

May 2023

UMA's Houston Gathering Report 2022

**Manufacturing Resilience:
Ecosystem Strategies for Building
Community**

#GatherUpUMA



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Event Summary

After two years, 170 Urban Manufacturing Alliance practitioners from every region of the United States gathered for the first time since the Covid-19 pandemic erupted in 2020. Perhaps due to the graveness of the last few years; perhaps having experienced the shared trauma of uncertainty multiplied by social uprising; perhaps having lived with broken systems and supply chains; or perhaps all of these things – this is why practitioners were both fired up and filled with gratitude as they met in person at the West Houston Institute in the Westchase neighborhood of Houston, Texas. Or maybe it was just the promise of warm weather, tacos, a local marketplace, and the 145 languages spoken by Houstonians that had folks energized. Whatever the case – people were smiling, present, and deeply engaged.

Our convening – appropriately named a Gathering – is an annual opportunity to learn, share, and connect, now leading into its 10th year. Gatherings are designed to convoke an ecosystem of individuals and organizations who are committed to using manufacturing as a pathway to racial equity and wealth building.



However, with the current alignment of both bipartisan political support and dedicated federal investments being directed at the manufacturing sector, our work at UMA has now taken center stage nationally. And this is critical, because without intentional planning and action, the benefits of these public investments are less likely to reach those who stand to gain the most.

These facts make it even more important for us to re-state that at UMA, we believe equitable, interconnected, and sustainable manufacturing ecosystems will help our nation build economic freedom in under-resourced communities, respond to climate change and sustainability challenges, and create racial and gender economic equality –

Event Summary

all of which will make our neighborhoods, cities, and our nation more resilient.

Thus the theme of 2022's Gathering was **Manufacturing Resilience: Ecosystem Strategies for Building Community**. The goal of the Gathering was to convene manufacturing practitioners as a national community of action where justice and economic mobility are both centered and framed as synergistic. Whether we are conducting research with partners, doing our storytelling and narrative change work with partners, or hosting 200 partners at a Gathering in West Houston, we are here to collect and share ecosystem strategies for building resilient communities.

As we look to the future of UMA, we are moving towards a model of co-implementation, where we continue to work hand-in-hand with our partners to replicate programs, policies, and initiatives between cities – all driven by community. Your ongoing partnership continues to be the reason we can do our work. We are in awe and have deep gratitude for your ongoing partnership.



Welcome Reception



We're so grateful for you – friends new and old – coming together to support manufacturing as a strategy for economic mobility and wealth building.

- Katy Stanton Co-Director
Urban Manufacturing Alliance, Madison



The Inclusive Economies team was thrilled to join UMA for Manufacturing Resilience. It was such an intentionally crafted convening that gave an in-depth perspective on the value of robust education and training programs in manufacturing. We continue to see manufacturing as a critical opportunity to leverage as we strive for an equitable economy.

- Patrice Green Director of Inclusive Economies
Surdna Foundation, Philadelphia



Around 10 years ago a bunch of us from different cities decided that we should be sharing in research and sharing in best practices and this is where UMA was born.

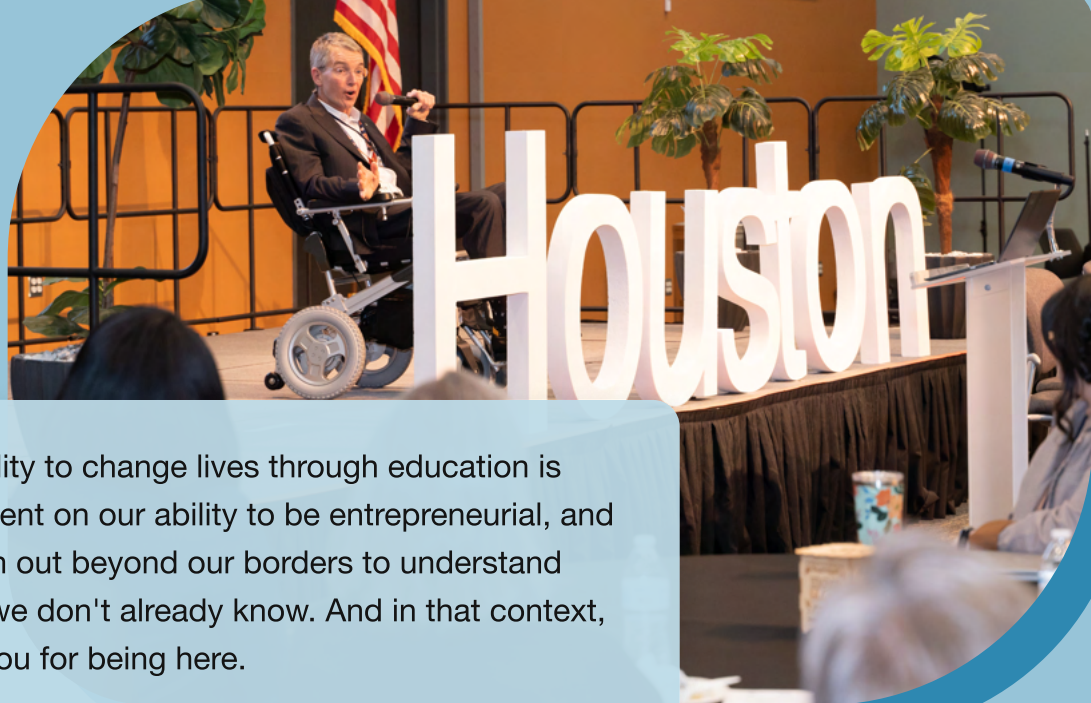
- Adam Friedman
Chief Strategy Officer, Pratt Institute, New York City
UMA Co-Founder & Board Director



