

Transforming Communities Through Business



ASSETS ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 24-25

Our Vision

A human-centered economy

Creating a human-centered economy means prioritizing people and sustainability. It ensures that businesses contribute to communities, promote opportunity, and drive positive social and environmental impact.



Our Values

- Trust
- Ownership
- Equity
- Justice
- Excellence

Our Mission

ASSETS cultivates entrepreneurial leadership to create economic opportunity for underserved communities.

A Letter from our CEO & Board Chair

Dear Partners and Friends,

This past year, ASSETS has continued to do what it does best: break down systemic barriers, equip entrepreneurs with tools for long-term success and invest in a more inclusive economy, one built by and for the people it serves.

As CEO and Board Chair, we are proud to witness firsthand how ASSETS is moving beyond short-term fixes and building the foundation for lasting change. Through values-driven lending, thoughtful program design and deep connection to the communities we serve, ASSETS is creating real pathways for entrepreneurs who have long been overlooked.

In fiscal year 24 / 25, ASSETS made bold investments in people, deploying over \$300,000 in grants and microloans. These funds supported early-stage entrepreneurs, who often face barriers when seeking traditional financing.

We also continued our commitment to high-impact training and coaching, equipping more than 500 entrepreneurs with the knowledge and confidence to build businesses that reflect their values. These efforts help entrepreneurs lead with purpose, create good jobs and become anchors in their communities.

This work is only possible because of partners like you, those who believe in a future where success isn't limited by zip code. Together we're creating a new standard for what an economy can be: human-centered, justice-oriented and built to last.

On behalf of the ASSETS Board of Directors, team and entrepreneurs, we thank you for standing with us. The work ahead is urgent and important, and we're just getting started.

With gratitude,

Jaime Arroyo, CEO
Peter Barber, Board Chair
ASSETS Lancaster



Our Impact (FY 24/25)

Building Equity and Opportunity Across Central PA



550
clients served through training and lending

\$312,850
invested in local entrepreneurs through grants & microloans

\$9,000
average loan size equipping entrepreneurs with accessible capital



171
jobs supported and created across the region

Impact at ASSETS means opening doors. We champion entrepreneurs who are building businesses with purpose. Our role is to walk beside them, offering tools, training, and support so their visions thrive and their communities flourish.



Investing in Our Communities

Community Lending: Putting Dollars to Work



At ASSETS, Community Lending fuels opportunity and equity. We work alongside financial institutions to reach entrepreneurs who may not yet have access to conventional lending. Together, we're helping build a more inclusive economy, where all business owners can access the resources they need to thrive.



Key Aspects of Community Lending at ASSETS:

- **Expanding Access:** By offering early-stage capital and flexible terms, our microloans and grant programs help entrepreneurs bridge the gap to traditional financing.
- **Tailored Financial Tools:** Flexible products are designed to meet entrepreneurs where they are, while encouraging sustainable and community-focused growth.
- **Beyond Capital:** Guidance, counseling, and one-on-one support equip business owners with tools to build long-term success.
- **Dollars in Community:** This year we continued to invest in local businesses, driving economic opportunity and building a stronger, more inclusive economy for Central PA.

Entrepreneur Training

Equipping Innovators to Build Stronger Businesses

Supporting Our Business Community

Hosted by the Women's Business Center at ASSETS, our training programs serve all entrepreneurs while addressing the unique barriers that many face. From first-time founders shaping their ideas to established business owners pursuing growth, ASSETS provides resources that build skills, strengthen confidence, and expand networks. Each program equips entrepreneurs to launch and grow businesses that create jobs and drive economic growth across Central PA.

Idea Incubators

ASSETS' Idea Incubators provide entrepreneurs with the tools, mentorship, and connections they need to bring bold ideas to life. Through hands-on training and a supportive network, participants refine their business concepts, reduce risk, and build the confidence to launch or scale. These programs prepare entrepreneurs to create jobs and grow their businesses.

Pitch & Brew

Pitch & Brew provides a collaborative environment where aspiring entrepreneurs test their ideas, sharpen their pitches, and receive feedback from peers and mentors. The experience helps participants lay a strong foundation while building lasting relationships in the local business community.

The Great Social Enterprise Pitch

Each fall, The Great Social Enterprise Pitch highlights entrepreneurs who are using business as a force for good. Participants learn to balance profitability with purpose, crafting models that generate social and environmental impact while remaining financially sustainable.





FY 24/25 Trainings

Zoning & Permitting for New Businesses

July 30, 2024

This in-person seminar walked entrepreneurs through the essentials of zoning and permitting, helping them navigate the often-complex requirements of starting a new business. Participants gained practical knowledge to move their ventures forward with confidence.

Finance Fundamentals for Small Business

September 24, 2024

Entrepreneurs learned the building blocks of business finance, from understanding cash flow to managing expenses. The session provided the knowledge needed to make informed financial decisions and strengthen long-term sustainability.

