



Morehead-Cain Civic Collaboration

# PROJECT REPORT

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## The Scholar Team



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# 1. CONTEXTUALIZATION

The Chicago Civic Collaboration Team was grateful to work with the Justice Journey Alliance, Leadership Foundation of Chicago (JJA) and experience the culture of Chicago this summer. This deliverable seeks to provide JJA with meaningful feedback and sustainable recommendations to grow the organization and increase youth engagement. Eight weeks of learning and observing JJA's programming, beliefs, and inner workings have culminated in a strong understanding of the non-profit's values and mission. After thorough group deliberation and discussion, the following suggestions aim to uphold JJA's mission and further racial justice and liberation in Chicago.

Before introducing scholar feedback, it is crucial to contextualize the dilemma and task for the summer. To begin, this brief defines youth as people aged 16-24 years. Based on interviews, previous experience, and activism circles, this age range is most primed to engage in meaningful dialogue and activism work.

As the Scholar Team examined the questions presented by Morehead-Cain and JJA, the Scholar Team found a fundamental flaw in the logic of the dilemma put forth. The Scholar Team was presented with statistics that reflect Generation Z's (Gen Z) increased emphasis on finding their dream jobs. This data was then extrapolated to assume that Gen Z would therefore be unwilling to volunteer or contribute to their communities. While Gen Z may have ambitious career goals, this is not mutually exclusive with being civically engaged, interested in activism, or dedicated to social progress.

Upon surveying 10,000 Gen Zers, research firm Edelman found that 70% of Gen Zers are involved in a political or social cause and that Gen Z is the most likely generation to boycott a product/company because of a political or social stance. **[1]** Gen Z also collectively identifies as a progressive generation. Gen Z and Gen Alpha have demonstrated concern and commitment to climate change, racial justice, and abortion rights. **[3]**



This passion is evident in Chicago, with high youth turnout rates at Palestine protests, Pride events, and reproductive rights demonstrations. For instance, four students from the University of Chicago put their graduation on the line and had their diplomas withheld after participating in a Pro-Palestinian encampment on campus. [4]



Nathaniel Simon , UChicago Palestine Protestors, 2024, 2024,

Earlier this year, Depaul University students protested outside of “crisis pregnancy centers” which purposefully share false and incomplete information to women seeking abortion care and medically safe contraceptive options. [5] Gen Zers are unapologetic and passionate in their efforts toward social justice, especially in a city like Chicago, with its rich history of activism and plethora of community/university organizations.

Thus, the Chicago Civic Collaboration Team has concluded that Gen Z and Gen Alpha are invested in social and political issues; the problem and need lies in offering clear, meaningful ways to engage in such matters. Activism and racial justice are daunting tasks, and it can be difficult, especially for young people, to know where to start.



Suzy Schlosberg , Youth Climate Protest , 2019, 2019,

This is where the Justice Journey Alliance, Leadership Foundation of Chicago can step in. JJA can involve more youth in racial/social justice work by adjusting current programming and offering new, well-defined initiatives, as described in this deliver

[1] Megan Carnegie, “Gen Z: How Young People Are Changing Activism,” BBC, August 8, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20220803-gen-z-how-young-people-are-changing-activism>.

[2] Kim Parker and Ruth Igielnik, “On the Cusp of Adulthood and Facing an Uncertain Future: What We Know about Gen Z so Far,” Pew Research Center (Pew Research Center, May 14, 2020), <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2020/05/14/on-the-cusp-of-adulthood-and-facing-an-uncertain-future-what-we-know-about-gen-z-so-far-2/>.

[3] Parker and Igielnik

[4] Emma Janssen, “University to Withhold Degrees of Four Students Involved in Pro-Palestine Encampment,” Chicago Maroon, accessed July 12, 2024, <https://chicagomaroon.com/43751/news/university-to-withhold-degrees-of-four-students-involved-in-pro-palestine-encampment/>.

[5] Online Editor and Molly Tinkey, “Battle for Choice: DePaul Students Protest What They Call ‘Secret Anti-Abortion’ Clinics, in Person and on Social Media,” The DePaulia, October 1, 2023, <https://depauliaonline.com/65872/focus/battle-for-choice-depaul-students-protest-what-they-call-secret-anti-abortion-clinics-in-person-and-on-social-media/>.



