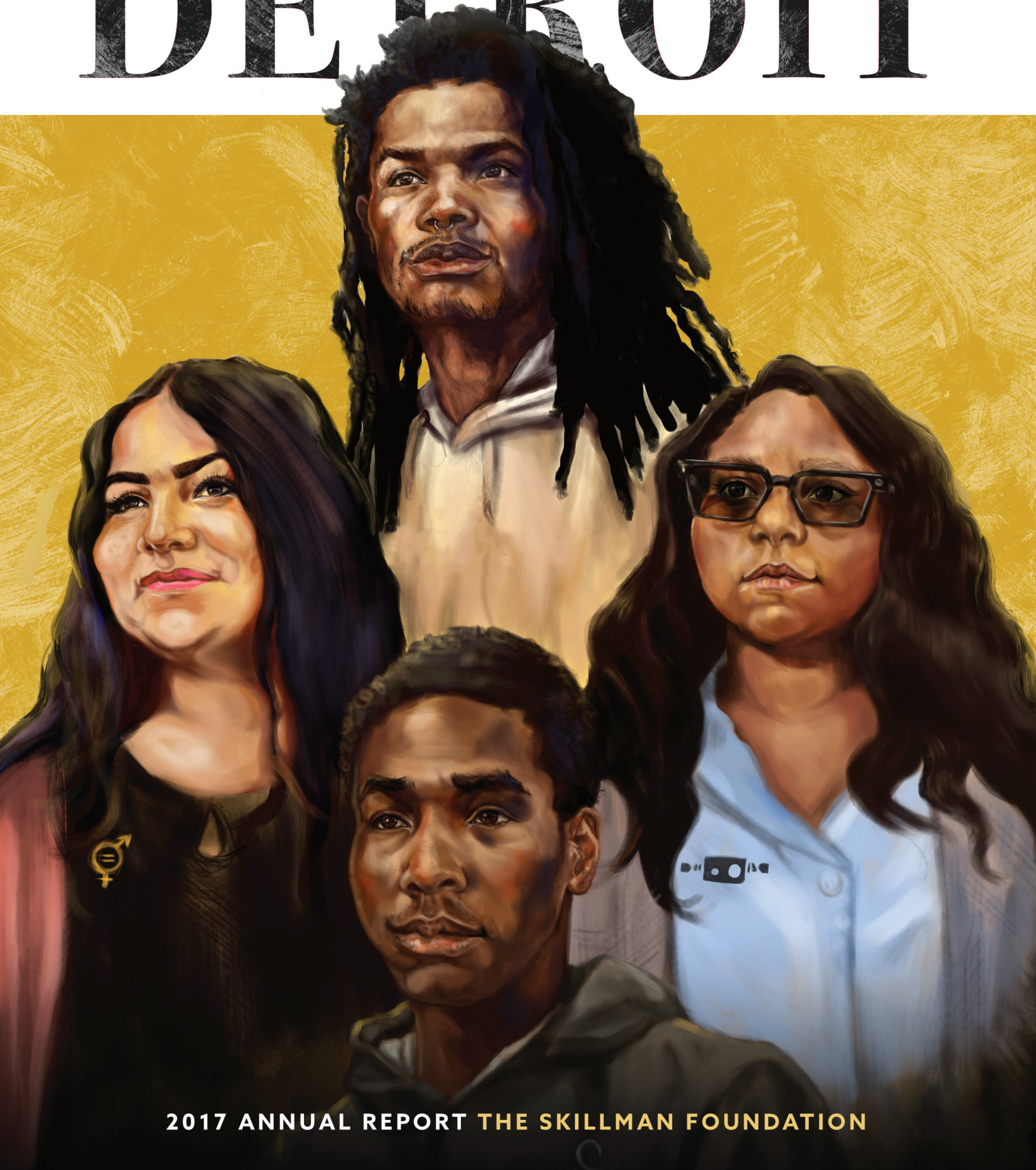


— WHO WILL LEAD —

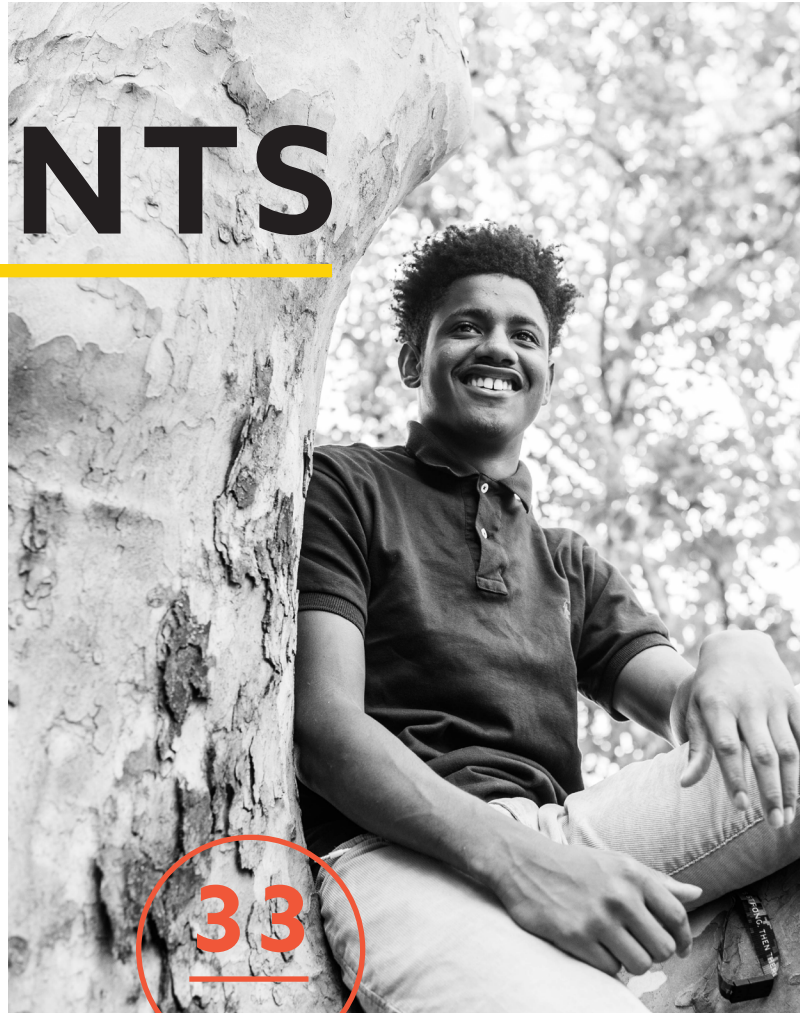
DETROIT



2017 ANNUAL REPORT THE SKILLMAN FOUNDATION

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Detroit from
My Bike Seat

On the Cover

Illustration by Sydney James

Cass Technical High School graduate
sydneygjam.es.com

Curtis Roach

Cass Technical High
School graduate (top)

Ana Lisa Alvarez

Western International High
School graduate (left)



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Founder, Staff,
Trustee List

Javon Franklin

Denby High School
graduate (bottom)

Kennedy Smith

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10th grade (right)

Learn more about these
young Detroiters at

skillman.org/whowillleaddetroit



Tonya Allen
President and CEO
The Skillman Foundation

A LETTER TO DETROIT YOUTH

What up doe? I see you, Detroit youth. From the east side to the west side, your light shines. Your grind is admirable. Your swagger is in a league of its own. You are humble. You are brash. You are beautiful. You are tough. And so much more...

