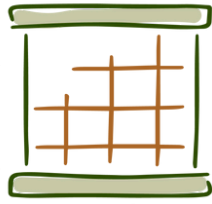


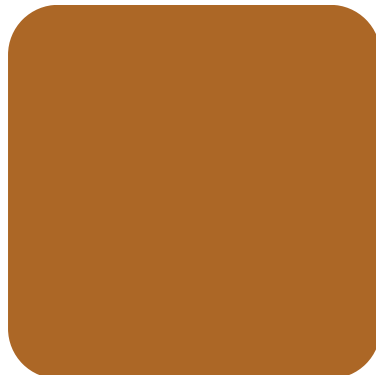
HANNAH  
GRIMES  
Center for  
Entrepreneurship



# Annual Impact Report



2024



# Letter from the Executive Director



Dear Hannah Grimes Community,

As we ring in a new year, we reflect on the past year – one marked both by beautiful growth and challenging changes. While it’s impossible to capture everything we have done in a single, digestible report, we’ve given you the highlights here.

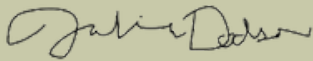
But before we celebrate all this good work, I want to take a moment to acknowledge the significant leadership transition that happened at Hannah Grimes in 2024. I was appointed Executive Director in October, succeeding Mary Ann Kristiansen (Mak) who founded and led Hannah Grimes for nearly 30 years. Having been mentored by Mak for the past 4 years, I appreciate and understand the privilege and responsibility of leading Hannah Grimes into its next chapter.

Mak believed ideas to be living, breathing things with lives of their own whose time had come or would eventually come. The Hannah Grimes Marketplace (and accompanying ecosystem) was an idea whose time had come in 1997, despite the fact that it was ahead of the revival of the “buy local” movement. It was nurtured and tended ever since then with resilience, integrity, and unstoppable GRIT. In 2006 it grew to include a second space, the Hannah Grimes Center, with a full array of physical gathering spaces, programs & services, and networks, and finally in 2018 to include a powerful national network of rural innovators from all over the country, called Radically Rural.

Mak also taught me, by her example, the gift of being rooted in a particular place and committed to doing the work over the long haul. It isn’t easy. It means that you go through the ups and downs of a place with it, wrestle with it, celebrate with it, create with it...all the while composting what isn’t working and fertilizing what is. It creates a kind of depth and mutual flourishing that can’t be fabricated any other way. I have seen the impacts of Mak’s abiding dedication to Hannah Grimes and the Monadnock Region firsthand. Efforts that were started a decade ago that come to fruition now. Relationships that were established and nurtured decades ago that are still the backbone of the larger community and our organization.

It is no exaggeration to say that Mak's work and the broader work of Hannah Grimes has touched thousands of lives and contributed to our economy and community in innumerable ways. Yet Mak's most enduring lesson to me and Hannah Grimes was that small intentional work is transformative. Her motto: "We help the economy and community grow one business at a time," exemplified how she went about doing the work and it will remain the way we continue to do the work.

My pledge to this community is that as long as I am here, I will keep doing the good work she started, while also releasing ideas whose time has come into our midst. One person. One business. One organization. One essential endeavor. One **idea** at a time.



Julianna Dodson  
Executive Director

## About our New Executive Director

Julianna Dodson is originally from South Carolina, lived temporarily in nearly half of the US states, and moved to New Hampshire in 2017. She resides in Westmoreland with her three children. The beginning of her career was spent teaching English overseas, after which she worked in finance and conducted her small business on the side for 10 years. Julianna joined the team at Hannah Grimes in 2021 as the director of Radically Rural. In 2022 she also added duties as Deputy Executive Director for the center, before becoming Executive Director in 2024. In her new role, she is most passionate about continuing to cultivate essential endeavors and regional economies that are resilient, regenerative, and distributive in design. Essentially, economies in service of ALL life. Outside of work, she co-leads an economic development committee for a Brownfields remediation project, and volunteers with organizations such as Project Home and Out in the Open. For fun she enjoys dancing, tending the land, reading to her kids, thrifting, surfing, and nerding out on all things humanities.



Julianna is up for anything! Here she is pictured playing softball with SBW's Dani Ruffo in the Keene Sentinel 225 anniversary game. This year she also participated in MoCo's Lights, Camera Keene, 100 Nights Amazing Race, and much more!

# About Hannah Grimes

## Mission

The Hannah Grimes Center for Entrepreneurship provides the space, tools, and connections that innovative entrepreneurs need to build strong businesses, thriving local economies, and vibrant communities in the Monadnock Region.