## 2. LEARNING FROM OUR RESEARCH

As non-Chicago youth spending only two months in the Windy City, the Scholar Team recognized their limited understanding of activism in the area and prioritized drawing upon pre-existing knowledge from locals. The Scholar Team contacted people from various generations engaged in racial equity work and interviewed them to learn from their experiences. Across these interviews, the Scholar Team sought to understand how younger and older generations can work together to engage in dialogue and solve social issues.

Interviewing two religious leaders – Pastor Sandy Richter and Pastor Jeff Schneider – helped the Scholar Team begin to understand how religious institutions can amplify activist spaces. Since JJA is an “unapologetically Christian organization,” the Scholar Team found it essential to discuss how Christian values can support racial justice without excluding other faith or nonreligious groups from the conversation. Pastor Sandy and Pastor Jeff both commented that there is a legitimate need to include nonreligious youth in activism work, even if it is led by religious institutions. [6]

Pastor Sandy’s advice to not “be afraid of young people’s questions” particularly stood out to the Scholar Team. [7] Controversy and disagreement in activism spaces push the work to be better and more inclusive. Young people’s opinions deserve space to be heard, even when they diverge from the status quo or majority. Diversity of thought is valuable and frankly vital. This philosophy is especially evident in our justBRUNCH and Toxic Polarization event recommendations.

Pastor Sandy also emphasized the importance of multigenerational forces for change, which blend older generations’ experience and knowledge of current systems with younger generations’ imagination and idealism. [8]

[6] Jeff Snyder, Pastor Jeff Interview , interview by Christina Huang et al., June 24, 2024.

[7] Sandy Richter, Pastor Sandy Interview , interview by William Walker III et al., July 2, 2024.

[8] Ibid



With these notes in mind, the Scholar Team worked to craft suggestions that align with Christian principles of racial justice, while creating more channels for nonreligious youth to get involved. The Scholar Team was mindful of how to maintain a close relationship between younger and older generations throughout current and future programming.

The Scholar Team also interviewed Alexandra Carrillo, who works to create youth programming opportunities throughout the city. This interview impressed upon the scholars the importance of implementing programs that provide hands-on, rather than hypothetical experience. Ms. Carrillo emphasized how much more time young people are willing to invest in an issue if they are actively engaged. [9] Thus, the Scholars have attempted to create hands-on opportunities that JJA can implement. This will maximize youth involvement. Ms. Carrillo additionally emphasized how vulnerable youth populations are, and how essential it is to be cognizant of this fact. [10] With this in mind, the Scholars have identified aspects of JJA programming that could benefit from greater youth protection and worked to establish more safe spaces and opportunities.

In addition to interviews, the Scholar Team referenced pre-existing scholarships, research, toolkits, and interviews to expand their understanding of Chicago's social and political climate. After careful research, the team has come to understand that Chicago is arguably one of America's most historically politically complicated cities. From the protests and upheaval of the 1960s to the tragedy of the '90s heat disaster, Chicago has often been a hotbed of unrest and reassessment. [11] Unfortunately, inequality and racialized violence continue to persist. Racial issues do not exist in a vacuum. Through their research, the Scholar Team has concluded that it is paramount for JJA to consider racial issues from a broad perspective, understanding that other complex issues must become part of the fight for racial justice.

[9] Alexandra Carrillo , Alexandra Carrillo Interview , interview by Kamryn Burton et al., June 28, 2024.

[10] Ibid

[11] Craig Phillip, "Chicago Activism on Racial and Economic Justice," PBS, October 2, 2023, <https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/blog/from-race-riots-to-rainbow-coalitions-and-heatwaves-chicago-activism-on-racial-and-economic-justice/>.





***Universal medical care is a racial issue***

***LGBTQ+ rights are a racial issue***

***Reproductive rights are a racial issue***

***Food insecurity is a racial issue***

***Climate change is a racial issue***

***Affordable housing is a racial issue***

These issues are large concerns for youth and the Scholar Team would like JJA to continue to take stances on these issues affecting people of all races. The events and programs the Scholars recommend attempt to merge these issues to continue complex conversations regarding race with an emphasis on intersectionality. These topics also align with JJA's mission to offer opportunities to "come together to address race relations and social injustices" and "equip multi-cultural and intergenerational groups to serve as advocates for equality, justice, and race-related issues."

