving and how critical it is that communities like Jackson are prepared to participate in it.

Today's technology workforce requires more than technical knowledge. Employers are looking for individuals who are curious, willing to learn, and able to apply technology to real-world challenges. That's why The Bean Path is so important.

The Bean Path is not only introducing people to technology—it is building the foundation of a local tech ecosystem. Through digital literacy support, workforce development programs, youth STEAM education, and hands-on training through the Makerspace, The Bean Path is helping people develop the skills that today's employers are actively seeking.

We are ensuring that access to these opportunities are not limited to a select few. By expanding digital access and training across our community, we are creating a more inclusive and competitive workforce for Mississippi's growing technology sector.

The future of our economy will be shaped by innovation, and innovation begins with people. The Bean Path is preparing the next generation of talent, entrepreneurs, and technology leaders who will help drive that future forward.

I am proud to serve as Board Chair and to support an organization that is helping ensure our community is ready for the opportunities of the digital age.

“

**THE BEAN PATH IS BUILDING
THE FOUNDATION OF A LOCAL
TECH ECOSYSTEM.**

”

Best Regards,

**Xavius Levy
President of the Board**



“

**ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY
SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO
EVERYONE, REGARDLESS OF
BACKGROUND, INCOME, OR
ZIP CODE.**

”

Executive Director's Message

Over the past seven years, we have seen what happens when communities are given the tools, resources, and spaces to explore innovation. Curiosity turns into skills, ideas become businesses, and individuals begin to see themselves as creators in the digital economy.

As we look ahead, our focus is on deepening that impact. The Bean Path will continue expanding opportunities for residents to gain hands-on experience with emerging technologies, strengthen workforce pathways into high-growth tech careers, and ensure that youth, entrepreneurs, and lifelong learners all have access to the knowledge and infrastructure needed to thrive in a rapidly evolving world.

Through spaces like the Makerspace and The Bean Barn, we are creating environments where creativity, collaboration, and innovation can flourish. These spaces are not just buildings—they are platforms for community-driven learning, entrepreneurship, and economic opportunity.

Our future will also be defined by partnerships. The progress we have made has been possible because of the support of community members, funders, educators, volunteers, and organizations that believe in the importance of technology access. Together, we are helping ensure that Jackson is not left behind in the digital age. We believe the future of technology should include everyone—and we are committed to helping make that future a reality.

Sincerely,

Tamika Jenkins
Executive Director

Why This Work Matters



Bridging Mississippi's Technology Gap

Technology is reshaping nearly every industry—from healthcare and manufacturing to education and entrepreneurship. Yet for many communities across Mississippi, access to technology education, innovation spaces, and digital career pathways has historically been limited.

These gaps are not about talent or potential. Mississippi is home to extraordinary creativity, curiosity, and entrepreneurial spirit. What has often been missing are the spaces, resources, and pathways that connect people to opportunity in the digital economy.

The Bean Path was created to help bridge that gap. By introducing residents to emerging technologies, providing hands-on learning opportunities, and building community innovation spaces like the Makerspace and The Bean Barn, The Bean Path is helping expand access to the tools and knowledge needed to thrive in a technology-driven world.

From youth exploring robotics for the first time, to entrepreneurs prototyping new products, to older adults gaining confidence with digital tools, The Bean Path is helping ensure that technology opportunity is accessible to everyone.

Because the future of technology should not be limited by geography, income, or background—it should be open to all.

The Bean Path Story



Mission Statement

The Bean Path's mission is to create equity and cultivate talent in Mississippi by providing access to the tools, knowledge, and networks needed to educate, innovate, and strengthen the tech ecosystem. It aims to bridge the digital divide and empower individuals and communities to succeed in the digital age through hands-on workshops, classes, and community events, starting with Jackson.

- **Create equity:** To provide equal opportunities in STEM fields for everyone.
- **Cultivate talent:** To grow the tech ecosystem and mentor entrepreneurs and innovators.
- **Empower communities:** To equip people with the skills and resources to navigate and excel in a tech-driven world through access to tools, knowledge, and networks.