Manufacturing is one of the oldest and most important industries in Houston. Many of our other core industries – from our world-class medical facilities to the region’s efforts in leading the energy transition – rely on innovations within the manufacturing industry. Hosting the Gathering introduced us to amazing work being done across the nation to support manufacturing, and reinforced our desire to support entrepreneurship and the establishment of a local brand for our Houston manufacturers.

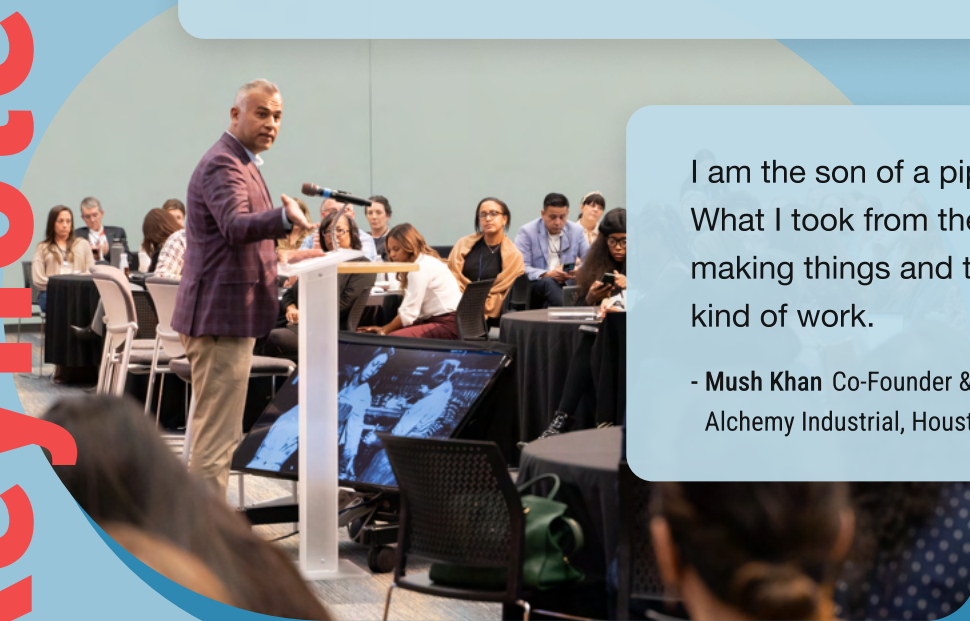
- **Andrew Busker** Staff Analyst Mayor’s Office of Economic Development
City of Houston, Houston

Keynote Speakers



Our ability to change lives through education is dependent on our ability to be entrepreneurial, and to reach out beyond our borders to understand things we don't already know. And in that context, thank you for being here.

- **Dr. Kurt Ewen** Vice Chancellor of Strategic Planning & Institutional Effectiveness
Houston Community College, Houston



I am the son of a pipefitter and a seamstress. What I took from them was the importance of making things and the honor that comes with that kind of work.

- **Mush Khan** Co-Founder & CEO
Alchemy Industrial, Houston



I'm always honored to be in a room with practitioners who are doing such hard and important work. We need to be investing in partnership, we need to be investing in programs that help learners of all races and all genders be able to be successful.