I have watched you navigate the challenges within our city and our neighborhoods, and I see your strength, your virtue, and your resilience.

And that's just part of your greatness.

I love the way you look out for and protect your sisters, brothers and cousins, and how you help when you see someone in need. All of this shows how Detroit is home to the strongest and big-hearted young people on earth.

This is who you are. This is what I see.

As Detroit recovers, it is your birthright to be at the forefront of its transformation. The world is watching our city, our home. People are paying attention. And what I want most is that they pay attention to you. →



When you speak up, and speak clearly and with focus, you'll find incredible things will happen.

Adults may be telling the story of Detroit today, but tomorrow—and I do mean tomorrow, not a distant day, but very, very soon—the youth of this city will own the story of Detroit. In fact, you're writing it right now. Claim it. Drive it. Let your voice be heard and your vision for our city be embraced.

When you speak up, and speak clearly and with focus, you'll find incredible things will happen. Others will step back so you can step forward to give your voice residence and power. You will be the change agents our city is waiting for.

Take a moment and look at yourselves. You are already leading. People like Alondra Alvarez (Western International High School graduate, class of 2018), who used her voice to help lead local and national gun violence protests. And Imani Harris (Renaissance High

School graduate, class of 2018), who spoke her truth and desire for better city schools in newspapers and on national airwaves. These influencers gained the attention of our city, state, nation and world by delivering first-hand insights on issues that affect young people in Detroit. You can do the same.

Alondra and Imani's activism are testaments to what you are all capable of achieving. They are only two examples; there are so many more of you making amazing contributions. Your great works and accomplishments are proof of what Detroit looks like when we invest in you.

So walk in courage. Hold your head high. Be seen and heard. Challenge the things around you and say, "This isn't working. What if we did it a new way, our way, a Detroit way?"

There will be some who will try to sway your ideas and silence your voice. There will be some who won't understand your point of view and say you are too young. Don't let them dissuade you, keep driving forward with conviction. Say loudly, "I belong here." Because you do.

With young people at the forefront, Detroit can be a city where everyone belongs and has a chance to be their best. This city can be "opportunity lit," where you can have access to the best schools, the best programs, and benevolent adults who are all working to make sure you achieve your dreams.

You can add so much power to the revival that is happening in the city right now. Bring new ideas to life. Listen to your friends as well as to the quiet kid in the back of the classroom. Build on one another's inspirations. Because it's diversity of thought that opens the gate to smart solutions. And Detroit is in need of smart solutions. You have them. The next big idea is a seed inside of you.

You are the new wave of technology trailblazers, policy makers and changers, global activists, renowned dancers, musicians, and artists.

This is your city. And I am listening to you. I hear you. Every day. Whenever The Skillman Foundation sets to work on an issue, it is because you have said it matters to you.

More than anything, I hear you say, "I love Detroit. I just want it to love me back."

As adults, it is our responsibility and our privilege to love you back. And we are going to scrap the lip service and prove it with action.

Detroit is in need of smart solutions. You have them. The next big idea is a seed inside of you.

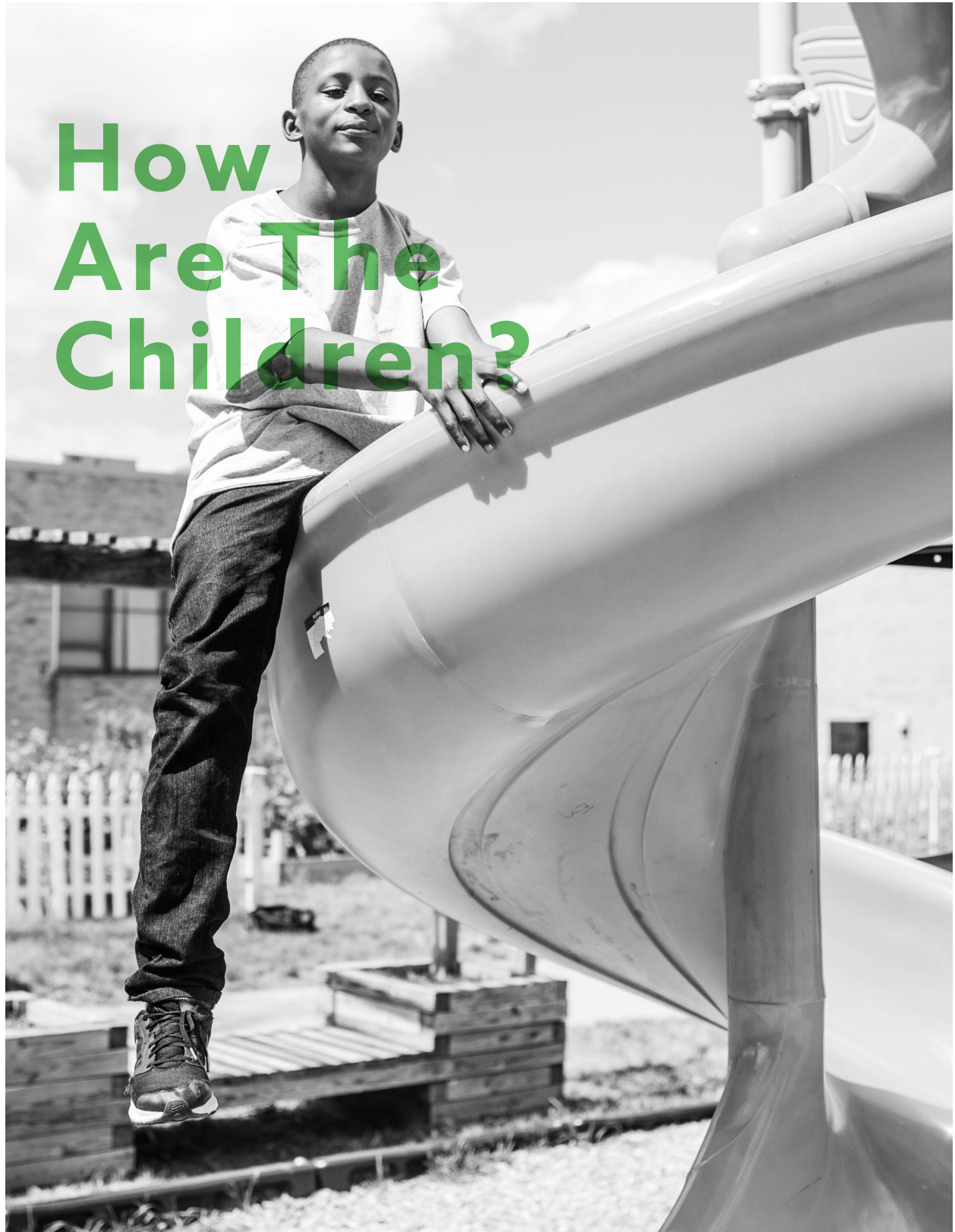
With your vision and determination, with all you have done and what you have overcome, I don't think there is anything stopping you. I am amazed by what I see. I am joyful because of what I see. I am full of hope because of all I see.