What's In A Name?

The Bean Path is inspired by both tech and nature. In computer programming, a “bean” is a small piece of code that serves as a building block for creating bigger, more complex systems. At the same time, bean also brings to mind a seed; something small, but once planted, grows and takes its own path. The Bean Path blends these ideas, representing our mission to help people grow their tech skills and carve out their own journey in the world of technology.

THE BEANPATH

CULTIVATE TO SPROUT. DETERMINE YOUR ROUTE.



2018

FOUNDING

The Bean Path was founded by Dr. Nashlie Sephus (AI scientist, engineer, and entrepreneur) as a tech nonprofit in Jackson, Mississippi. It initially started as a partnership with local libraries to provide tech services and exposure to the community.

LAND ACQUISITION

Dr. Sephus purchased 22 acres of land in downtown Jackson for a multi-million dollar Tech District development, partnering with Bean Path to bring revitalization to the area.

2020-2021



2023

CORE GROWTH

Bean Path significantly expanded its reach, hosting over 51 community-driven programs that reached over 3500 people, including a summer program and hiring full-time staff for programming.

HISTORY

EARLY GROWTH

Bean Path grew to engage nearly 100 volunteers and 10 part-time staff, impacting 1k+ individuals and orgs through programs including Tech Office Hours, youth programs, and awarding scholarships/grants.

2019-2020



2022

MAKERSPACE OPENING

Bean Path opened its Makerspace as Phase One of the Tech District during its 4th anniversary celebration with support from the Kellogg Foundation and Amazon.



MAJOR EXPANSION

With 50+ staff members and multiple locations, Bean Path raised over \$3M and expanded its programming that impacts senior adults, entrepreneurs, and youth. The Bean Barn opened as phase two of the developing Tech District..

2024-2025



Impact By The Numbers

Over the past seven years, The Bean Path has worked to expand access to technology, learning, and innovation across our community. While the true impact of this work is reflected in the people we serve and the opportunities created, these key metrics offer a snapshot of the scale and reach of our efforts. Together, they represent thousands of moments where curiosity was sparked, skills were developed, and pathways into the digital economy began to take shape.

2018– 2025 Impact Metrics



\$6M

Invested in
technology access



17,000

People impacted through
programs and outreach



3,000+

Community learning
programs hosted



\$65K

Scholarships
awarded to startups
and entrepreneurs



50

Local and regional
partnerships

10

Programs That Power the Mission

Makerspace Programs

The Bean Path Makerspace is a 6,000+ square-foot community workshop that serves as Jackson's premier STEAM hub. Designed as a hands-on learning environment, the Makerspace provides residents with access to tools, equipment, and technologies that are often financially out of reach. Weekly classes led by experienced instructors allow participants to explore tools and technologies ranging from engineering and coding to jewelry making, ceramics, sewing, and digital fabrication.

1,475

Combined class participants from 2024 through 2025.

\$10K

Estimated cost savings from free equipment usage since 2022.

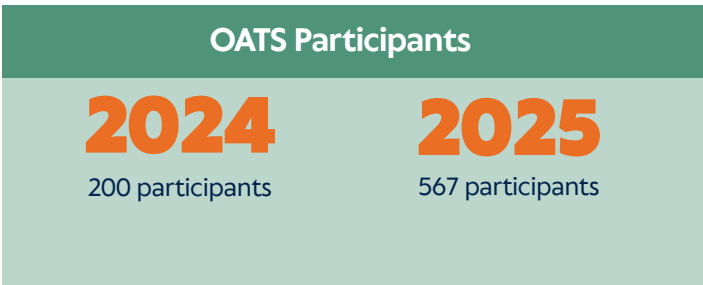
50

Entrepreneurs and small businesses supported in the past two years.



OATS Program

Through the Older Adults Technology Services (OATS) program, The Bean Path helps change that narrative. As an affiliate of AARP’s national initiative, OATS provides welcoming, community-driven classes designed specifically for adults aged 50 and above. Participants learn practical digital skills—from navigating smartphones and video calls to accessing online services—empowering them to stay connected, informed, and confident in an increasingly digital world.



