



**Press Contact**  
Cindy Rodriguez  
*Administrative Coordinator and Communications Associate*  
*Cindy@CollabNewHaven.org*  
*(203) 204-1404*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Announcing the Ventures in the Fall Collab Accelerator 2023**

*Ten Connecticut-based ventures have been accepted into the Fall cohort of the Collab Accelerator 2023*

### Key facts

- Ten Connecticut-based ventures have been selected to participate in the Collab Accelerator.
- Now in its sixth year, the Collab Accelerator is Collab's flagship program to support New Haven and Connecticut entrepreneurs. It is a 12-week program that includes in-depth 1-on-1 coaching, an educational curriculum and a pro bono partner network.
- Past graduates from the Collab Accelerator have gone on to create successful ventures, receive investment, create local jobs and more.

**October 26th, 2023, New Haven, Connecticut** — Collab, a program that supports New Haven and Connecticut early-stage entrepreneurs, announced today the ten Connecticut-based ventures that have been selected to participate in the Collab Accelerator.

The Collab Accelerator is Collab's flagship program to support local entrepreneurs based in New Haven and Connecticut. Now in its fifth year, the Collab Accelerator has over 118 graduates. Of those graduates, 84% are people of color-led ventures and 76% are women-led ventures.

Selected ventures participate in the 12-week program that includes in-depth 1-on-1 coaching and an in-depth early-stage educational curriculum. We are proud to announce that this cohort will be led by a graduate of the accelerator, Tea Montgomery, the creative force behind Threads by Tea. During the program, the cohort of entrepreneurs will be connected to a mentor in Collab's Mentor Network and pro bono service providers in legal and accounting. At the conclusion of the program, entrepreneurs will showcase their ideas to community and industry leaders at a culminating graduation ceremony called the Collab Graduate Showcase.

**LIST OF ACCEPTED VENTURES**

### **Tierra Soap Company**

*Founders: Addy & Richard Ramos*

Tierra Soap is a brand dedicated to reimagining skincare by using natural botanical ingredients and handcrafting small batches of soap to promote a healthier relationship between our skin and the environment.

### **The Kids Newsroom**

*Founder: Maya McFadden*

The Kids Newsroom (TKN) is an after-school program for youth (ages 8 and up) that offers instruction in writing, storytelling, photography, interviewing, and life skills, with the aim of empowering students to engage with their local community through media, develop creative career interests, and participate in public discussions and decision-making processes on various important issues.

### **Just In Mixology LLC**

*Founder: Justin Young*

Just In Mixology LLC is a fully licensed mobile mixology and bartending service that offers tailored beverage experiences and services for various events, providing high-quality drinks, interactive experiences, and customizable options without the need for large catering agencies.

### **BlackCherry**

*Founder: Diana Johnson*

BlackCherry is a brand that designs, licenses, and produces products aimed at providing representation and alternative experiences for young Millennial and Gen Z women, promoting self-confidence, diversity, and storytelling beyond webcomics through merchandise.

### **WoodShed**

*Founder: Nathan Mai*

Woodshed is an online platform similar to Khan Academy, focusing on modern music education, offering innovative courses, directories, and forums.

### **ArtZapp**

*Founder: Justin Young*

ArtZapp is an education and information app for the arts that encourages community engagement through quizzes, in-app rewards, and a map of local arts organizations, aiming to bridge the gap between the digital and in-person arts experience and catering to both organizations and individual users.

### **FLOW Like WATER LLC**

*Founder: Patrick Escandon*

FLOWLikeWATER LLC is a versatile business encompassing eco-building supply, education, training, and community projects, with a primary emphasis on utilizing hemp-based eco materials.

### **Mostly Nuts**

*Founder: Portia Amendola*

Mostly Nuts offers indulgent yet nutritious nut and seed blends that can be enjoyed as a standalone snack or a delightful complement to various foods and recipes.

### **CheB LLC**

*Founder: Darian Duah*

CheB is a hyper-local e-commerce platform that provides quick sneaker purchases through storefront authentication, local partners, and blockchain payment options, aiming to solve issues related to slow delivery, limited local shopping options, and payment methods.

### **PHOCUSED LLC**

*Founders: Eliezer Santiago & Tiphani Benbow*

Phocused is a production house with a range of clients, including businesses, non-profits, artists, and entrepreneurs, to create visually engaging content, such as commercials, social media material, and short films/documentaries, with a particular focus on aerial footage captured through drone technology.

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Past graduates of the Collab Accelerator have gone on to create successful ventures – including receiving investment, creating local jobs and providing goods and services to the community. Notable graduates include Havenly, Sanctuary Kitchen Catering, Oh Shito!, The Notorious P.I.C. and many others.

### **Learn More About Collab**

Collab is an early-stage accelerator that supports individuals in using entrepreneurship to build wealth for themselves and their families, create local jobs, build economic power and shape their communities with a focus on people of color and women entrepreneurs. Since 2017, Collab has supported hundreds of entrepreneurs, including almost a hundred graduates on their Accelerator. Of those graduates, 84% are people of color-led and 76% are women-led. For more information, head to Collab's website at [www.collabnewhaven.org](http://www.collabnewhaven.org).