***Racial Equity and Affordable Housing  
Go Hand in Hand***

**Op-ed: Farmers of color need climate action now. The farm bill is our best hope.**

**Understanding the Barriers to Coming Out for LGBTQ+ People of Color**



Housing Justice Hub, Urban Institute, 2022



### 3. ORIGINS & DEFINING VOCABULARY

The language and ideas used in activist spaces are vital in creating a safe and inclusive environment where people from all backgrounds feel comfortable sharing their opinions. This section has been specifically designed to address vocabulary relating to topics and issues that JJA related events have discussed.

#### **LGBTQ+**

More resources, legal protections against discrimination, and growing cultural acceptance have allowed more young adults to feel comfortable with their identity. As a result, the number of American adults who identify as LGBTQ+ has significantly increased in the past decade with studies showing that 28% of Gen Z adults (ages 18-25) identify as LGBTQ+. **[13]** LGBTQ+ rights hold significant importance to Generation Z and Generation Alpha.

**LGBTQ+ |** An acronym for “lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer” with a “+” sign to recognize the limitless sexual orientations and gender identities used by members of the community.

**Transgender |** An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Therefore, transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc.

- To treat a transgender person with respect, you treat them according to their gender identity, not their sex at birth. So, someone who lives as a woman today is called a transgender woman and should be referred to as “she” and “her.” A transgender man lives as a man today and should be referred to as “he” and “him.”

[13] Zoe Greenberg, “Gen Z Says It’s Much Gay than Older Generations,” <https://www.inquirer.com>, February 8, 2024, <https://www.inquirer.com/life/gen-z-lgbtq-generations-study-20240208.html#:~:text=A%20study%20finds%20that%20Gen>.

**Bisexual** | A person emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to more than one gender, though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way or to the same degree. Sometimes used interchangeably with pansexual.

**Gay** | A person who is emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to members of the same gender. Men, women, and non-binary people may use this term to describe themselves.

**Non-binary** | An adjective describing a person who does not identify exclusively as a man or a woman. Non-binary people may identify as being both a man and a woman, somewhere in between, or as falling completely outside these categories. While many also identify as transgender, not all non-binary people do. Non-binary can also be an umbrella term encompassing identities such as agender, bigender, genderqueer, or gender-fluid.

## ***Diversity and Race***

Diversity education emerged in popularity during the civil rights movements as a way for marginalized groups such as Black Americans, women, and the LGBTQ+ community to challenge deep-seated racism, sexism, and homophobia.

In recent years, diversity has been used broadly to describe individual differences among people. Some diversity pioneers argue that “the broader definition of diversity has ‘watered down’ the focus on race to the extent that it is no longer dealt with seriously” [14]. Diversity and diversity education are crucial tools to challenge discrimination and expand equity.

Thus, activist spaces should be mindful of the specific and different needs of historically excluded groups in our practice. This will ensure that diversity initiatives continue to serve their original purpose of combating systemic inequalities and promoting a more integrated and equitable society.

[14] Lou Diaz, “The Dilution of Diversity,” LinkedIn, March 9, 2018, <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/dilution-diversity-luis-diaz>.