“IT’S SO REWARDING TEACHING THE SENIORS AND WATCHING THEM BECOME MORE COMFORTABLE EACH WEEK.

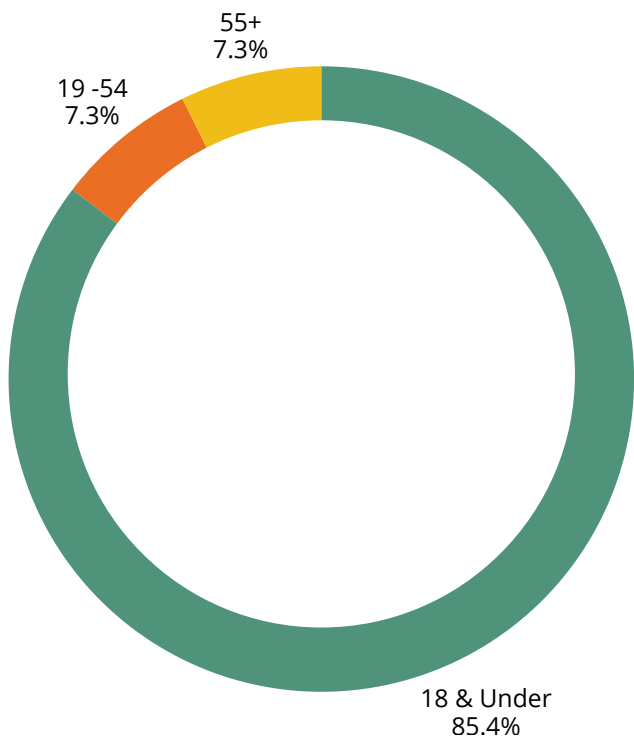
-ERICA ARCHIE
OATS INSTRUCTOR



STEAM Education

Across Jackson, The Bean Path introduces youth and families to the excitement of science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics. Through robotics programs in schools, coding workshops, and community demonstrations, students gain hands-on experience with the tools shaping the future. Programs like Full STEAM Ahead Summer Camp, STEAM Tuesdays, and Family Fun STEAM Days create spaces where young people can experiment, collaborate, and imagine what's possible.

Total Participants by Age (2025)



85% of participants are youth (18 & under)

AGE	NUMBERS
18 & Under	2996
19-54	257
55+	257

STEAM Education Impact (2025)



3210
Participants



246
Programs



31
New Programs



10
Job Placements

34%

of participants paid for STEAM programming

13



More than **1,000 participants** enrolled in paid STEAM programs in 2025, demonstrating strong demand for hands-on technology learning.



Pathway To Tech

Launched in November 2025, Pathways to Tech connects residents to the skills, certifications, and employer networks needed to enter high-growth technology careers. Participants receive training in areas such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, data science, digital marketing, UX/UI design, and tech-enabled entrepreneurship. By combining technical instruction with career preparation and industry connections, the program helps residents move from learning about technology to building careers within it.

Community Connections

The Bean Path stays connected to the community through signature events, volunteer engagement, and active participation in local gatherings across Jackson. From hosting programs like the Anniversary Celebration, AI Month, and STEAM Summer Camp to showing up at community parades, Jackson Public Schools science fairs, and neighborhood events, The Bean Path brings technology and creativity directly to the people.

Signature Events



Annual Anniversary Celebration

The Bean Path marks its anniversary with a week-long celebration that reflects the spirit of innovation and community that drives its mission. Throughout the week, residents gather for activities, demonstrations, and conversations that highlight the progress made over the past year and the possibilities ahead. The celebration culminates in a lively community block party—an open invitation for families, supporters, and neighbors to come together for hands-on STEAM activities, music, and fellowship.