- **Kermit Kaleba** Strategy Director for Employer Aligned Programs
Lumina Foundation, Indianapolis

Keynote Speakers



Manufacturing is good for cities and cities are good for manufacturing. Let us all be students of one another's work.

- **Lee Wellington** Chief Strategist
Urban Manufacturing Alliance, Hudson Valley



Continuous learning, community building, and resilience-oriented strategies broaden pathways to economic opportunities. This Gathering is a real-time solutions lab.

- **Dr. Ron Williams** Associate Professor of Management
Coppin State University, Baltimore
UMA Board Chair

Rapid Shares



I'm excited to continue to explore partnerships with training and employer partners that want to help our youth, community members, and system reframe the setbacks that have gotten them engaged with our criminal justice system as opportunities for personal and professional growth.

- **Vanessa Ramirez** Co-Founder
Work Texas, Houston



The Seattle Restored program offers maker entrepreneurs, particularly Black, indigenous, and others of color, the opportunity to host pop up shops in vacant storefronts. It invigorates neighborhoods with much needed activity and offers opportunities to entrepreneurs who typically couldn't afford these spaces.

- **Andrea Porter** Program Manager
Seattle Good Business Network, Seattle



I am everything you've been discussing today. I graduated from Forsyth Tech as a CNC machinist and just received my credentials.

- **Deborah Moore** Machinist
Siemens Energy, Rural Hall

Rapid Shares

We are the nation's only nonprofit design house. We support survivors of trauma, human trafficking, domestic violence, housing insecurity, forms of PTSD, and typically marginalized communities with workforce training that leads to actual employment.

- Ahshia Berry Vice President
- Sarah-Jayne Smith Founder
Magpies & Peacocks, Houston

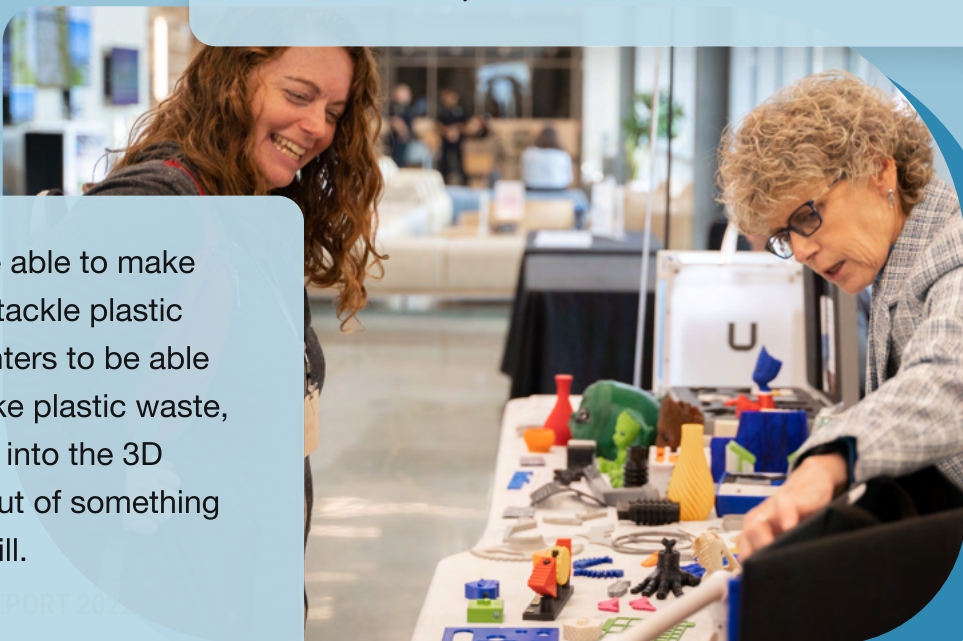


Makers who feel connected to the people and resources they need to grow report an annual average revenue of 150% higher than makers who do not perceive a similar connection. These data points underscore that makers who have that social and economic support become better business leaders, and in turn are more financially resilient.

- Nicole Franklin Director of Makers United
Nest, New York City

For us, it wasn't enough just to be able to make stuff out of plastic. We wanted to tackle plastic waste, so we modified our 3D printers to be able to print directly from trash: you take plastic waste, grind it up, and then put it directly into the 3D printer to create something new out of something that would otherwise go in a landfill.