I see you. And you make me proud.

With Love,

Tonya Allen

Cass Technical High School graduate



How are the children?

This is where we begin, this is where we end.
At breakfast, on the bus, in class, after school,
finding a part-time job, doing
homework, going to sleep.

How are the children?

Here in Detroit, it's a hard question.
Many of our children's stories come
from a bruised and scarred history:
racism, deindustrialization, poverty,
predatory lending, poor transit,
and a patchwork recovery.

How are the children?

Look into their eyes, see the spark, the
light. There is a great future present.
A future we are relentlessly committed to
fostering with every tool at our disposal.
From the city blocks where they
play to the great halls where their
school budgets are weighed,
we seek to open doors, windows, and minds.
Always asking: How are the children?
We say to you, if you have a way
to make them happier, healthier,
we will partner with you.
Together, we are their champions. We are
their lanterns. We are their spirit warriors.
We are, purely and simply, theirs.
We belong to nobody but the
children of Detroit.

They are our mission, our
agenda, our policy and politics.

The answers will not be easy.

We will face struggle.

But if we remain explicitly focused
on diversity, equity, and inclusion,
we will honor our children, who are
Detroit's future and Detroit's present,
and help them grow strong.

We are idealistic for Detroit children.

We are pragmatic for them.

We are selfish for them. We
are hopeful for them.

How can we not be? Look
into their eyes. See them.

How are the children?

"And how are the children?" is the
traditional greeting of Maasai tribe warriors.
The expression connotes that the true
strength of a community is determined
by the well-being of its children.

We believe this is the single most important
question to consider each and every day.
As issues are debated, priorities are set,
and decisions are made, asking first and
foremost "How are the children?" will guide
us toward a more just and thriving society.

50 people

who represent the



Detroit

By Natalie Fotias

The Skillman Foundation

Photography by Justin Milhouse



Detroit is fueled by community heroes dedicated to supporting children. In every pocket of the city, there are people nurturing and investing in our youth. From teachers and counselors, to doctors and nurses; librarians and statisticians, to mentors and artists. Some are youth themselves advocating for their peers. Others are caring adults who look to protect, guide and provide for kids.

Narrowing down a list of people who represent the care our city has for its youth was a challenging, yet rewarding project. We compiled the list by asking a few dozen Detroiters, "Who comes to mind when you think about people who champion Detroit kids?"

The result: an extraordinary group of individuals representing a vast swath of communities, backgrounds, and ages. We asked each of them to share their aspiration for Detroit youth and what they're doing to help make it a reality. What we heard back was an inspiring testament to the love our city holds for its kids.

01 **ASWAN ALMAKTARY**

Advocacy Specialist, Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS)

Aspiration: For youth to thrive in school and beyond.

Through ACCESS, I help ensure children and their families have access to quality education, safe neighborhoods, and other essential needs.

02 **ALONDRA ALVAREZ**

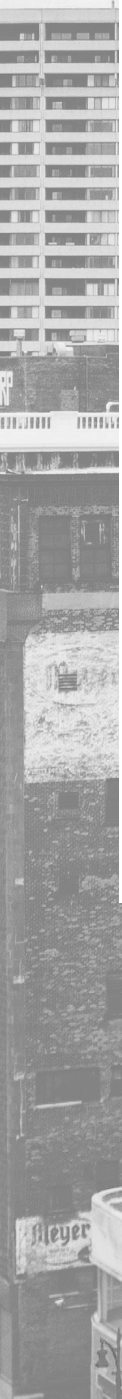
Youth Organizer, Congress of Communities and 482Forward

Aspiration: That our youth become leaders and the voice of their community. I coach youth to be organizers and to take pride in telling their stories.

03 **JASMIN BARNETT**

Executive Director, Ladies in Training

Aspiration: For youth to know they matter. Too many kids in Detroit have been confined to their neighborhood; I work hard to introduce them to the larger world.



04 **ODIS BELLINGER**

Director and Founder, Building
Better Men Program

Aspiration: That our young people are recognized as a precious resource. For 27 years, I've been humbled to support their development. "Watering" their dreams will help them thrive.

05 **ANTHONY BENAVIDES**

Director, Clark Park Coalition

Aspiration: That youth excel, have fun, and be proud of where they live. I work to make a park where kids play and feel good about themselves.

06 **TANISHA C. BURTON**

Founder, Today Is The Day LLC

Aspiration: For all children to know their self-worth. Today Is The Day provides parents of LGBTQ youth with resources that help them support and advocate for their children.

07 **KENYETTA CAMPBELL**

Executive Director, Cody Rouge
Community Action Alliance

Aspiration: For youth to continue to lead the transformation efforts that are taking place in Detroit. I support this by helping to create a pipeline of youth and young adult leadership.





08 ALANDRA D. CHUNEV

Director of Student Support and College Persistence, Midnight Golf Program

Aspiration: That youth understand the unlimited power they possess!

I am committed to mentoring, empowering, and ensuring that they are exposed to diverse opportunities.



09 DWAYNE T. DECK

Department Coordinator, Detroit Police Law Enforcement Explorers Program; Coordinator, Children In Trauma Intervention Camp

Aspiration: That our young people dream without limits, accomplish seemingly impossible goals, and live out their inner greatness. I mentor and support interactive programs for youth.

10 BART EDDY

Co-Founder, Detroit Community Schools and the Sunbridge International Collaborative

Aspiration: For young people to transform community and discover themselves in the process. Through the Brightmoor Makers Entrepreneurship in Action program, I help ignite the creative and innovative possibilities within our youth.

11



13



18



11 **CINDY EGGLETON**

Co-Founder and CEO, Brilliant Detroit

Aspiration: That neighborhoods come together to assure kids are ready for school and life. Brilliant Detroit provides spaces for programming and fellowship to make this happen.

12 **FAITH CHARISA FELS**

History Teacher, Detroit Public Schools Community District

Aspiration: For young people to be change agents in their communities. Through teaching, I help my students identify what they care about, and how to explain their “why.”

13 **ANDREA FORD-AYLER**

Principal, West Side Academy of Information

Technology and Cyber Security

Aspiration: That our children reach their greatest potential. I facilitate a fast track to graduation, career training, and certification with opportunities for the whole child to thrive.

14 **SERVANDO GARZA**

Youth Leader, Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation

Aspiration: That kids aim for greater heights. I help by showing them that regardless of their background, they are able to do anything.

15 **EDGAR GOMEZ**

Lead Youth Organizer, 482Forward; Youth Program

Coordinator, Urban Neighborhood Initiatives

Aspiration: That children will never have to be in closing schools with no teachers and outdated books, like I did. I work to bring justice for our youth.

16 **STACEY L. GRAHAM**

First Grade Teacher, University Prep Science

and Math Elementary School

Aspiration: For our youth to have an equitable education. I deliver instruction based off children's individual needs and encourage them to always give their very best.