AI Month

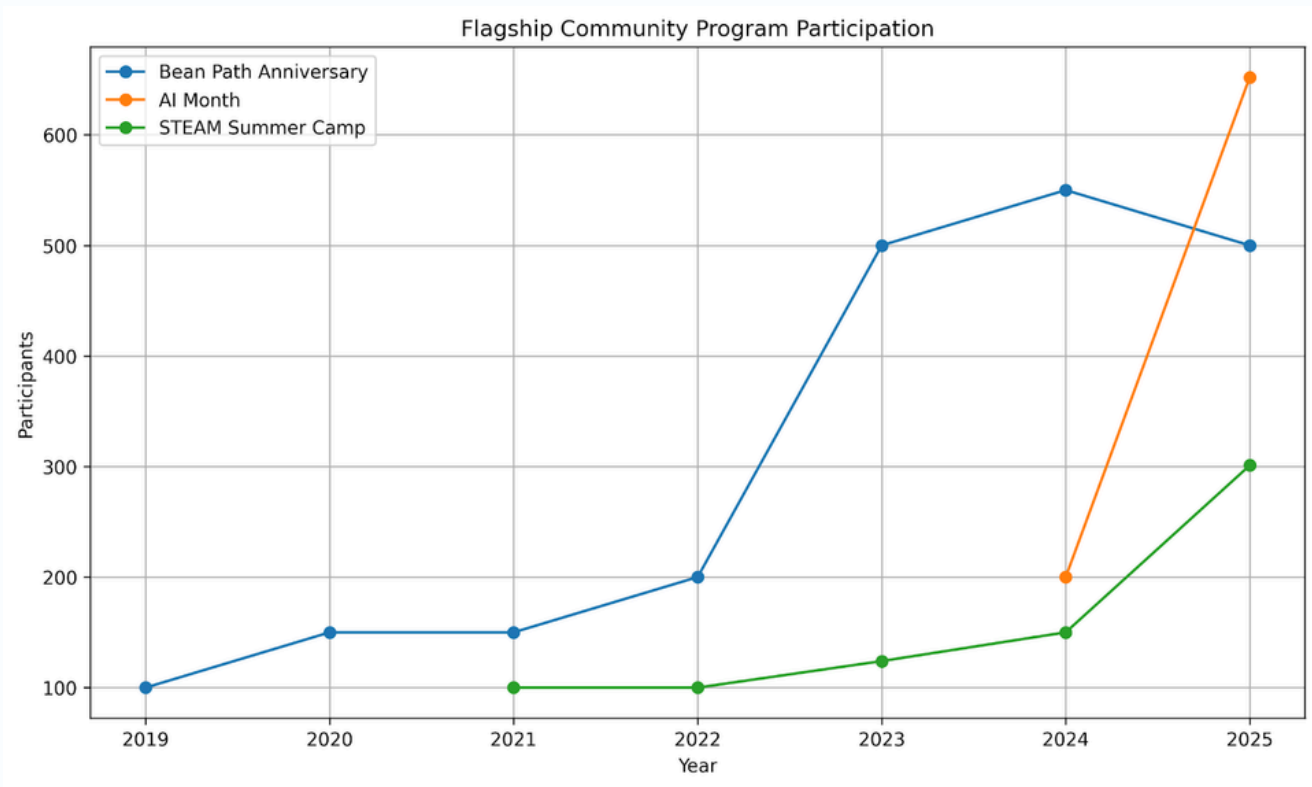
AI Month creates a space where curiosity, learning, and collaboration around artificial intelligence take center stage. As part of the Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Collaborative (MAIC), The Bean Path hosts workshops, demonstrations, and discussions that introduce the broader community to the possibilities of AI and emerging technologies. At the same time, it serves as a gathering point for technology professionals, innovators, and entrepreneurs to connect, exchange ideas, and deepen their understanding of rapidly evolving tools and trends.