## Staff as of 12/31/2024

- Julianna Dodson, Executive Director
- Katia Knight, Director of Biotech Initiatives
- Lillian Chase, Program & Development Coordinator
- Megan Miner, Operations Director
- Nicole French, Program Resource Advisor
- Sara Powell, Program Director
- Sharon Rossi, Administrative Coordinator

## Board of Directors as of 12/31/2024

- Alana Fiero, Secretary
- Deirdre Fitzgerald, President
- Joshua Velasquez
- Peter Hansel, Treasurer
- Randall Walter
- Scott Maslansky

# Local Entrepreneur Programs

## Business Lab

- Five Cohorts
  - Seven farms
  - Two childcare providers
  - Four product businesses
  - 13 service businesses



## Incubator

- HGC added a second cohort of the Business Incubator Program for the first time ever!
  - Five product businesses
  - Eight service businesses

## Coaching

- 300+ clients served with one on one coaching
- 250+ staff coaching hours
- 90+ volunteer coaching hours
- 12 new volunteer coaches joined the roster

## Workshops

- Five Workshops:
  - Two Marketing
  - Small Business Taxes
  - Management & Leadership
  - Analyzing Financial Statements



## Networking Events

- Four Offerings
  - Entrepreneur Headshots
  - Business Values
  - Two LGBTQ Entrepreneur Gatherings

# New This Year

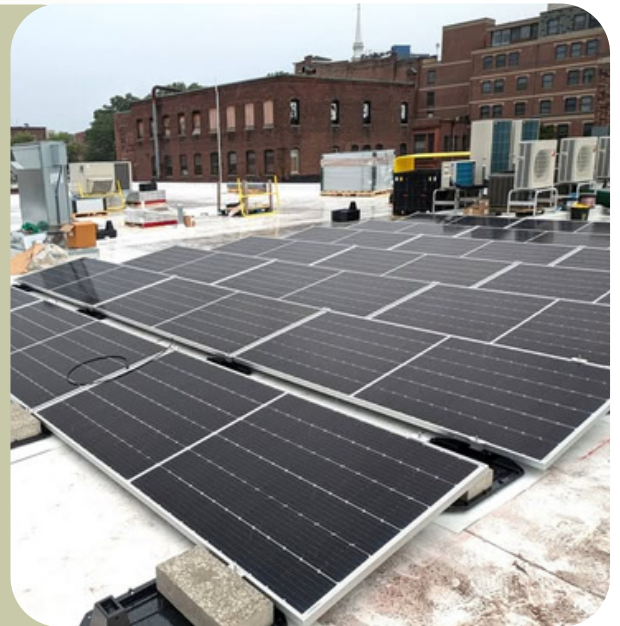
## Lean In Monadnock

Hannah Grimes hosted over 50 women entrepreneurs for a one day retreat complete with a keynote, marketing workshop, networking lunch, and small group roundtables. The feedback was so positive, HGC is already planning Lean In 2025.



## Facility Improvements

CDFA's Community Center Investment Program supported the installation of solar panels and removal of propane from HGC. The lighting and HVAC systems were also upgraded in parts of the facility. Savings Bank of Walpole funded an upgrade to the furniture in The HIVE Coworking Space to better serve people with disabilities and bodies of all sizes.



## Tech Access for Microentrepreneurs

A Community Development Block Grant allowed Hannah Grimes to purchase 16 laptops, which are available to all microentrepreneurs in its cohort programs. HGC also added a wireless printer to its coworking space. These improvements have reduced barriers for entrepreneurs with limited resources.

# Entrepreneur Success Stories

## Tori Chasse

Tori joined the Hannah Grimes network by participating in Lean In Monadnock, our first annual women entrepreneur retreat. She went on to participate in the fall Business Lab program, further developing her systems optimization business, Grow & Thrive Business Solutions. In December, HGC hired Grow & Thrive Business Solutions in an executive assistant support role.



## Sarita Drew

In 2023, Sarita participated in Business Lab to develop her business idea Everybody Burlesque with her business partner. Since then, she has started two new ventures, Flow State Financials and PEAR Projects. She has also gathered other bookkeepers in the region for network meetings! Sarita is a staple in The HIVE Coworking Space, where she has joined other coworking members in organizing a weekly tea time.



## Read More

Read more entrepreneur success stories on the Hannah Grimes Center blog!

<https://hannahgrimes.com/news-blog/>



# Regional Programs & Ecosystems

## Food Systems

HGC hosted and participated in a food systems working group with several community partners. This year's work included the draft completion of a regional food systems assessment as the result of various focus groups that have been held over the last two years. One special focus this year was food waste due to the introduction of a NH state law that will limit food waste.