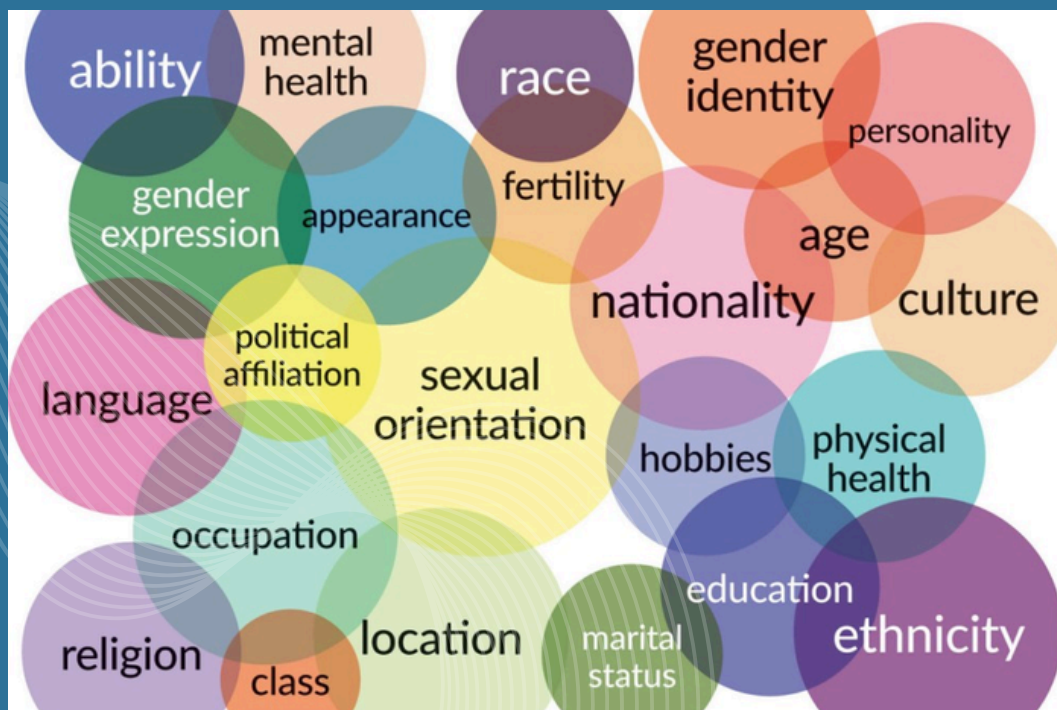
**Anti Racism** | A set of beliefs and actions that oppose racism and promote the inclusion and equality of people of color in society

**Intersectionality** | Frameworks and strategies that address a vision of racial justice that embraces the intersections of race, gender, class, and the array of barriers that disempower those who are marginalized in society; coined by Kimberle Crenshaw (African American Policy Forum, no date).

**Safe space** | Refers to an environment in which everyone feels comfortable expressing themselves and participating fully, without fear of attack, ridicule, or denial of experience

**Prison industrial complex (PIC)** | is a term used to describe the overlapping interests of government and industry that use surveillance, policing, and imprisonment as solutions to economic, social and political problems.

**PIC Abolition** | A political vision with the goal of eliminating imprisonment, policing, and surveillance and creating lasting alternatives to punishment and imprisonment. Replacing policing, punishment and detention with better systems of community healing, accountability, resilience, and safety