STEAM Summer Camp

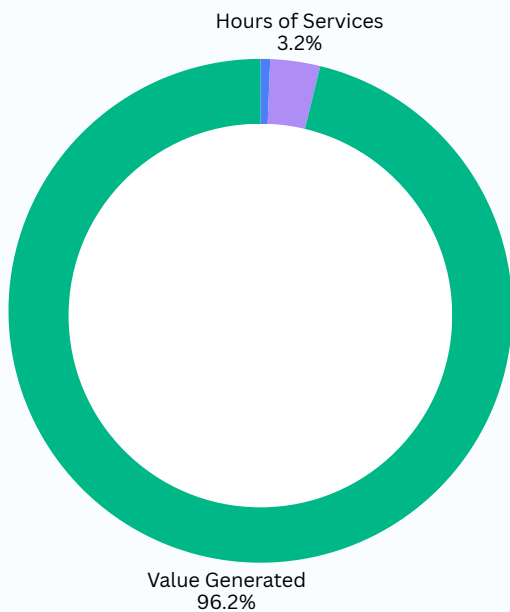
The STEAM Summer Camp introduces a new dimension of science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics. Campers dive into hands-on experiences that range from coding, robotics, and engineering challenges to fashion design and video production. Along the way, they learn to blend creativity with science through art-infused projects that encourage experimentation and imagination.





Ambassador & Volunteers

The Bean Path’s Ambassador Program helps to deepen community engagement and strengthen the network of volunteers who support its mission. Ambassadors serve as advocates, mentors, and event volunteers—helping introduce new audiences to technology while supporting programs, workshops, and community events throughout the year.



135
Volunteers



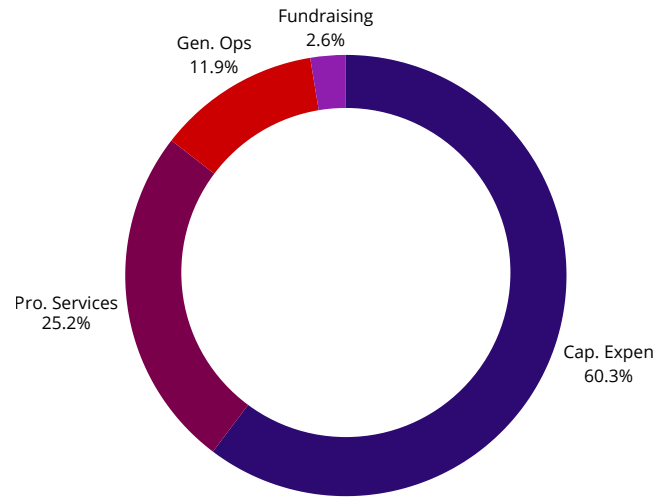
698
Hours of service



\$20,955
Value Generated

Funding & Support

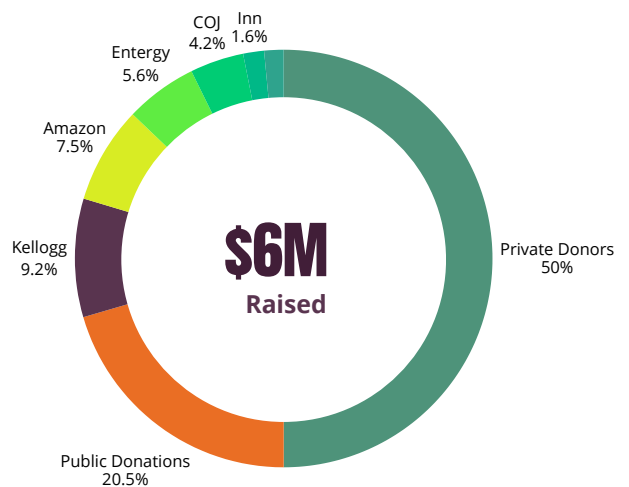
Over the past seven years, The Bean Path has experienced steady growth made possible through the support of philanthropic partners, corporate sponsors, public funding, and individual donors. These investments have enabled the organization to expand access to STEAM education, workforce training, and community technology programs across Jackson and beyond. As funding has grown, The Bean Path has remained committed to directing resources toward programs that create meaningful opportunities for learning, innovation, and economic mobility. This continued support reflects a shared belief that expanding access to technology is essential to building a stronger future for the community.