## Directors Circle

With help from Sarah Harpster, HGC revived its Nonprofit Executive Directors Circle to bring community leaders together to problem solve and build community with peers. This is an essential resource for nonprofits as the Keene community experiences leadership transitions.

## Housing Access

As chair of the Monadnock Resource Alliance's working group, Entrepreneurial Solutions to Improve Housing Access for Everyone, HGC hosted its first housing access event. Shared Homes, Strong Communities highlighted the benefits of sharing housing. The working group also launched a housing resource webpage on Southwest Region Planning Commission's (SWRPC) website and supported SWRPC's ADU Design Challenge.

## Family Childcare

In collaboration with the Bringing It Home Project, Hannah Grimes facilitated its first ten-week business lab for home-based childcare providers, serving two local business owners.



# National Programs & Ecosystems

## Radically Rural Summit

- 536 attendees from 37 states, D.C., and Canada
- 19 sessions on social weaving, youth entrepreneurship, microtransit, and more
- 66 speakers from across the country
- 40+ volunteers contributed to the summit's success
- 18 programs and initiatives were shared at the Solutions Slam
- RR welcomed new members to the planning team and national advisory group



## Radically Rural biotech

- Founding RRb partners facilitated a session on bringing new economic sectors to rural communities
- Hannah Grimes hired a Director of Biotech Initiatives
- The network grew from five founding partners to nine total partners



## Year Round Work

- RR hosted four virtual roundtables
- The first ever RR rural policy white paper was written and distributed to all members of congress
- The RR Director visited Hood River Oregon for Radically Rural on the Road
- The RR Director participated in over 15 digital or in person speaking opportunities

# Space

## Private Offices

- Five offices rented to businesses
- Eight offices rented to nonprofit organizations
- Two drop-in private offices available



## Conference Rooms

- 9,000+ people served (includes repeat renters)
- Used by dozens of community organizations on a regular basis



## Coworking at The HIVE

- 134 daily drop-ins
- Ten recurring monthly members
- Business Lab and Incubator participants made use of The HIVE between cohort meetings



## Marketplace

The Hannah Grimes Marketplace continued to serve the Keene community, selling products from over 250 local vendors. Sales were up an average of 15% from 2023.



# Finances & Fundraising

## New Giving Club

In 2024, HGC launched a new fundraising initiative, the Hannah Grimes Giving Club. The Giving Club is comprised of individuals donating \$20/month or the equivalent of \$240/year. We are so grateful to the individuals that joined the group this year: Ashok Bahl, Alana Fiero, Ben Robertson, Cara Down, Jean McCarthy, Joy Biggers, Gregg Kleiner, Jessica Hipp, Julianna Dodson, Maryann Lindberg, Rachel Keyworth, Steve & Melinda Silverstien, Roy Wallen, Terry Williams, and Tuul Sukhbaatar.

## Thank You, Funders!

### Founders Circle

- 310 Marlboro St, LLC
- Ashok Bahl
- Annie Faulkner & Bob King
- Dave Therrien
- Eileen Sarson
- Frisky Cow Gelato
- Gryscka & Associates
- Kapiloff Insurance
- KE Bergeron Mechanical Systems
- Maureen Curtis & Dean Beaman
- Peter & Bridget Hansel
- Randall & Marni Walter
- Ruth & Carl Jacobs
- Sang Curtis & Chip Chapman
- Savings Bank of Walpole
- Stephen Roll
- W.S. Badger Company

### Grantors

- Cheshire County
- Community Project Fund (SBA/Congressionally Directed Spending)
- HUD/NH CDFA CDBG Microenterprise Program
- M&T Charitable Foundation
- NH Charitable Foundation
- NH CDFA Community Center Investment Program
- NH Humanities
- Northern Borders Regional Commission
- SBA Growth Accelerator Fund Competition
- TD Charitable Foundation

### Additional Donors

- Abigail Ladzinski
- Allyson Santaw
- Ashley Elliot
- Bending Branch Farm
- Bridget Burns

- Caliope Brothers
- Catherine Koning
- CC&D's Kitchen Market
- Chelley Tighe
- Deirdre Fitzgerald
- Dori Drachman
- Gregory Ormsby Mori
- Isis Latham
- Jessica Gelter
- John & Jean Hoffman
- Julie Schoelzel
- Lisa Sieverts
- Marcel Maxwell
- Marcia Sporny
- Mark Bodin
- Michelle Chalice
- Mike Remy
- Rik Ekstrom
- Sara Allen
- Scott Maslansky
- Simone Elder
- Ted Leach
- Yana Shapiievaska