A woman wearing a blue denim jacket and glasses stands on the left side of the frame, addressing a group of approximately 15 children. The children are seated in a circle on white folding chairs in a room that appears to be a community center or classroom. In the background, there are wooden cabinets, a white refrigerator, a water cooler, and a whiteboard with the MCHS logo. A red Target shopping bag is visible on the left. The overall atmosphere is educational and interactive.

# Voices of Youth

## Model D

<b>PHASE 1</b>  Oct-Dec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2-4 strategy sessions</li> <li>• Determine age groups, geography, recruitment methods &amp; needs</li> <li>• Finalize project schedule &amp; team: Where will listening sessions happen? When is best? Online &amp; offline mentoring sessions?</li> </ul>	1	Prep, Kickoff + Program Design
		2	Recruit and Enroll Youth
<b>PHASE 2</b>  Dec-Feb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 24 youth participants</li> <li>• 1-2 listening/recruitment sessions</li> <li>• 3-6 curriculum/mentor sessions</li> <li>• Track youth participation/engagement with partner organizations</li> </ul>	3	Recruit and Train Mentors and Facilitators
		4	Prepare and Deliver Curriculum
<b>PHASE 3</b>  Feb-May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start publishing Project Editor written stories</li> <li>• Finish content creation (youth &amp; mentors)</li> <li>• Keep publishing Project Editor written stories</li> <li>• Create a special Model D Issue</li> </ul>	5	Publish Editorial
		6	Evaluation and Reporting

# YOUR INSTRUCTOR: Biba Adams

Biba Adams has been a contributor to Issue Media Group since 2018. She is also a former educator and currently the Assistant Director of Marketing and Communications at Wayne State University Law School.



# YOUR MENTOR: Joel “Fluent” Greene

Joel Fluent Greene is a Detroit based poet, author and event producer. A Spirit of Detroit Award winner, Joel was the long running host of Detroit’s iconic Cafe’ Mahogany poetry nights, and has shared the stage with acts as diverse as The Roots, Pharrell Williams, The Last Poets, Big Sean, and more

He has held workshops and performances in over 50 schools in the Metro Detroit area. Author of four collections of poetry, Joel is currently a creative writing instructor at Mariner’s Inn, a shelter and treatment center located in Detroit.



# YOUR MENTOR: Val Waller

Native Detroiter, Valaurian Waller is a documentary photographer whose work examines social inequities in the city of Detroit. Self-taught, she is a Foundry Photo Workshop alumna (2021), a Facing Change: Documenting Detroit Fellow (2018), and a member of *Diversity Photo* and *Women Photograph*.

Her most recent work is on display at the Detroit Historical Museum as part of *The Hustle* exhibition (2023).

Valaurian's photos have been published in the New York Times, The Washington Post, The Houston Chronicle, The Detroit Free Press, Bridge Michigan, Bridge Detroit, and Detroit Catholic, among others.



# YOUR MENTOR: Jessica Taylor



Jessica Taylor is a Detroit-based journalist. As a National Association of Black Journalists award winner Jessica has built her professional career reporting on race and culture. She developed her journalistic skills at Wayne State University's professional honors program, The Journalism Institute for Media Diversity. There she grew in passion for storytelling and marketing and communications.

As a recent graduate of Wayne State, she is ardent about the education of Detroiters and advancing Black youth professionally and creatively. Her involvement with serving the youth department for the Southwest Jurisdiction #1 of the Church of God in Christ and being a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. keeps her rooted in her community. Jessica is currently working for the communications and marketing team at Wayne State University Law School.

# YOUR MENTOR: James Morris



James Charles Morris (b. 1984), is a self-taught multidisciplinary artist, who has engaged in the creative visual media practices of photography, collage, painting, and printmaking for 20 years. Morris has used his work to engage in various social conversations addressing themes of race, spirituality, history, mental wellness and community. As a native Detroiter, Morris has always had a fondness for his hometown, which is evident in his work.

In 2008, Morris founded Definitive Style Exclusive (DSE Detroit), a brand that uses an array of visual statements and designs created with a simple yet blunt approach to touch on difficult and controversial topics within our society.

In 2019, Morris began developing an artistic style that combines collage, photo montage, and abstract expressionism. This collage-montage style has led Morris to create a series of figurative works, that have engaged many within the artistic community.