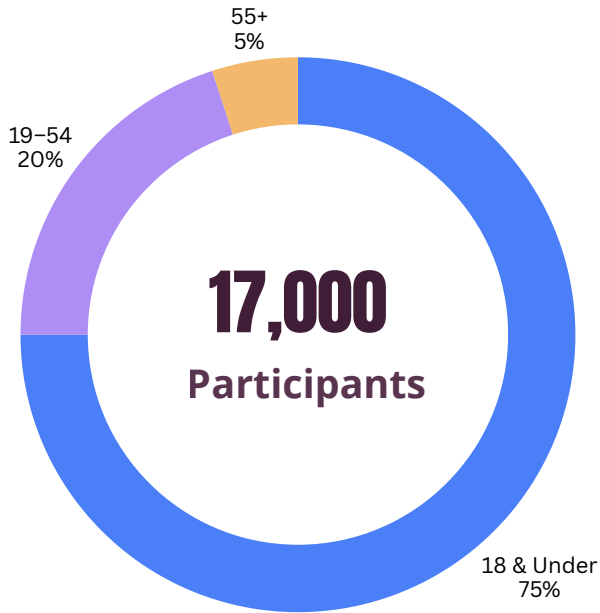
EXPENSES	
Program Services	\$1,345,442
Labor / Wages	\$568,517
General Operations	\$636,999
Fundraising	\$138,232
Capital Expenditures	\$3,220,523
Total	\$5,909,713.00

FUNDERS

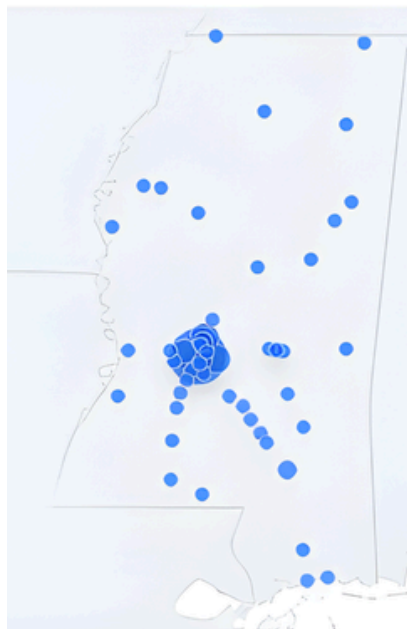
Private Donors	\$3,000,000
Public Donations	\$1,228,000
Kellogg	\$550,000
Amazon	\$450,000
Entergy	\$335,000
City of Jackson	\$250,000
Innovate	\$97,000
CSpire	\$90,000



Who We Serve



75% of participants are youth (18 & under)



MS

Jackson	1,120
Brandon	188
Madison	188
Clinton	152
Pearl	90
Ridgeland	70



Founder & CEO | Board Member

Dr. Nashlie Sephus

Meet The Bean Team



Executive Director

Tamika Jenkins



Makerspace Director

Adam Crowe



STEAM Director

Traci Johnson



Marketing Director

Mariah Morris



Engagement Manager

Lena Horne



Public Relations Manager

Shameka Reed



Digital Marketing Coordinator

Terran McDaniels



Bean Barn Coordinator

Ashten Jones



Venue Rental & Event Bookings

Crystal Hill

Meet The Board Members



Board President
Xavius Levy



Board Member
Roderick K. Jackson, Ph.D



Board Member
Ivan Walker



Board Member
Almesha L. Campbell, Ph.D.



Board Member
Dr. Amber Johnson Avery



Board Member
Theresa Grace Kennedy



Board Member
Stephen Brown



Board Member
Dr. Creston Burse



Board Member
Jason Bright

Testimonials & Stories



Phillip Brookins, Internal IT Auditor
Python Coding Class

I've learned a lot from our Python Coding teacher Ricky Romanek. He's a really good teacher. He's taught me a lot. He's really patient with me. Because I've been coming to the python classes at The Bean path, I've been able to become an IT Auditor.