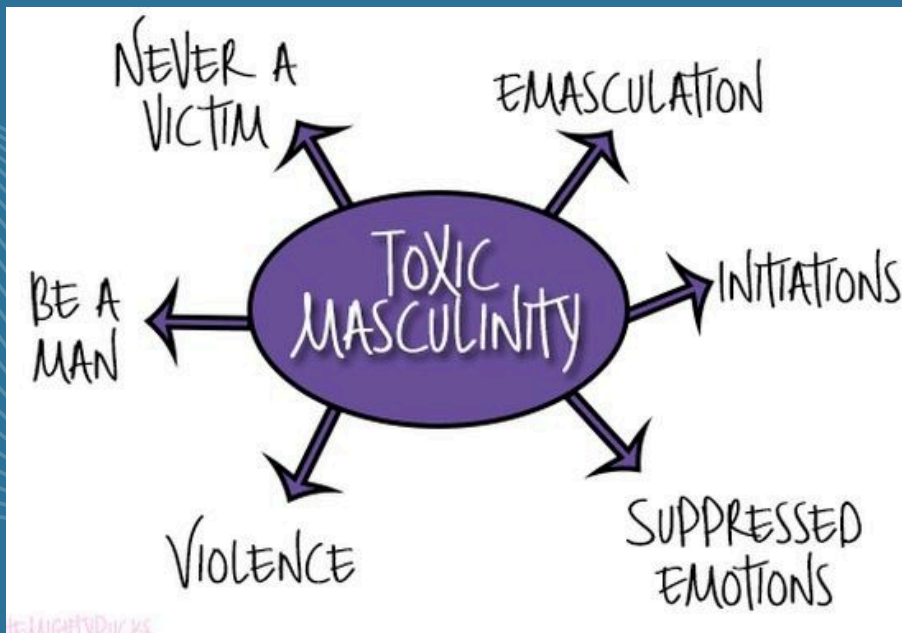


Misty McPhetridge , Intersectionality Diagram, 2020, 2020,

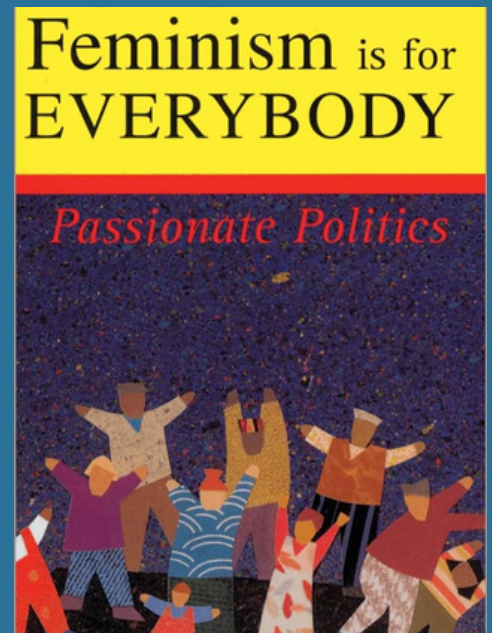
**Patriarchy:** | Actions and beliefs that prioritize masculinity. Patriarchy is practiced systemically in the ways and methods through which power is distributed in society (jobs and positions of power given to men in government, policy, criminal justice, etc.) while also influencing how people interact with one another.

**Emotional labor:** | The work of managing one's feelings, expressions, and reactions as part of a job; often refers to the emotional work of interacting with others in a workplace. This work is disproportionately done by women, specifically women of color.

**Toxic Masculinity** | a limiting, one-dimensional form of gendered behavior that occurs when expectations of what it means "to be a man" are taken to damaging extremes. It often encourages or gives legitimacy to misogyny, homophobia, and sexual violence. It involves dominating others (especially women) and means resolving disputes with physical conflict and exhibiting an aggressive machismo.



Drew Hayes , Toxic Masculinity Diagram, 2022





## 4. MARKETING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

The Justice Journey Alliance has many successful initiatives making strides toward mending racial divides. The Scholar Team noticed and appreciated the strong brand and marketing consistency among these programs. For instance, each event has “Just” attached to the front of the name – justBRUNCH Conversations, JustUs Conversations, JustUs Conversations for Women, etc. – making it recognizable to JJA’s audience and returning attendees. Additionally, JJA tends to host events and workshop series, a strategic move to gain long-term participation.

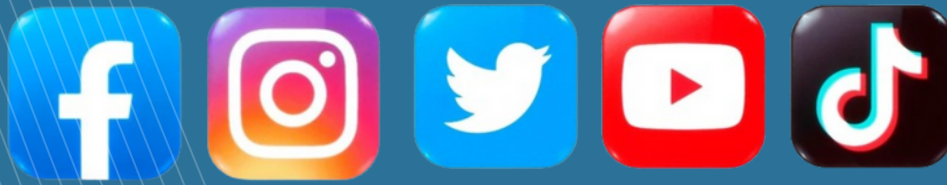
**JustUS Conversations**



**JustUS Conversations for Women**

In the digital age, effective marketing is more important than ever for gaining and maintaining community support. Digital marketing provides cost-effective solutions for nonprofits looking to reach a larger and more diverse audience. Through social media advertisement, JJA can maximize its marketing budgets and see measurable results in program visibility, directly influencing the size and diversity of its audience. Additionally, digital marketing on social media facilitates real-time interaction. This enables JJA to quickly adapt its strategies and gauge its audience’s interest in different programs. Especially on highly trafficked social media apps like Instagram, JJA can create targeted event campaigns that reach potential attendees.





Social media marketing is also an opportunity to collaborate with other Chicago organizations dedicated to racial change. JJA would greatly benefit from the publicity and partnerships with other organizations dedicated to the same cause of bridging racial gaps. These collaborations can amplify brand messages and reach niche audiences more authentically.

In regards to marketing, the Scholar Team spent most of their time improving JJA's Instagram account. One of the first things the Scholar Team noticed was the lack of consistent flier design for varying events. An overabundance of information and sporadic color schemes created visually confusing fliers that would deter someone from wanting to learn more about the events. In the future, consistent color schemes, fonts, and imagery make social media campaigns more visibly cohesive. The Scholar Team is not suggesting that every post be identical, but consistent social media branding adds to an organization's credibility, legitimacy, and overall appeal.