# YOUR MENTOR: Chrishelle Griffin

Chrishelle Griffin is the owner of Consult Chris, LLC. She works with organizations and entrepreneurs, specializing in branding, marketing and events. Chrishelle previously served as a multimedia journalist for six years, working as a copy editor, features writer, and social media manager.

In her role with Issue Media Group, Chrishelle manages social media posting and boosting for special projects across multiple markets, including Model D Media. She has served as a social media mentor in previous Voices of Youth projects, working with youth on topics including mental health, diversity and inclusion. She is an advocate for creating safe spaces for conversations around mental health and work.







## Two Youth Cohorts

- **Cohort 1 - Ages 4 - 12- COMPLETE**
  - Center 4 Success
  - Brilliant Detroit
  
- **Cohort 2 - Ages 13-18 - COMPLETE**
  - CDAD | Community Development Advocates of Detroit
  - Cody Rouge Action Alliance
  - Boys & Girls Club
  - Skillman



- **3 cartoon/community storytelling workshops held:**
  - December 7th - Center for Success
  - December 8th - Brilliant Detroit
  - December 9th - Brilliant Detroit
- **Over 24 youth served**
  - Translator on-site at Center for Success location
  - Original artwork created at each workshop
- **1 original story published in Model D**
- **Completed artwork to be delivered to partners**



Voices of Youth: What would our youngest community members change? We ask them.

BIBA ADAMS | TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2023

[\\*Spanish version also published on Model D](#)



[\\*Spanish version also published on Model D](#)

## **Cohort Two Session Dates**

**Thursday, January 26th**

5:30-7:30 pm

Aretha's Jazz Cafe

350 Madison St. Detroit, MI 48226

**Thursday, February 9th**

5:30-7:30 pm

Aretha's Jazz Cafe

350 Madison St. Detroit, MI 48226

- **9 youth participants**
- **9 stories published, 1 produced by IMG**
- **All youth have been paid for workshop participation**

## Introducing Cohort 2 - 451 views



**D** modeldmedia Original audio ...

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**D** modeldmedia Take a peek inside Model D's Voices of Youth initiative — a series that pairs young people with mentors to help capture their perspective and narrative. 💙👏📱  
:  
Featuring comments from Biba Adams (@bibathediva) & Joel Fluent Greene (@joelfluentgreene)  
7w

 sarahwilliamstoryteller Wonderful series initiative! Can't wait to hear more from these young voices! 🍷

1w Reply

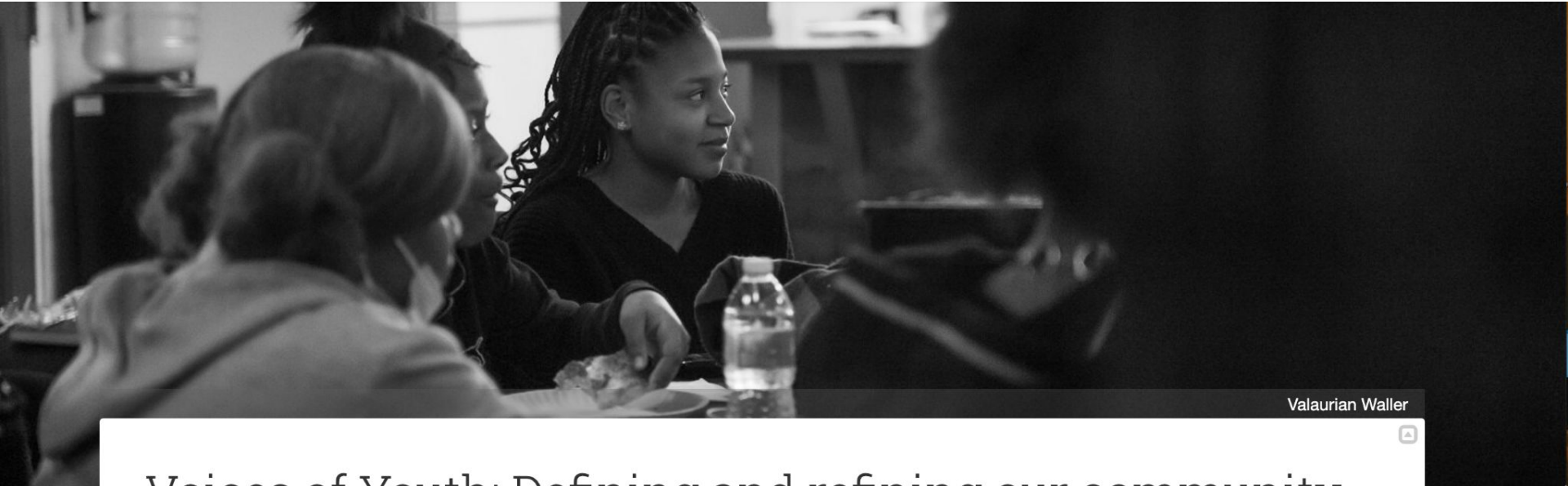
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👍 💬 🗑️