17 **CHANEL HAMPTON, M.A., M. ED.**

Founder and President, Strategic Community Partners

Aspiration: For youth to own their power and path, inspiring and leading Detroit, our nation, and the world. Strategic Community Partners creates community-centered spaces and initiatives that youth deserve, want, and need.

18 **IMANI SIMONE HARRIS**

Youth Leader, 482Forward

Aspiration: For youth to steer the city's comeback—not billionaires and outsiders. I'm here to inspire and support what's already here.

19 **LOUISE HARRIS**

Youth Advocate

Aspiration: That young people—with the spirit of hope—love and respect themselves and others; and focus on giving their best to be successful in any positive path they choose. I volunteer with a number of organizations to enhance education, safety and parent engagement.

20 **ANISE HAYES**

Executive Director, Atlantic Impact

Aspiration: For young people to believe their city is a place where they can be academically, economically, and professionally empowered. I work with Atlantic Impact to make this a reality!

22



21 **EVERETT HODGE**

Project Director, Clockwise Education

Aspiration: For youth to receive the best education and training. I am a strong advocate for wraparound services to remove barriers that can prevent youth from attaining their goals.

22 **BEVERLY ANN HOGAN**

Family and School Engagement Specialist, SchoolSmarts

Aspiration: For children to dream BIG. Through SchoolSmarts, I help remove barriers to education and create an environment where dreaming big is the norm.

25



23 **KIM JOHNSON**

President and CEO, Developing K.I.D.S.; Network and Operations Manager, Youth Development Resource Center

Aspiration: For children to be educated, safe, healthy, and exposed to opportunities and new experiences. I work to keep kids the number one priority in our city.

24 **TAMMIE JONES**

Vice President of Education, United Way for Southeastern Michigan

Aspiration: For our young people's success to be supported. By leveraging the strengths of business, education and community, we're mobilizing hearts and resources to expand opportunities!

26



25 **NICOLE JUREK**

Founder, Local Circles

Aspiration: For youth to be ready for work and college. Local Circles provides young people with an opportunity to lead research projects on social issues that inspire them.

26 **FRANK MCGHEE**

Youth Advocate

Aspiration: For our young people to be community leaders, committed to transforming their neighborhoods. I passionately mentor our youth to help inspire them toward this end.

27



27 **ANDREA MEYER**

Executive Director, Center for Success Network

Aspiration: That young people positively contribute to their community and society, and gain success. I support academic growth so they can achieve their highest potential.



**COMMUNITY LEADERS,
COMMITTED TO
TRANSFORMING THEIR
NEIGHBORHOODS**

28 **JUSTIN MILHOUSE**

Photographer and Videographer

Aspiration: That kids embrace a vision for themselves limited only by their imagination. I mentor youth, serving as a creative resource and endeavoring to establish an artistic, expressive space in Detroit.

29 **BENNY N. NAPOLEON**

Sheriff, Wayne County Sheriff's Office

Aspiration: That young people have the support needed to be healthy, well-educated, and civically engaged. I am a mentor, former little league coach, president of the Wayne County Sheriff's Youth and Senior Education Fund, and 20-year board member of Fight Crime: Invest in Kids of Michigan.

30 **SARAH NASHER**

Youth Leader, Chadsey Condon Community Organization

Aspiration: That Detroit youth have every opportunity that students in more privileged areas have. I help plan events focused on expanding opportunity.

31 **ABDOELDAME OBEID**

Youth Leader, Arab Community Center
for Economic and Social Services

Aspiration: That youth reach the right pathways in school and life. I help ensure they have the resources needed to do so.

32 **KWAKU OSEI-BONSU**

Founder, BlackMetroEats.com and Organizer
of Detroit Black Restaurant Week

Aspiration: For Detroit kids to enjoy food that is real, healthy, and truly accessible. I help by way of school lunch reform within Detroit's public and charter school networks.





33 **SARA PLACHTA ELLIOTT**

Executive Director, Youth Development Resource Center

Aspiration: That children have many opportunities to expand their interests and skills after school and in the summer! The YDRC supports adults that serve youth to measure quality, improve programming, and advocate.

34 **MELISSA M. PONCE**

School Social Worker, Detroit Public

Schools Community District

Aspiration: For students to see themselves in positions of power and realize their dreams are possible. That's why I, a Latinx, choose to work in DPSCD.

35 **JULIA PUTNAM**

Principal, The James and Grace Lee Boggs School

Aspiration: Our youth can create a Detroit that works for all. The Boggs School helps by nurturing creative, critical thinkers who contribute to the well-being of their communities.



36 **ANGELA REYES**

Executive Director and Founder, Detroit

Hispanic Development Corporation

Aspiration: That children have every opportunity to reach their full potential and become happy, healthy, and productive adults. DHDC makes a difference by creating life-changing opportunities for youth and their families.



37 **MICHAEL REYES**

Founder, We Are Culture Creators

Aspiration: For the youth of Detroit to find a place of love, support, and reaffirmation. I provide a space of healing and artistic expression.



38 **BISHOP TONY RUSSELL**

Founder, The MAN Network; CEO,

Detroit Community Solutions

Aspiration: For children to feel valued, capable, and safe to live their dreams. I help keep kids safe and train them to become incredible leaders.



39 **KAYANA Z. SESSOMS**

Program Director, Osborn Neighborhood Alliance

Aspiration: For youth to have the tools to navigate through their everyday lives and to conquer any obstacle. I support this by developing solution-focused programs that improve their overall quality of life.

40 **T. SONUYI**

Medical Director, Detroit Life Is Valuable Everyday (DLIVE)

Aspiration: For young people's life expectancy to not be determined by their zip code. DLIVE addresses this through a health-centered approach to community violence and trauma.



41 **KHALI SWEENEY**

Founder and CEO, Downtown Boxing Gym

Aspiration: That students achieve their dreams. Downtown Boxing Gym empowers Detroit students with education (books before boxing), mentoring, enrichment opportunities, college and career readiness, and an insatiable winning spirit.

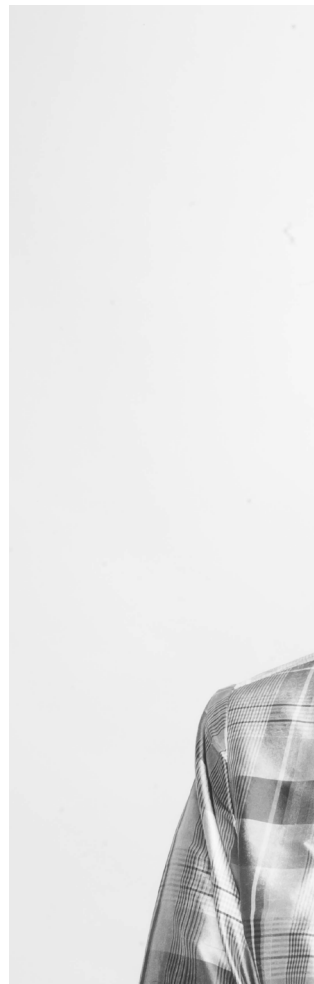
42 **BERNADETTE TALIAFERRO-CAIN**

Director, Heritage Youth Program

Aspiration: For our children to learn and develop skills that will enable them to reach their full potential. Heritage Youth Program helps them stay out of trouble, attend school, and become self-sufficient.