Kenneth Williams, Attendee
Chatbot Class

I work in IT and I came to the Chatbot class to learn more about AI. For me AI is something new and consistently developing. This class helped to open my eyes as to what AI is really about, how I can use it and where it's headed.

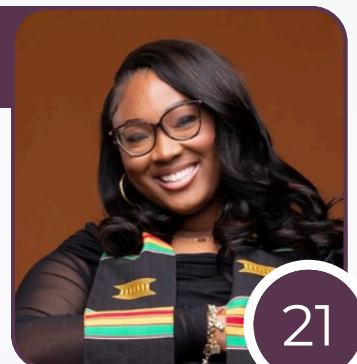
Ricky Romanek
Volunteer / Instructor

I'm a Python Coding instructor. I help individuals who have never written a line of code to writing code and create their first program. When it all clicks and their face lights up, that's why I do it. Beyond classes The Bean Path has invested in me as an entrepreneur. I have pitched here for a startup that I'm working on and actually won some funding. When people support The Bean Path, they are helping to support bridging the technical gap here in Mississippi.



Lalia Lovett, 2025 Sowing Seed Scholarship Recipient
Greenville, MS

I was so excited to receive this scholarship. It was the first scholarship that I received. This gave me the motivation that I needed heading into my first year of college and to further my education.



Testimonials & Stories



Riley Adams

2025 Sowing Seed Scholarship Recipient

Receiving the Sowing Seeds Scholarship helped me pursue my academic and career goals. It allows me to focus on my academic success without having to worry about the financial burdens of tuition. I look forward to the day that I can give back to others in the same way that The Bean Path has given to me.



Myesha Wallace

2022 Portia Powell STEM Teacher Award Recipient

Organizations like The Bean Path play a crucial role in supporting and recognizing outstanding educators. Continuing to celebrate and uplift the work of teachers helps to shine a light on the vital contributions we make to education and society. Such recognition not only encourages educators, but also highlights the importance of innovative teaching methods that prepare students for the future.

**Sylvia Woodard, Participant
Makerspace Sewing Class**

“When I signed up for the sewing classes at the Bean Path, I had never touched a sewing machine before, but I had always wanted to learn and finally got the courage to try. I walked in knowing absolutely nothing. I walked out with a new hobby. This was truly a great experience.”



**Mary Overton
OATS**

I enrolled in the OATS program because I work in an office and needed to improve my technical skills. Me learning how to navigate technology has opened up a whole new world of opportunities and possibilities. I want to thank The Bean Path for this opportunity, because a lot of times as seniors programs like this aren't offered.

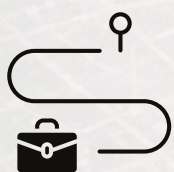


The Road Ahead: Building Jackson's Tech Ecosystem



The Bean Path is helping lay the foundation for a growing technology and innovation ecosystem in Jackson. Through the development of the Bean Path Tech District—a 21-acre mixed-use innovation hub in downtown Jackson—the organization is creating spaces where learning, creativity, entrepreneurship, and community can intersect. The next chapter of The Bean Path is focused on ensuring that Mississippi residents are not just consumers of technology—but creators, innovators, and leaders in the digital economy.

WHAT'S NEXT



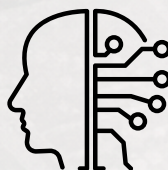
Growing Pathways to Tech

Scaling the Pathways to Technology workforce program to connect more residents with industry-recognized certifications, high-growth jobs and job placement opportunities.



Expanding the Tech District

Developing a 21-acre innovation district that brings together entrepreneurs, technologists, educators, and community members in a shared ecosystem.



Preparing Residents for AI and Emerging Technologies

Equipping communities with the knowledge and skills needed to participate in the next generation of technology—from artificial intelligence to advanced manufacturing.



Thank You to Our Community

The progress highlighted in this report would not be possible without the support of partners, funders, volunteers, and community members who believe in the mission of The Bean Path. Together, we are building a more connected, creative, and innovative Mississippi.

thebeanpath.org | info@thebeanpath.org | [@thebeanpath](https://www.instagram.com/thebeanpath)