 Liked by sarahwilliamstoryteller and 22 others

FEBRUARY 13

😊 Add a comment... Post



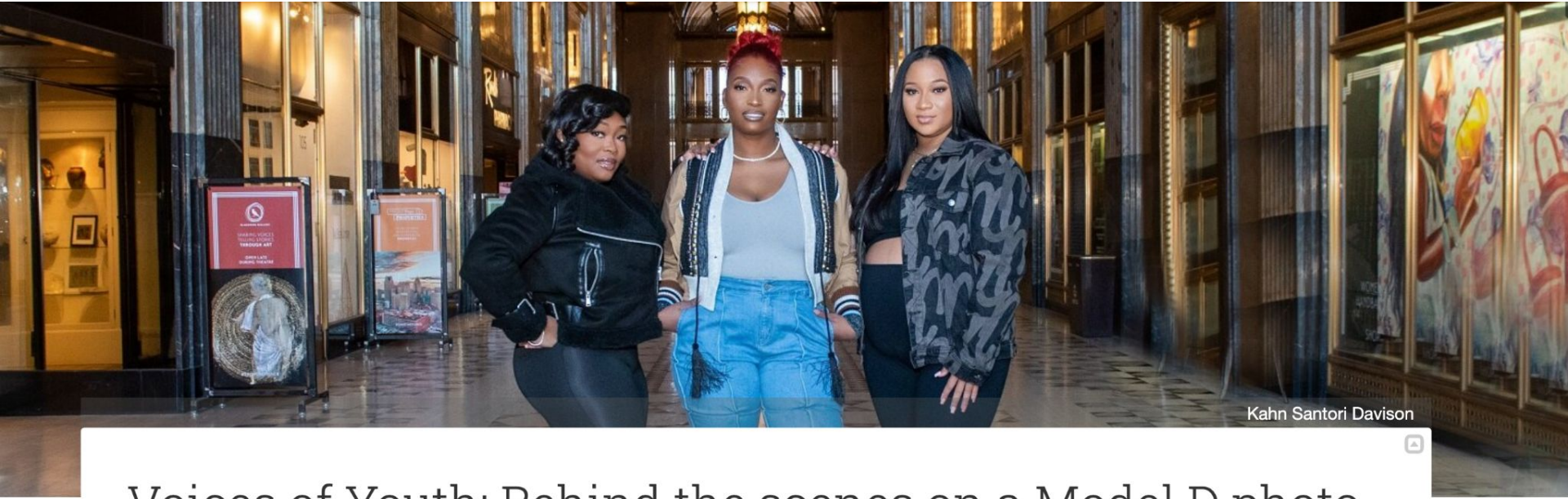
Valaurian Waller



## Voices of Youth: Defining and refining our community

BIBA ADAMS | TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 2023

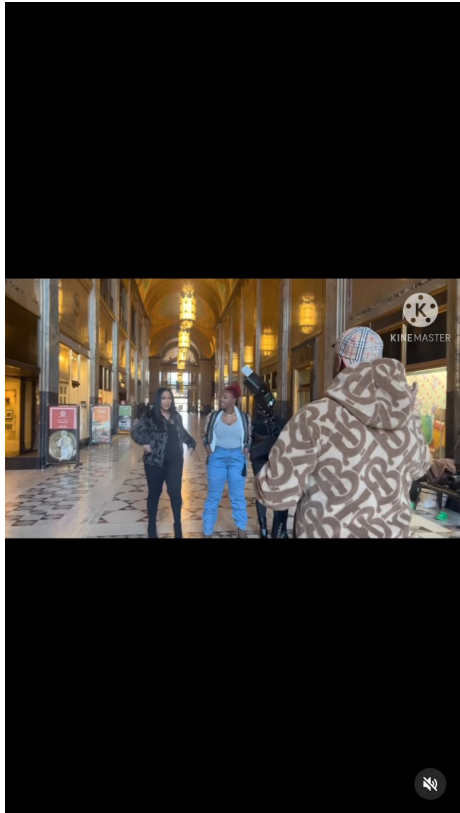




Kahn Santori Davison

Voices of Youth: Behind the scenes on a Model D photo shoot

1,452 views



**modelmedia**  
Original audio



**modelmedia** BEHIND THE SCENES: Meet 3 women shaping Detroit's hip-hop renaissance.

:  
While the 1990s may be hailed as the "golden age" of Detroit's hip-hop scene, these three women are tenaciously blazing their own trails today. Rather than taking center stage, they are behind the scenes managing clubs, artists, and careers in the industry. Meet the new faces driving Motor City's hip-hop revival.