//

**FOR CHILDREN TO
VALUED, CAPABLE
TO LIVE THEIR DRE**



FEEL , AND SAFE TEAMS.



43 **JAMES E. TATE, JR.**

District 1 Council Member, City of Detroit

Aspiration: That young people have access to opportunities that lay the foundation for successful growth. My team and I support this through our various office initiatives, focusing on mentoring, student engagement, and providing additional resources youth may need.

44 **PAM TAURENCE**

Registered Nurse, CCM, Access Management Specialist, Children's Hospital of Michigan

Aspiration: For children to live full, healthy, happy lives. I co-lead an annual cereal drive at Children's Hospital of Michigan alongside fellow nurses—so no child goes without breakfast during the summer months.

45 **ALICE G. THOMPSON**

Chief Executive Officer, Black Family Development, Inc.

Aspiration: For children to have access to abundant opportunities; to thrive in safe, loving and supportive homes, schools and communities. This is at the heart of my daily work.

46 **VANESSA VELA**

Youth Program Coordinator, Urban Neighborhood Initiatives

Aspiration: For young people to have access to become who they want to be in life. I offer my help during the school year to keep them on track.

47 **MARY JO VORTKAMP**

Children's Librarian and Manager, Franklin
Branch of the Detroit Public Library

Aspiration: To work with everyone and
anyone to help Detroit youth become
the happiest and most skilled adults—
who love to read—in the United States.

48 **ERIKA VILLARREAL BUNCE**

Director of Programs, Living Arts

Aspiration: That youth find their power. I
help by introducing them to the arts as a
tool for awakening their voices, expressing
confidence, and envisioning their own future.

49 **TONY WHLGN®**

Founder, The Whlgn®

Aspiration: For kids to have positive
peer-to-peer leadership. We assist them in
understanding the business behind what
they love, and help bridge the gap between
youth and our generation of mentors.

50 **JASON WILSON**

Founder and CEO, The Yunion

Aspiration: For Detroit youth to soar over
negative cultural influences and into their
purpose. The Yunion empowers them
with innovative prevention programming,
life skills training, and counseling.

The heart of Detroit doesn't stop with this list!
We want to hear from you, too. Get social and
post your aspiration for Detroit youth and how
you're making it happen using #kidsmatterhere,
or visit skillman.org/50Detroiters.





A man with a beard and glasses, wearing a checkered shirt and a striped tie, stands with one hand on his chin in a thoughtful pose. The background is dark with a word cloud of various phrases in different fonts and colors, including 'BENEFITED from', 'TEACHING IS MY PURPOSE', 'GOOD TEACHERS', 'USE', 'hip-hop', 'IN AN', 'ARTIST', 'PROVIDE', 'FATHER', 'THANKS', 'ABOUT', 'HOW TO', 'have a', 'POSITIVE', and 'IMPACT'.

TEACH IN DETROIT

A TEACHER CAN BE MANY THINGS.
IN DETROIT, THEY CHANGE LIVES.

MR. NELOMS, HIGH SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER,
DETROIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS COMMUNITY DISTRICT



WWW.TEACH313.COM



DETROIT

FROM

MY

BIKE

SEAT

We rode our bikes all over Detroit,
which, then,
was to the white picket fence
just past the pine tree next door
and back home again—
an entire city packed into this
lot of concrete meadow.

We had to play in the field
of Mama's vision—
Which was never consistent in range,

especially when she would fall into
her season of drinking.
One time she allowed us to go a little further
and we thought we found a new Detroit.

The point just past the neighbor's house—
The depth of this city beyond it,
my perception
A world as small as my hand.

// By Imani Nichele

Imani Nichele is the 2018 Detroit Youth
Poet Laureate, a title given to one teen
each year by InsideOut Literary Arts Project
to promote literacy, artistic engagement,
and civic awareness among peers.

AN **OPPORTUNITY** **AGENDA** FOR **DETROIT CHILDREN**

Detroit is a place of remarkable hustle and opportunity, where driven people with great ideas can find success, impact, even celebrity. A few recent examples from this incredible city include:

By **Natalie Fotias**
The Skillman Foundation

Melissa Butler (Cass Technical High School graduate) worked on Wall Street before moving home to focus on her lipstick line, The Lip Bar. She struck out with investors on the reality TV show *Shark Tank*, but kept grinding and created her own lane. Now, you can pop into Target stores across the country to purchase the vegan and cruelty-free line.

Dr. Tolulope Sonuyi, an emergency room physician at Sinai Grace Hospital, wanted to do more to treat the violence he had become accustomed to seeing. So he started DLIVE (Detroit Life is Valuable Everyday), a program that puts intervention specialists directly in the ER ward to assist victims, their families, and their friends in creating lasting lifestyle changes that help break the cycle of violence. DLIVE has become a national model, providing training to medical facilities across the country and receiving accolades from former President Obama.

Tommey Walker (Cass Technical High School graduate) created the Detroit Vs. Everybody brand that sparked national attention across the sports, news, and entertainment arenas; and influenced eminent Detroit rappers Eminem, Big Sean, Danny Brown, DeJ Loaf, Trick-Trick, and Royce da 5'9, who named their 2014 collaboration after the slogan.

Zay Hilfigerrr (Tyjuan Peoples) and **Zayion** (James) McCall were 15- and 17-years-old respectively when they produced "Juju On That Beat." Their music video went viral on YouTube, getting shared by a deluge of celebrities including LeBron James, Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, Waka Flocka Flame, and Ellen Degeneres. As of fall 2018, the video has attracted 362 million views. The single climbed to the number five spot on the *Billboard Hot 100* list and earned the duo a contract with Atlantic Records.

While these examples showcase Detroit as an incubator of dreams, the city remains, for many, a place of limited opportunities. A place where you can live your entire life within a few blocks of your home, constricted by lack of transportation and safety concerns, leading to a strangled sense of hope and self.

As one young Detroiter put it, "You shouldn't have to be afraid of your own city, or your own neighborhood, or your own streets where you grow up." That statement is indicative of the stories we reflect on as we think about our role and responsibility to Detroit children.

Detroit is, indeed, a city of opportunity. But it will only live up to its promise if every child growing up within its borders can connect to its greatest possibilities.

Building an Opportunity Agenda

In 2017, The Skillman Foundation spent time with youth, other community members, neighborhood organizations, and nonprofits, listening to and discussing the concerns that were top of mind. Simultaneously, we were reflecting on the many lessons learned from the Good Neighborhoods Initiative, our 10-year program that focused on improving conditions and outcomes for children in six Detroit neighborhoods.

These reflections and discussions led us to a conviction that Detroit children must benefit from and contribute to an opportunity-rich Detroit. From here, we developed the Opportunity Agenda for Detroit Children, an initiative dedicated to ensuring youth are met with meaningful learning and leadership opportunities that will allow them to have a presence in the city's recovery.

Skillman Foundation Program Directors David McGhee and Punita Thurman provide greater detail of this changemaking strategy.