- Charlotte Craff Ambassador
re:3D, Houston

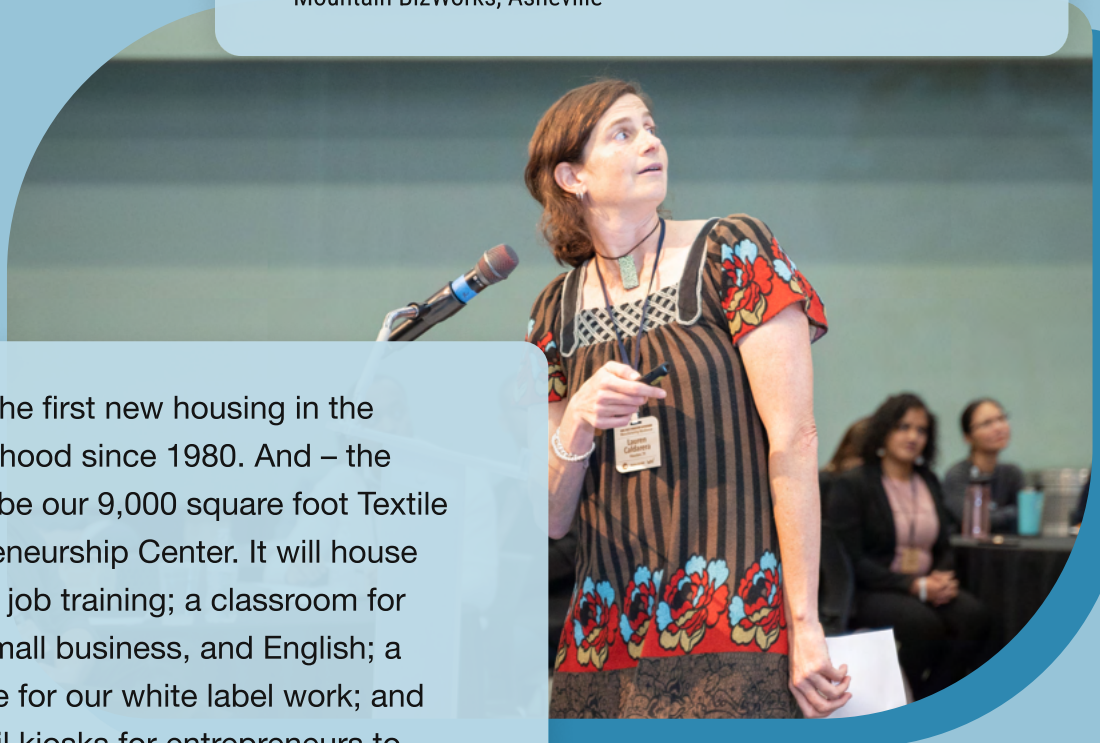


Rapid Shares



I oversee our Multicultural Catalyst Program which is specifically designed in an effort to dismantle or disrupt some of the long-standing discriminatory lending practices that have prevented socioeconomic mobility for BIPOC communities.

- **Jeremiah Robinson** Senior Program Manager
Mountain BizWorks, Asheville



We are building the first new housing in the Gulfton neighborhood since 1980. And – the ground floor will be our 9,000 square foot Textile Lab and Entrepreneurship Center. It will house industrial sewing job training; a classroom for digital literacy, small business, and English; a production space for our white label work; and seven micro retail kiosks for entrepreneurs to sandbox their brick and mortar ideas.