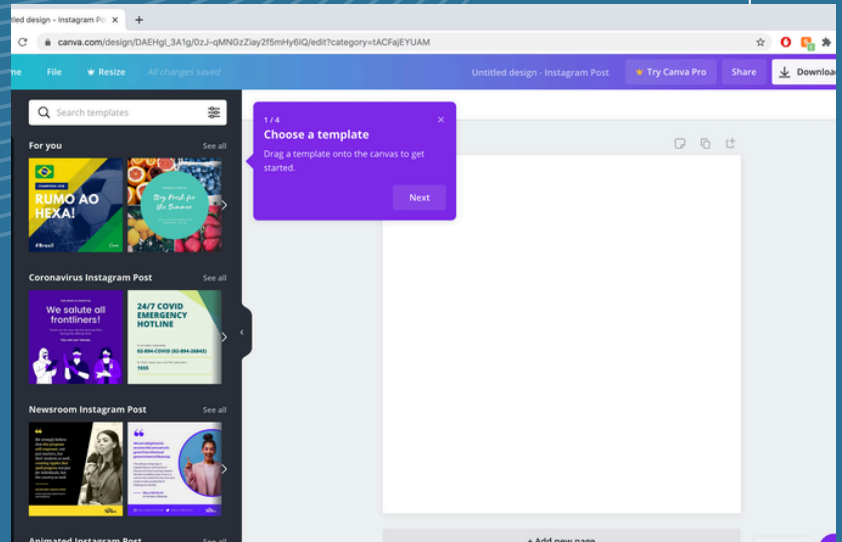
The Scholar Team recommends bright colors, succinct language, and sleek/modern designs for future fliers. An effective flier briefly lists the following information: the title of the event, location/address, and the date/time. Additional details can be included in the caption of the post, including guest speakers and a detailed description of the event. These strategies are effective because they allow users to view posts quickly and gather necessary information. For social media posts, less is more and simplicity is key!

## Here is an example of fliers before and after:



The flier on the left has bright colors, however, it is visually crowded. Viewers might feel overwhelmed and unsure of what to look at first with the excess information and photos. The photos are compelling, but they could be included in a follow-up post, rather than on the flier. The brands included in the bottom part of the flier do not have a consistent format nor are they all centered/sized consistently.

The Scholar Team created the flier on the right for the same event. It is still eye-catching with its color scheme but is significantly simpler than the previous flier, including only the most relevant information. This flier is easily digestible, especially for younger generations that tend to scroll quickly on social media and possess a short attention span. All other information can be found in the caption of the post. The flier also has all of the collaborators on the top in an organized fashion. These subtle changes go a long way in the digital marketing of an organization.



The Scholar Team recommends Canva for flier and content creation. Canva's simplicity makes it an invaluable marketing tool, especially for individuals and small businesses without extensive design experience. Its user-friendly interface and drag-and-drop functionality allow anyone to create professional-quality graphics quickly and effortlessly. The platform also offers collaboration features, enabling teams to work seamlessly on marketing materials in real-time.

Regarding general social media marketing, representation is crucial in fostering an inclusive and equitable society where people feel seen and valued. In media and advertising, displaying racial, generational, gender, and socioeconomic diversity ensures that different perspectives and experiences are acknowledged. JJA can enhance relatability and connect with broader audiences by showcasing a wider range of communities and stories. Specifically relating to generation representation, it is crucial for youth to be more represented on JJA's social media platforms. This will highlight that JJA provides programming that includes, respects, and celebrates young people and their voices.



Special attention should also be paid to the timeline of social media posting. For the most effective marketing, the Scholar Team suggests beginning to post 1-2 weeks before an event. This initial post should be followed by a second post 4-5 days before the event with a different flier utilizing the same color scheme. This flier can include new information, such as the name and bio of the speaker for the event. A final post should be issued the night before the event with last-minute reminders of the time and address. Following the event, JJA should post photos, videos, and in-person testimonies to increase engagement and interest in upcoming events.

In preparation for the Opals Walk for Freedom, the Scholar Team prepared five posts on Instagram that followed the format and layouts above. In doing so, the Scholar Team noticed over a 500% increase in engagement on the main flier used for targeted advertisement. On other posts, the like count tripled.