**It will take all of us
working together to make
real change for kids.**

In 2017, the Foundation crafted a new strategy for its grantmaking and changemaking. How does its new vision differ from its work in the past?

David McGhee: We're taking what we learned over the past decade while working to improve the lives of children in six neighborhoods and applying those lessons citywide. That expansion of scope magnifies the questions philanthropy often asks itself: How do we grow our impact and how can we sustain positive outcomes over the long term?

Take our youth development work, for example. We want every child in Detroit to be able to attend high-quality afterschool programming, but we can't achieve that through our funding alone. So we've extended beyond funding individual programs to work toward building a network of out-of-school providers that better serve youth because they have access to training, data, and the ability to share best practices and services with one another. We're also working to expand the funding available to youth development providers, including advocating for dedicated public funding.

Punita Thurman: Our work has evolved beyond that of a funder to also consider how the systems that impact children can be improved or rebuilt; we're acting as a convener toward this end.

In addition to David's example of youth development, I would mention our work with the Coalition for the Future of Detroit Schoolchildren, a diverse cross-section of education, nonprofit, community, government and business leaders that came together in effort to stabilize and improve Detroit's schools. The Coalition was able to influence the creation of the new, debt-free Detroit Public Schools Community District and the return of local control to an elected school board and a board-selected superintendent. No single organization could have achieved this alone.

Convening a multitude of partners and perspectives to move collectively toward a shared goal is very much our way of working now. It will take all of us working together to make real change for kids.

What is the Foundation's vision for Detroit youth?

Thurman: We want young people to have a voice, to have access to good schools and good opportunities, and to drive a continued positive trajectory for their city.

The quality and reputation of Detroit schools has suffered for a long time. How can this be remedied?

Thurman: There is no shortage of brilliance in Detroit. Of course, it's easy to get weighed down by the negative headlines, but pockets of remarkable progress exist. University YES, a k-8 school in northwest Detroit, rose from being in the bottom five percent of Michigan schools to being in the 40th percentile in just two years under new leadership. Detroit Edison Public School Academy and Cass Technical High School have reached a 100 percent college acceptance rate with their students. Part of the work for the Foundation, and for the city, is to re-think the narratives we surround our children with by lifting up what is working and being solutions-oriented about what is not.

In regards to addressing quality, we have good reason to be hopeful. There's an immense focus on school improvement coupled with a responsiveness from local leadership that we haven't seen in decades. In the Detroit Public Schools Community District alone, the shift from emergency state management to a locally elected board and board-selected superintendent has begun to improve the lines of communication and accountability between school leadership and Detroit families. In the charter sector, high-performing schools are providing proof points of what's possible, and some are expanding to serve more children.

Overall, Detroit should celebrate and learn from areas of progress, while holding a relentless commitment to a long-term turnaround.

What would you like people to know about The Skillman Foundation's efforts to help improve Detroit's education system?

Thurman: One thing we're often pressed about is whether we support Detroit Public Schools Community District or public charter schools. We support both, and that's because our allegiance is to Detroit children, not to a particular school governance type or school leadership. We are beholden only to the children of Detroit and work to improve the places and policies that affect their lives.

The Skillman Foundation has been a long-time supporter of out-of-school youth development programming. What benefits do these programs play in the lives of children?

Thurman: Kids only spend about 20 percent of their waking hours in school, so what they do after school and during the summer matters. Our youth employment work connects young people with paid summer jobs, but it also introduces them to adults in the workforce with whom they have a chance to build relationships. For youth who may have never spent a day downtown, it can expand their outlook on what's possible for their future and expose them to a diversity of people, while also growing their sense of the world and sense of self.

McGhee: Another great example is Detroit PAL's Team Up program that places local police officers as quasi-coaches on the team. So, not only do young people have the opportunity of experiencing the sports that they're interested in, they are also building a relationship with a local police officer in a healthy way and in a healthy environment. When the game is over and they bump into each other on the street, they now have that connection.



There is no shortage of brilliance in Detroit.

The Foundation's Opportunity Agenda for Detroit Children calls out three impact areas: Education, Equity and Economy. What does the Economy impact area entail?

McGhee: We want Detroit youth to have a prosperous future and reach the highest levels they aspire to. To this end, we invest in programs and systems that enable youth to develop job readiness and entrepreneurial skills, explore career possibilities, forge relationships with employers, and learn how to manage their personal finances.

What does equitable change look like in Detroit?

McGhee: It really boils down to all of us recognizing one another as assets. To really understand our problems and develop effective long-term solutions, a diversity of experiences, values and ideas must be considered. This is how we build a more equitable Detroit and a stronger Detroit.

What does equity look like within the Foundation?

Thurman: Equity is at the heart of our efforts, from increasing public funding for afterschool programming to decreasing barriers like harsh disciplinary policies in schools. We also use our position to insist residents, including youth, have a seat at the table.

What we've come to realize more recently is that a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion should not only be an ethos, it should be made explicit. To this end, we've held numerous trainings with our staff and trustees as well as inviting a diverse set of education, business and community leaders to learn along with us. Some of this content has also been shared on our blog, with a more thorough account of our learnings to come. We also adopted a DEI policy statement this year and are actively working to ensure these values are present in every level of our work. →

What is your message to Detroit youth?

Thurman: You are brilliant. You are valuable. You are loved. Know that there are advocates who will continue working on your behalf.

McGhee: We acknowledge that you operate in a world where adults and systems have failed you. Yet we see you get up and go forward every day. You possess a perseverance and resiliency that many of us adults couldn't even fathom. Keep going. You will achieve great things.

DEI Policy Statement

The Skillman Foundation embraces diversity and authentic inclusion in all areas of our work; we consider this a prerequisite for positive social change. As a guiding principle, it impacts our decisions at every level from staffing to partnerships and how our resources are deployed.

We understand that we work in a context defined by inequities that are as present as the air we breathe. Therefore, we must confront the drivers of inequality and redesign systems with those who have been historically marginalized.

We are driven to create a community where all Detroiters—especially youth—are valued, heard and mobilized in the service of opportunity and prosperity for all.





How will
you create
opportunity
for young
people of
color in
Detroit?

Rising to the Challenge:

HOW MBK DETROIT IS LAUNCHING NEW IDEAS FOR THE CITY'S YOUTH

By William Sexton
The Skillman Foundation

That is the question at the heart of the My Brother's Keeper Detroit Innovation Challenge. Launched in 2016, the Challenge is a call for community members to submit their ideas to create and support opportunity for boys and young men of color in the city. Applicants do not need to have an established 501(c)(3), as is typically needed to apply for grant funding, only a great idea and the willingness to bring it to life.

The first edition of the Challenge attracted more than 500 submissions from Detroiters across the city, with a select group of finalists ultimately receiving \$50,000 each to develop their visions. Awardees represented a wide-range of ideas and all sought to create opportunity for youth in very unique ways.