Mastering Costs and Pricing

October 1, 2024

This training gave entrepreneurs the tools to calculate costs accurately and set pricing strategies that ensure profitability. Participants walked away better prepared to position their products and services in competitive markets.

Forecasting Your Finances

October 8, 2024

Entrepreneurs gained hands-on guidance in creating financial forecasts, a crucial skill for planning growth and securing funding. The session emphasized practical approaches to projecting revenue and expenses.

10 Steps to Startup

January 9, 2025

Designed for aspiring business owners, this session outlined the essential steps to launching a startup. From refining an idea to preparing for market entry, participants received a roadmap for beginning their entrepreneurial journey.

The World of B Corps, Social Enterprises, and Impact Measurement

February 13, 2025

This interactive webinar introduced entrepreneurs to the growing movement of B Corps and social enterprises. Attendees explored how to measure impact while aligning profitability with purpose, equipping them to build businesses that drive both economic and social value.

How to Get Certified as a Women's Business Enterprise (WBE)

March 13, 2025

This session demystified the WBE certification process, helping women entrepreneurs understand the requirements and benefits of certification. Attendees left with clear next steps to leverage opportunities for growth.

Legal Lab with SCORE

Navigating Contracts with Confidence

April 2, 2025

Hosted in partnership with SCORE, this workshop equipped entrepreneurs with knowledge to understand and negotiate contracts effectively. The training reduced legal uncertainty and built confidence in managing business agreements.

From Startup to Shared Business Success

April 10, 2025

This seminar highlighted pathways for collaboration and collective growth. Entrepreneurs explored strategies to scale their ventures while contributing to shared prosperity in the local economy.

Coffee & Connection

April 29, June 10 & 26, 2025

Held at the Lancaster Public Library and Gather 256, these informal gatherings created space for entrepreneurs to connect, share experiences, and build supportive peer networks in a welcoming setting.

Are You Taking Care of Yourself? Mental Wellness for Entrepreneurs

May 8, 2025

This event addressed the unique stressors of entrepreneurship and emphasized strategies for maintaining mental health. Attendees were encouraged to prioritize wellness as an essential part of business success.

Find Your Funding

June 12, 2025

This webinar helped entrepreneurs identify funding opportunities to support business growth. Participants learned how to explore financing options, prepare applications, and match resources to their needs.

Networking 101

June 17, 2025

This session taught the fundamentals of building authentic professional relationships. Entrepreneurs practiced strategies to expand their networks and access the resources necessary for business success.



2024 Great Social Enterprise Pitch

Investing in Innovative Ideas

September 12, 2024

The 2024 Great Social Enterprise Pitch marked a powerful milestone: our 10th anniversary and the first in-person Pitch since 2019. Held at Mickey's Black Box in Rock Lititz, the evening brought together changemakers, community leaders, and impact-driven entrepreneurs to celebrate business as a force for good. Finalists took the stage with bold ideas that blended profitability and purpose, each one tackling urgent social and environmental issues with creativity and vision. The top three finalist received capital investments from ASSETS to launch their business

1st Place: Kate McMeans Farbo, Prism Thrift

A sustainable thrift store promoting affordable fashion and reducing waste.

2nd Place: Jakyra Simpson, STEAM Sneakerheadz

A youth program teaching science, technology, engineering, art, and math through sneaker design.

3rd Place: Alex Colon & Tabby Benitez, Ripple Hub

A coworking and community space fostering collaboration among entrepreneurs and creatives.

The event highlighted the creativity and community support that makes Central PA's entrepreneurial ecosystem thrive.



Building a Beloved Community



Building a Beloved Community

December 5, 2024

In partnership with **Advantage Lancaster** and with support from the **Lancaster County Community Foundation**, ASSETS hosted a Building a Beloved Community event, an evening of film, food, and conversation.

The Oscar-nominated documentary, ***The Barber of Little Rock*** set the stage for a powerful discussion on the racial wealth gap and the importance of equity in business.

A panel of local barbers and entrepreneurs, including Amit Corso, Tyrik Jackson, and Jorge Valentin, shared their journeys in a conversation moderated by McCaskey High School student, Dre Serrano.

Their stories of perseverance and leadership inspired students to view entrepreneurship as a pathway to opportunity and representation.



Stories of Impact

Every entrepreneur we work with has a story worth sharing. From new ideas taking shape to businesses expanding their reach, these journeys show the power of resilience and creativity. Explore more stories on our blog and hear directly from local business owners through the *Built By Us Podcast*, available on YouTube, Spotify and Apple Podcasts.

LanCATster Cat Cafe

Jax Lanza & John Bender

When Jax Lanza and John Bender founded LanCATster Cat Cafe, they turned a creative vision into a community-centered business. With guidance from ASSETS' Idea Incubator program, they sharpened their business plan and gained the confidence to launch. Today, their Lancaster cafe blends coffee, adoptable cats, and inclusive space, and in just three months 18 cats have found homes. ASSETS helped move them from idea to reality by supporting their growth and helping embed their mission in the local community.