The Scholar Team also utilized collaboration posts to increase the visibility of the Walk. By partnering with a record company, art studio, and poetry collective, JJA reached people who care about similar issues but might not have been aware of JJA. JJA's Instagram account immediately gained significant engagement, likes, and reposts from the Scholar Team's three posts. Social media collaborations with like-minded organizations proved to be a useful and free way to reach a larger audience.

In summation, social media marketing is particularly crucial for reaching Gen Z and Gen Alpha, as these populations have grown up in a world dominated by online platforms. Younger generations are highly engaged with social media, using it not just for communication, but as a primary source of information. To better engage with youth, JJA must pay special attention to how events are marketed and promoted on social media.





## 5. CURRENT JJA PROGRAMMING

### *5.1 “Navigating the Challenges of Toxic Polarization” Talk*

This event, hosted in collaboration with the One America movement, has great potential to engage young people. A majority of young adults consider themselves to be within the middle of the political spectrum, and a higher percentage of young people compared to older generations find discussing controversial topics with people who disagree with them to be interesting and engaging. Thus, this event is primed to be a space where young adults can meaningfully engage in conversations that are both interesting and effective.

To establish a space where controversy and dialogue can be productive, it is crucial to first establish a safe space. A safe space is defined as an environment where all participants feel equal, comfortable, and free to express themselves and their opinions without fear. Cultivating a safe space takes conscious effort, and it begins the first moment someone walks in the door.

The current physical set-up of these talks can be amended to promote meaningful dialogue and interpersonal interactions. By positioning all participants in a circle formation, rather than the current set-up of all desks facing forward, participants are invited to be more open with each other and all members feel more equal.



[15] Jay Geneske, “National Survey Finds Warning Signs for American Democracy in Civic Outlook of Young Adults,” Institute for Citizens & Scholars, September 21, 2023, <https://citizensandscholars.org/national-survey-finds-warning-signs-for-democracy/>.

[16] “Knowledge Café Principle: Create a Safe Space,” Conversational Leadership, accessed July 11, 2024, <https://conversational-leadership.net/knowledge-cafe-principles-create-a-safe-space/>.

As the University of Delaware Center for Public Policy and Administration explains, “Circles provide a safe, supportive space for members to draw on their best values, talk about important topics, and respond from their best selves.” While these talks feature a video aspect that requires all members to face one screen, chairs can be turned to face forward in those moments and repositioned when the dialogue begins. It is essential that everyone participating in these talks feels as though they are on equal footing.

Moving on from the physical space, it is important to create a culture of respect in the room, which can begin at introductions. Approximately 1.2 million people in the United States identify as non-binary, with the overwhelming majority falling into Gen Z. **[18]** Thus, it is extremely relevant to include pronouns in introductions. Fitting pronouns into introductions can, and should, be seamless: “Hello, my name is Ann. I’m from Ohio, and my pronouns are she/her.” During conversations concerning controversial topics, creating a baseline where people’s gender is respected allows for better communication and conversation that refrains from devolving into hateful rhetoric. Additionally, inclusive language is absolutely crucial throughout this event. During past events, the Scholar Team observed instances of hateful language. Phrases such as “street hoodlums” when referring to the people of Gaza and denoting the new Miss Maryland as merely “a transgender” creates a space that squashes, rather than supports dialogue.

One of the largest issues the Scholar Team identified is that the current curriculum does not lend itself to engaging with younger generations. Due to consistent exposure to social media, buzzwords like “polarization” are already well-understood by many members of Gen Z and Gen Alpha. Thus, the Toxic Polarization events will be more engaging for young generations if they focus on discussing specific polarizing topics rather than the definition and implications of polarization. One way this could manifest is by centering each talk around a specific issue.

[18] “Nonbinary Pronoun Usage in the Workplace: What Employers Are Doing to Promote Inclusivity,” Ogletree, July 12, 2022, <https://ogletree.com/insights-resources/blog-posts/nonbinary-pronoun-usage-in-the-workplace-what-employers-are-doing-to-promote-inclusivity/>.



As this program is designed to work with religious leaders and institutions, the issues could be topics that directly impact the church. Examples of relevant topics include reproductive rights, LGBTQ+ rights, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Many of these issues gauge the interests of both young people and religious organizations. Leaving space to thoroughly discuss these divisive issues promotes the event's purpose, rather than passively addressing issues as they are introduced.