We Are Culture Creators

Merges arts, activism, and entrepreneurship to help connect young men with the resources they need to become leaders, community builders, and independent artists.

skillman.org/culturecreators



Developing Despite Distance

Helps to connect young men of color with their incarcerated parents and express the complex emotions that accompany shared sentences.

skillman.org/developingdespitedistance



JOURNi

Equips youth with the technical skills they need to be competitive in Detroit's evolving economy through computer coding courses and employment opportunities.

skillman.org/journi



Our Town

Provides a platform for young Detroiters to share their city with the world through youth-guided tours and international travel experiences aimed at building leadership and cultural awareness skills.

skillman.org/ourtown

As the organizations tested their ideas, the experience also offered the opportunity to learn from each other, work collaboratively, and grow together. The young men who participated in the programs also played important roles throughout the process, lending their voices and helping to shape the direction and growth of their organizations.

"There's definitely a lack of opportunities for young people in Detroit," said Duan, a participant in the Developing Despite Distance program. "It feels good to be a part of an organization where I can help out and give back."

The process culminated in a public expo where the finalists demonstrated the mission and impact of their organizations through interactive exhibits prominently displayed in downtown Detroit. The installations were also accompanied by a photo exhibit that told the stories of the young men impacted by the participating programs.

"The Challenge has been a game changer for us. Not only did it provide funding for our organization, but we also received a ton of guidance and advice on how to build, scale, and evaluate our programming," said Richard Grundy, a co-founder of JOURNi.

"To this day, we continue to collaborate with contacts we've made during the Challenge, including some members of our cohort."

In the spring of 2018, the second Challenge launched with the returned support of The Skillman Foundation, Campaign for Black Male Achievement, and JP Morgan Chase as well as additional support from the Ford Motor Company Fund. A My Sister's Keeper component was also added for ideas focused on girls and young women of color in Detroit.

More than 600 submissions were received and entered a comprehensive review process that engaged Foundation staff, community members, and local youth to review and determine which ideas would make the most impact. As a result, 21 teams were selected to receive \$5,000 to prototype their ideas. On January 21, 2019 (Martin Luther King Jr. Day), teams will share their progress at a public pitch event, where six teams will be awarded \$50,000 to launch their program.

Be there as the
semifinalists compete for
\$50,000. Six teams will
win. Your vote counts!
Info at mbkdetroit.org

THE PROCESS



Community Outreach Submission

600+ ideas submitted from community members across the city



Invitation to Round Two

150 ideas selected to complete a round 2 application



Prototype and Test

A diverse group of community members, business leaders, previous Challenge participants, and youth selected 21 teams who received \$5,000 to prototype their ideas



Public Pitch Event

Semifinalists pitch to a panel of community members, including youth of color, and 6 finalists receive \$50,000 to launch



Scale

Finalists grow programs with the help of skill-building workshops, mentors, and a suite of technical assistance



Showcase and Connect

Organizations showcase their progress at a public capstone event

Cody Rouge:

A COMMUNITY WITH HEART AND IMPACT



BY KENYETTA CAMPBELL

Cody Rouge Community
Action Alliance

Cody is
home to
36,849
residents

12,183 OF WHOM ARE 18 AND UNDER

My fondest memories growing up on Detroit's west side in Cody Rouge are sitting on the porch talking to the older adults who lived on the block and playing with my friends until the street lights came on. Adults were caring. Streets were clean. Trees stood tall. Our schools were strong.

Over the years, I have seen Cody Rouge at its best and its worst. I am committed to this community, its children and its families.

10 Years of Action

I am honored to support my community as the executive director of the Cody Rouge Community Action Alliance. Birthed in 2009, the CRCAA works to revitalize and sustain a healthy community where residents have access to a high-quality of life through three core areas: youth development, community engagement, and neighborhood stabilization. Our programs include community organizing, a youth council, summer youth employment, and a slew of resources such as zero percent interest loans, property tax assistance, and funding for minor home repairs and beautification.

While Cody Rouge has had its share of adversity and blight, it possesses a collective determination to become Detroit's next walkable, premier community. We have quality housing stock, eye-pleasing landscapes, a stable business sector, historical churches, and an enhanced Rouge Park. Our greatest assets, however, are the people who reside in this community.

CRCAA has always been driven by community members. In 2017, with the help of Community Development Advocates of Detroit (CDAD), CRCOA launched an eight-month, community-wide planning process to develop a community plan. Community meetings, focus groups, and surveys gathered feedback from residents of all ages, local businesses, nonprofit organizations, the faith community, and government officials. From this input, residents established a community vision focused on a set of seven neighborhood priorities: youth development, neighborhood stabilization, safety, land use, being a welcoming community, strengthening commercial corridors, and supporting community-based groups.

The bold community plan and history of resident engagement in Cody Rouge attracted the interest of General Motors, Quicken Loans, DTE Energy, and The Skillman Foundation. This partnership, referred to as the Cody Rouge Initiative, has contributed to the community's work in a number of ways, including:

- in- and out-of-school programs for youth including reading, math, STEM, skilled trades, summer employment, and leadership development

- school and housing rehabilitation
- neighborhood beautification, including the development of Stein Park
- funding to support resident planning process

Additionally, the Cody Rouge-Warrendale community has been selected as one of 11 sites for investment from the City of Detroit's Strategic Neighborhood Fund. The development plans created for Cody Rouge will not only be resident-informed, but also child-centered, as our community is focused on child and family well-being.

Our Youth Own the Future

I am proud of what has been accomplished in Cody Rouge and have become keenly aware of what got us this far: our sense of ownership. I know in order to keep progressing we must pass down our strong sense of ownership to our community's young people. That's why the CRCOA maintains a strong youth council and includes young people in our decision making.

I want our children to know they own their future; to give them the support and the freedom they need to dream big, and the tools to make their dreams a reality.



TH

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EVER

OLD

Story and Photography

by Xavier Cuevas

Voyageur College Prep

High School graduate



I've read enough Greek myths and lived through enough Devil's Night arsons to know that fire purifies as much as it destroys. Kills as much as it rebirths.

And I've seen that same fire in enough of my friends to know that ashes aren't the end. Or the beginning.

We are not beginning. We are not "just starting." We've been here.

Molding what you call "ruin." What you call ash. What you call "Abandoned" into the very culture you claim is "new" and "emerging"—like this isn't just a normal week for us. Like we haven't been turning the short-end-of-the-stick into a paintbrush since before y'all thought graffiti was cool or beautiful.

I've seen kids shoot music videos out the backs of cars they can't legally drive.



**ASHES
AREN'T
THE END**

BEAUTY



I've heard high school students
weave words that from the mouths
of others would be contrived.

I've got friends painting and taking pictures
you've got to see while you're alive.

I've met philosophers in barbershops,

Historians outside liquor stores,

Archaeologists on playgrounds,

Scientists, mathematicians,
and clergyman on parole.

We are the greatest story never told.

Detroit. Is not a Phoenix.
We did not come back from the dead.
Yes, our future is bright.
We just want you to see what
we're doing NOW instead.



THE
FUL
OR THE
BEGINNING



Year One of the
Opportunity Agenda
for Detroit Children

OUR 2017 GRANTMAKING

2017 was a year of transition for The Skillman Foundation. On the heels of our Good Neighborhoods Initiative, which spanned from 2006–2016, we were embarking on our next chapter—the Opportunity Agenda for Detroit Children.*

The Opportunity Agenda continues our efforts to improve and expand opportunities for Detroit youth to learn and thrive by working in partnership with a broad network of individuals and organizations who support children.