- **Lauren Caldarera** Founder
Projects-Matter, Houston

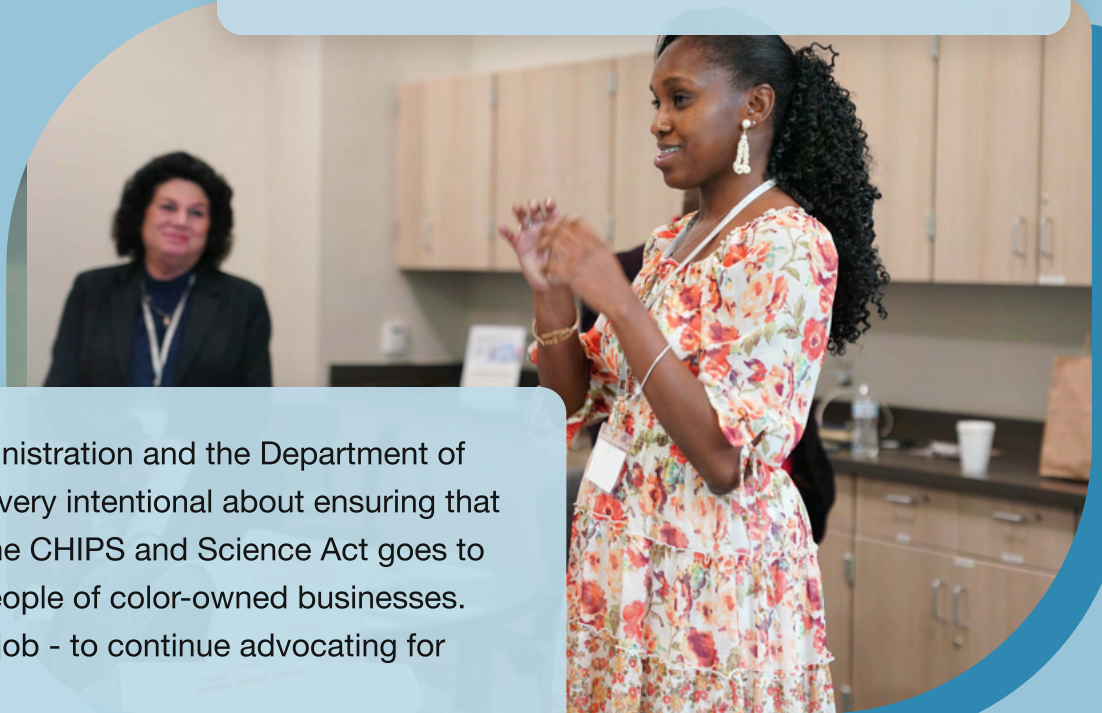
Rapid Shares



The Maryland Makerspace Initiative Program is the first partnership in the country between an HBCU and a community-embedded makerspace. This unique collaboration is also leveraging that partnership to influence policy in a way that many don't often expect – to justify the first infusion of public money for the expansion of makerspaces across the state in the country.

- **Dr. Ron Williams** Founder

Center for Strategic Entrepreneurship at Coppin State University
Baltimore



The Biden administration and the Department of Commerce are very intentional about ensuring that funding from The CHIPS and Science Act goes to women- and people of color-owned businesses. And that is our job - to continue advocating for that.

- **Michelle Burris** Fellow

The Century Foundation, Washington, DC



Discussed 7 Issues in Break Out Sessions

Workforce Development

Capital Access

Local Branding

Sustainability

Mission-Driven Real Estate

Local Supply Chains

Entrepreneurship





Makers Market

Hosted 20 Makers at the Maker Market



@marlaza.designs
@feistydesigncompany
@casitabakes
@gghoeld
@cocoselect_
@poplifepoppingcorn
@cargovintageshop
@popsoap
@nazarion_kreationz
@accessoriosixchel
@thestreetsofno
@victoriaslemonade
@yerbasoap
@chocogladysusa
@htx_raices
@heavenly_kreations_pastries
@chingonapicositacandies
@robinsbirdbraindesigns
@randeboutique
@knotsobad
@cleverpandahomemade_llc
@houston skateboards
@bepurenaturals
@bamatexas
@threelumpsofsugar
@dandan_el_rey_del_elote
@thensclub
@misschief_makes



Industry & Inclusion



Convened 12 Community Colleges after the Gathering

Over 40 leaders from community colleges and workforce development organizations gathered at the West Houston Institute to build connections, share promising strategies, and solidify commitments to increasing racial equity in manufacturing credentialing programs. The day included briefings on federal manufacturing policy from the National Economic Council, tours of Houston's advanced manufacturing centers, a DEIB workshop, storytelling, small group sessions, and networking. The cross-institutional learning yielded personal and institutional commitments to action – many of which are already underway.

Tours of Houston



West Side

Toured 4 Advanced Manufacturing Facilities

Alief Career Center

Houston Community College's
Advanced Manufacturing Center

US Canvas and Awnings

Frazer, Ltd



Tours of Houston



East End

Toured 3 Facilities Across the Manufacturing Spectrum

Port Houston

East End Makers Hub

Magpies & Peacocks



The UMA Team

Nepal Asatthawasi
Kimora Brock
Katy Stanton
Crystal Marie Young
Tanu Kumar
Lee Wellington
Audra Ladd
Andrew Dahlgren



Not pictured: Jeannine Cook, Eva Pinkley

The UMA Board

Nicole Lau
Leah Archibald
Ron Williams
Elizabeth Demetriou
Adam Friedman
Bernadine Hawes



Not pictured: Carlos Delgado, Livia Lam, Tulsi Patel, Louis Santiago, and Eric Strickland

The West Houston Institute

Robin Nagy
Israel Garza
Connie Leon
Jordan Carswell
Gabrielle Jenkins
Mayra Herrera



Thank You

Thank you to our partners who made this event possible!

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**EAST END
MAKER HUB**



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