Cafe 301

Laurie Myers

Laurie Myers transformed her love for cooking into Cafe 301, a mobile food and catering business known for soulful Southern dishes and signature "Soul Rolls." Through ASSETS' support with budgeting, legal setup and marketing, Laurie built a stronger foundation for growth. Her journey shows how ASSETS equips entrepreneurs to turn vision into reality while creating businesses that serve both people and community.



Communications Essentials

Amer Al Fayadh (Built By Us: EP 13)

Amer Al Fayadh, founder and CEO of Communication Essentials, shared how language can be both a barrier and a bridge for entrepreneurs. Drawing on his own journey as a refugee and business owner, Amer spoke about the importance of communication in building confidence, creating opportunity, and connecting across cultures. His story illustrated how entrepreneurship and language access can empower communities to thrive.

Capeles Agency

Angela Capeles (Built By Us: EP 17)

Angela Capeles, founder of the Capeles Agency, discussed the power of branding rooted in authenticity and intention. She shared how her agency helps businesses tell their stories in ways that reflect their values while also driving long-term success. Angela's insights encouraged entrepreneurs to think of branding and visuals as a foundation for trust, connection, and impact.



Presented by ASSETS, the *Built By Us Podcast* shares stories of local entrepreneurs who are transforming the economy through resilience, innovation and leadership. Each episode highlights voices often left out of traditional narratives and shows how small businesses create opportunity and strengthen communities. Listen on YouTube, Spotify, and Apple Podcasts.



Press play on inspiration.
Scan now to check out the
Built By Us Podcast.



A Legacy of Leadership

During his tenure as CEO, Jaime Arroyo has helped transform ASSETS into a leading force for equitable entrepreneurship throughout the region. From expanding access to capital and growing our training programs to strengthening ASSETS' role as a community advocate, Jaime's leadership has left a lasting mark on our organization and the communities we serve.

Jaime's passion for equity, innovation, and community has guided ASSETS through years of growth and impact, positioning the organization as a trusted partner for entrepreneurs across Central PA. His vision and dedication have inspired staff, partners, and entrepreneurs alike to reimagine what an inclusive economy can look like.

As Jaime transitions to his next chapter of leadership, we honor his contributions and celebrate the legacy he leaves behind at ASSETS. His work has laid a strong foundation for the future, ensuring that the mission of investing in people and building opportunities for underserved entrepreneurs will continue to thrive.

We thank Jaime for his leadership and his unwavering commitment to ASSETS and the community we serve.



Together, we build opportunity.

As we reflect on this fiscal year, ASSETS remains dedicated to cultivating entrepreneurial leadership and expanding economic opportunity for all. As a certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) we are a community builder and a bridge for underrepresented entrepreneurs to access capital, training, and support. Through Community Lending, Entrepreneur Training, our podcast, and at our community events, we have witnessed remarkable stories of resilience and impact. As we look ahead, we are committed to breaking down barriers, forging partnerships, and investing in the bold ideas that will shape our shared future.



Thank you to our FY 24/25 Board Members...

- Peter Barber, Chair
- Lance Greene, Vice Chair
- Denise Wayman, Treasurer
- Dr. Francine McNairy, Secretary
- Amer Al Fayadh
- Jessica Gehman
- Kathy Granbois
- Kent Hartzler
- Joseph Martinez
- Champagne Domingo
- Yessenia Maldonado
- Aileen Wigotow



...and our Team

- Jaime Arroyo, CEO
- Jason Allgire
- Denzel Brown
- Chelsea Christmas
- Carol Eby-Good
- Aimee Franqui
- Ariana Garcia
- Jose Garcia
- Rhonda Harrison
- Lindsay High
- Rosa Mercado
- Jessie Tuno
- Lisa Weaver-Gonzalez
- Chris Wise
- Andres Zorrilla





Thank You To Our Community Partners

Bank of Bird-In-Hand
Cargas

Citizens Bank

City of Lancaster

Community Development Financial Institutions Fund

Edwards Business Systems

Emotional Health Center of Lancaster

ENDERS

Ephrata National Bank

Everence Federal Credit Union

Everence Financial

First Citizens Community Bank

First Commonwealth Bank

First National Bank

Friday Financials

Fulton Bank

Gibbel, Kraybill, & Hess

Goodville Mutual Casualty Company

Hempfield Technology

High Foundation

Lancaster County Community Foundation

Lancaster County STEM Alliance

Landis Communities

Lehman Insurance Group

LINKBANK

Mid Penn Bank

Move Forward Counseling

M&T Bank

NALCAB

Northwest Bank

PA CDFI Network

Penn Industrial Development Authority

PNC Bank

PPL Foundation

Pryor E & Arlene R Neuber Charitable Trust

Reimagining Our Community (ROC) Giving Circle

S&T Bank

Santander Bank

Sharp Shopper

TCW-GAV

The Keith Campbell Foundation For The Environment

United Way of Lancaster County

UNIVEST

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

Wells Fargo Foundation

West End Mennonite Fellowship