*For more information on the Opportunity
Agenda for Detroit Children, see page 28.*



2017 Grants

In 2017, we made 284 grants. The following are examples of our partners' work, exemplifying our strategies and investments within three impact areas: Education, Economy and Equity.

Education

We support learning opportunities, inside and outside of the classroom, to help ensure Detroit youth are prepared to lead rewarding personal, financial, and civic lives.

One effort we're focused on is improving **student attendance**, helping Detroit youth stay on track in school, hitting important educational milestones and progressing through to graduation.



56% of Detroit students
chronically absent*

2016-17 school year

*Missed 10 percent or more of school days



15% is the goal
by 2026-27 school year

2017 Funding Example

\$230,000 to Urban

Neighborhood Initiatives

Increased student attendance by offering after-school and summer programs at schools with high absence rates. Students who participate in after-school programs are less likely to be absent during the school day and tend to be more engaged in school.

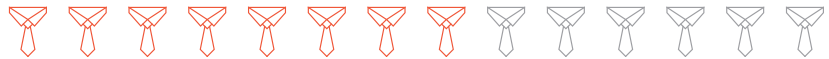
Economy

We work to ensure Detroit youth are prepared to succeed in college, skilled trade programs, and/or the job market, and have opportunities to explore educational and career options.

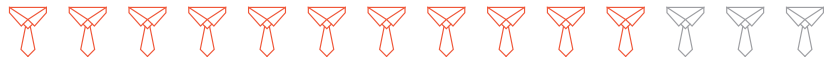
One way we do this is by helping to build a high-functioning **youth employment** system in Detroit through the Grow Detroit's Young Talent summer jobs program.

Number of Detroit youth engaged in summer jobs through GDYT

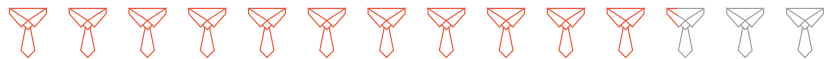
2016: **5,564**



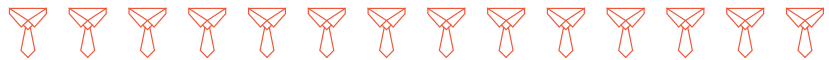
2017: **8,127**



2018: **8,210**



2020: **10,000 (target)**



2017 Funding Examples

\$350,000 to Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation

Managed Grow Detroit's Young Talent, expanding summer work opportunities for youth and ensuring job experiences were meaningful by training both employees and employers on expectations

\$100,000 to Downtown Detroit Partnership

Grew the number of corporate employers offering summer jobs to Detroit youth

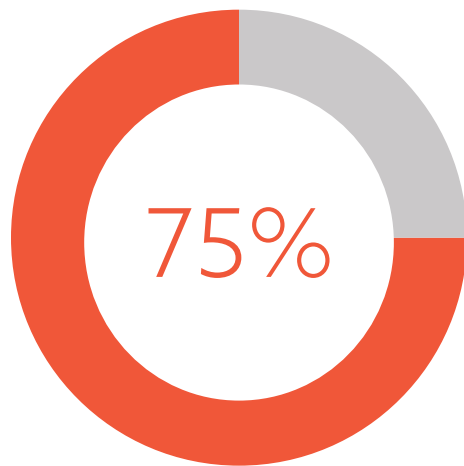
\$150,000 to Philadelphia Youth Network, Inc.

Built a stronger enrollment and payroll system needed to support Detroit's growing youth employment efforts

Equity

We expand developmental and leadership opportunities for Detroit youth and work to remove barriers that limit their chance of success.

One effort we're focused on is strengthening the system of out-of-school youth development program providers serving Detroit youth.



Our Goal: 75% of Detroit youth (ages 9-19) have access to high-quality youth development opportunities

2017 Funding Example

\$375,000 to the Youth Development Resource Center	Enabled the YDRC to expand its services, providing data and training to help improve the quality of after-school and summer programs citywide.
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A complete listing of **2017 grants** can be found at skillman.org/grants. Our **financial reports** can be viewed at skillman.org/financial-reports.

HOW TO APPLY FOR A SKILLMAN FOUNDATION GRANT

Learn more at skillman.org/grants

Grant Seekers Must

- Be a nonprofit 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization and provide your tax id (EIN) number or be a government or public agency (city, county, state, public school district)
 - Be a publicly supported charity as defined in Section 509(a) of the Internal Revenue Code
 - Have total revenues of at least \$100,000 for your preceding fiscal year and be able to provide a copy of a current financial audit conducted by an independent certified public accountant
 - In policy and practice, offer opportunity and service to all, regardless of age, race, creed, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation and ethnicity
-

What We Fund

The Skillman Foundation provides grant funding and other supports to organizations whose work advances an Opportunity Agenda for Detroit children in one of three Impact Areas: Education, Economy, or Equity.

The Process

Grant seekers can begin by contacting a member of the program team. Program officers and the issue areas they work on can be found at skillman.org/team. Grant seekers may also begin with a pre-application, which will be reviewed by Foundation staff within 15 business days. When appropriate, grant seekers will then be asked to submit a more lengthy application for further consideration.



Founder, Staff, and Trustees

Founder

Rose Skillman

Rose Skillman was committed to the welfare of children. She founded The Skillman Foundation in December 1960 and served as president until she was named honorary chair in 1964. She remained a trustee of the Foundation until her passing in 1983.

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→ Find bios and staff contact information at www.skillman.org



COMMUNITY EDUCATION COMMISSION'S Detroit Parents' Guide to Schools

CITYWIDE K-12 SCHOOLS · DISTRICT & CHARTER

HELP FAMILIES FIND THE BEST EDUCATIONAL FIT FOR THEIR CHILDREN:


Important school information from detailed profiles, set up alphabetically in 10 color-coded sections of the city, with ZIP codes and neighborhoods listings.

Do you get questions about the type of schools, enrollment timelines, and terms schools use when they talk about the registration process?

Do you work with students and/or families who have questions or experience difficulties when trying to enroll, or are overwhelmed by where to start in the school search?

 School hours

 Transportation

 Uniform requirements

 Security

 Before Care/  After Care

 Top 5 activities offered

DETROITSCHOOLSGUIDE.COM

STATE OF THE Detroit Child



What's the median household income for families with children?

Detroit: \$28k

Michigan: \$51k



How many of Detroit's third-grade students are reading at grade-level?

15%



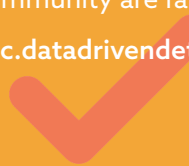
What's the high school graduation rate in Detroit?

78%

Knowing how our children are faring is essential to understanding the strength of Detroit's turnaround. But that information has been complex and hard to come by... until now.

State of the Detroit Child is an online data tool that gives parents, community members and civic leaders access to the information needed to develop and evaluate solutions for the most pressing issues faced by children.

See how the children in your community are faring at sdc.datadrivendetroit.org



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