:  
Voices of Youth participant, Nyla Davison goes behind the scenes to learn more about this Model D story.

:  
Link in bio for the full story!

👉 & 🗺️ Kahn Santori Davison (@kahnsantori)

👉 Nyla Davison for Model D's Voices of Youth initiative

👉 Chanel Domonique (@chanelcdm) | Darylynn 'DeDe'

Mumphord (@dream\_rich\_) | Lauren 'Lo' McGrier

(@connectwithlo)

Edited · 3w



**sarahwilliamstoryteller** Great job, Nyla! 🍷



1w Reply



Liked by **sarahwilliamstoryteller** and 40 others

MARCH 7



Add a comment...

Post



## Voices of Youth: Detroit teen tells grandparents story through a moving poem

"The reason I chose the topic of my grandparents, as well as how they contribute to my life and others around them is because of the impact I know that they've made on my family and I," says Hickson. "Knowing my grandparents' stories, and how they've maneuvered through life, while remaining so selfless to one's around them has made this process very heartfelt to me."

As part of the process, Jaimee interviewed her grandparents, "Recording this interview also gave me something to remember and look back on when my grandparents earn their wings. So I am very grateful to have them today in order to make this video, knowing others sadly may not have had the opportunity to do so."

## Voices of Youth: Detroit teen tells grandparents story through a moving poem

**Blessed am I**, by Jaimee Hickson

*Whole-hearted, humble, and consistent love.*

*I'd always knew I was blessed with you.*

*Blessed that you were good so life was good to you*

*Blessed that you were dealt in my deck of cards.*

*Blessed that you are still here and well.*

*So blessed that you love me.*





## Voices of Youth: Teen artist visualizes her hope for Detroit's homes

### Artist Statement from Dominique Hubbard:

*My art shows a real home and community that is different in Detroit. Many people come together, all males and females that stand as one, holding tools facing a broken home that can soon rebuild can be colored. The problem is there are so many broken old houses in Detroit that lose their worth over time, but if others come together with skills or money or hope or faith a new home will be formed. Not just not just for them, for their city and a new life that starts in a home.*

Voices of Youth: Teen artist visualizes her hope for Detroit's homes





## Voices of Youth: Teen reporter captures development disparity in Detroit

The homeschooler in 10th grade says that she has observed "one or two abandoned homes" in nearly every neighborhood in Detroit, but that downtown there is constant building of new apartment homes and entertainment venues that don't seem to serve the residents.

"Fixing all these apartments but still abandoned houses?," she writes, "Still people on the street hungry, cold and so on. I love Detroit but they need to get it together. It's amazing how downtown or dominantly white communities look so nice compared to the Black communities."

Grice was mentored by Chrishelle Griffin, who helped her create a visual project designed for social media.

In her personal statement, Grice referenced [Shamayim "Mama Shu" Harris](#) of Avalon Village in Highland Park who has been able to rally investors and community members to help her build a village that serves children and local residents as someone that she looks up to and admires.

Grice's mentors hope she continues to seek the answers to the question that seems to be heavy on her heart: "Where is the progress in my community?"

Voices of Youth: Teen reporter captures development disparity in Detroit







## Voices of Youth: Teen poet shares powerful story of grief and guilt

Aliryca Howell is a 9th grader at Voyageur College Preparatory High School. As a Voices of Youth participant, she was chosen for the poetry track with mentor Joel "Fluent" Greene.

Her moving poem "Tears of a Tiger" touches on thoughts of inadequacy and insecurity. In writing the poem, she was influenced by a novel of the same name. It depicts the story of a 17-year-old African American boy named Andrew "Andy" Jackson, who feels deeply guilty for inadvertently causing his best friend Robert "Rob" Washington's death through drunk driving.

The story is told through multiple different formats such as journal entries, first-person narratives, and newspaper articles. Aliyrica noted that the book deeply affected her and she thought about how "sometimes in life, you do the same thing over and over and again and nothing is getting better, but nothing is getting worse." She added that one only improves in life if they decide to take true steps forward in their own progress.



## Voices of Youth: Teen poet shares powerful story of grief and guilt

### Tears of a Tiger

By Aliryca Howell

*i feel as if i'm a bother to society, to the warm world due to pollution,  
to the constant fear of being trapped,  
i am a bother to whom i share a home with, to whom i share my heart with,  
i am not home here,  
i am not myself here,  
why am i so far if everyone else is so near,  
why am i like this?  
what is there to me that others do not seek?  
at this point in time my soul, mind and body feels so weak,  
so un pigmented,  
so broken  
so dull, filled with madness and despair,  
how is it that i feel so scared, in my own head?  
am i the problem? is it me?  
i continue to pray on my knees that one day god will see that he made a mistake creating me,*



## Voices of Youth: What does self-care look like for Detroit teens

"Photos hold memory and can tell words that people can't even form for themselves," says Haney. "Every photo has a different story."

The Detroit teen worked with professional photographer Val Waller to explore the theme of self-care in her photo essay, featured in the gallery above.

"I wanted her to explore what that looks like for her during her everyday life," says Waller. "I think she did an awesome job of exploring the subject visually, and she let me know she had a great time putting it together."

Haney says she hopes that through her work, people gain the knowledge that "it's ok to take time for themselves and don't feel bad about that".

"Self-care means to have time for yourself without feeling bad about it or anything."

Voices of Youth: What does self-care look like for Detroit teens



Self love  
through  
pictures

Stephanie Haney • Mar 2023



## Voices of Youth: Teen captures how Cody Rouge provides calm in a chaotic world

*I chose photography with the Voices of Youth because I have always wanted to do photography and I always looked at different pictures and wanted to make something like the ones I have seen. My mom says I have always stopped and said, "that would be a pretty picture". The VOY program gave me the opportunity to learn how. I learned a lot from Val. She taught me how to angle the camera, how to capture life in photographs, and how to take a picture in a decent background too.*

*One of my greatest accomplishments thus far is the wellness room, because the youth need a space to unwind. The Cody Rouge Youth Council along with myself started a room for people ages 13 to 20 years old. The Cody Calm Center (or C3) is a wellness room designated for teens to have a space to relax, recenter and realign their minds.*

Voices of Youth: Teen captures how Cody Rouge provides calm in a chaotic world





## Voices of Youth: Detroit teens dives into the history of hostile architecture

Hostile architecture is an urban-design strategy that uses architecture to restrict certain actions taken upon the property. Hostile architecture mainly affects homeless people, but also can affect other members of our community.

This is an issue to bring awareness to because homelessness increases more and more each year. Homeless people are already struggling to find places to sleep and or stay warm and hostile architecture makes it more difficult. Not only does it affect homeless people, but it also has an impact on pregnant people and people with disabilities.

Voices of Youth: Detroit teens dives into the history of hostile architecture







Run date	Title	Engagement	Total Reach
2/7/2023	Voices of Youth: What would our youngest community members change? We ask them.	133	32784
2/7/2023	Los jóvenes opinan: ¿Qué cambiarían los miembros más jóvenes de nuestra comunidad? Se lo preguntamos	1	17568
3/21/2023	Voices of Youth: Defining and refining our community	102	17877
3/23/2023	Voices of Youth: Behind the scenes on a Model D photo shoot	1,544	17871
4/11/2023	Voices of Youth: Detroit teen tells grandparents' story through moving poem	435	32996
4/18/2023	Voices of Youth: Teen artist visualizes her hope for Detroit's homes	17	22688
4/25/2023	Voices of Youth: Teen reporter captures development disparity in Detroit	515	31273
4/25/2023	Voices of Youth: Teen poet shares powerful story of grief and guilt	297	17871
5/2/2023	Voices of Youth: What does self care look like for Detroit teens?	219	28365
5/9/2023	Voices of Youth: Teen captures how Cody Rogue space provides calm in a chaotic world	54	2430
5/16/2023	Voices of Youth: Detroit teen dives into the history of hostile architecture	156	19578



- 33 youth served
- 9 youth stories published
- 5 events held
- 2 IMG stories published
- 201,341 people reached
- 3,473 engagements

*“I loved the program and the project I promoted. I hope people actually take into consideration that mental health and self love is a big thing in the world and learn how to help themselves improve their mental health and wellbeing.”*