The Scholar Team has observed that the videos in the pre-planned curriculum break up the meaningful and engaging conversations in the room. Multiple times, the Scholar Team felt like they were learning a lot from the other people in the room, but these conversations were cut short in the name of watching another video. If the goal is truly to learn how to have difficult conversations and navigate toxic polarization, this can be learned better through real-life experience than through a couple videos explaining it. Additionally, in the videos, some of the comparisons seemed off-putting. Comparing divisive and sensitive conversations to enjoying "pineapple on pizza" seems to divert the seriousness of debates.

To get young people motivated, engaged, and involved in this event series, it is crucial to consider how to make these talks more actively engaging. Multiple studies published in the last decade, such as Louis Deslauriers' paper on active learning, have discovered that students absorb more information when they are engaged in active learning. [19]



**Polarization Talk Participants Completing Online Survey**

[19] Louis Deslauriers et al., "Measuring Actual Learning versus Feeling of Learning in Response to Being Actively Engaged in the Classroom," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 116, no. 39 (September 4, 2019): 19251-57, <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1821936116>.

Active learning can be defined as “students engaging in small or large activities centered around writing, talking, problem-solving, or reflecting.” [20] This event already does a good job of allowing for discussion, but there should be room for more discussion and other methods of active learning. Having participating members debrief what they’ve learned at the end of the session is a good way to invite reflection. Asking people to write down their thoughts before discussion allows for individual reflection on one’s beliefs, which leads to greater group engagement. Succinctly, young people need to be engaged through multiple avenues to truly absorb and internalize the important information these talks convey.



From a promotional standpoint, this event could be done in collaboration with high school clubs working to uphold civic principles or dialogue. Many national organizations have chapters at local high schools: High School Democrats of America, High School Republican National Federation, National Speech and Debate Association, My School Votes, etc. These organizations all aim to discuss controversial and polarizing issues, making them an ideal space for this event. As previously mentioned, people from Gen Z and Gen Alpha have high levels of civic engagement, so the core issue when attracting young people has more to do with outreach than motivating these generations to engage and participate with enthusiasm.

[20] University Of Minnesota, “Active Learning | Center for Educational Innovation,” [cei.umn.edu](https://cei.umn.edu/teaching-resources/active-learning), 2023, <https://cei.umn.edu/teaching-resources/active-learning>.





## *5.2 Opal's Walk for Freedom*



Opal's Walk for Freedom exceeded the Scholar Team's expectations with an impressive turnout and media coverage, especially given the limited planning time. Though the Walk came together nicely, the planning process could have been far less stressful and confusing. The volunteer team often required further clarification on their roles and responsibilities. The team also needed more communication outside the weekly meetings regarding progress, outreach, and pressing action items. Below are the Scholar Team's recommendations for future committees. Ideally, these teams of volunteers will meet consistently to complete their tasks.



**Medical Coordination** – This committee will help plan the route, have water and first aid supplies on standby, and walk with the group. This committee will be the first contact for any medical emergency or injury. Preferably, this committee will consist of at least one medical professional, student, or person certified in first aid/CPR. This eliminates complete reliance on EMS for medical treatment, especially in situations that are not life-threatening.

**Community Outreach** – This committee will work closely with the Marketing Committee to get the word out about the Walk. This committee should seek partnerships, sponsorships, and participation from local organizations, businesses (specifically Black-owned businesses), churches, youth groups, schools, and community centers. This outreach can start as early as January, depending on the attendance goals for the Walk. This committee should keep a document with whom they've emailed and their contact information.

**Marketing** – This committee will create and share fliers, posters, and other promotional materials for the Walk. This committee must maintain a large and consistent social media presence on platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, X, and TikTok. This committee will also post paper fliers in community buildings, schools, churches, YMCAs, Boys and Girls Clubs, etc.

**Entertainment** – This committee is responsible for reaching out to speakers, vendors, gyms for the warm-up, food trucks, and other forms of entertainment that the group deems fit. Ensure the speakers are diverse in race, age, gender, religion, etc. GetFit1st should be contacted again to lead the warm-up.

Regarding other aspects of the Walk, it was a great event! The location was beautiful and spirits were high. Reverend Bibbs united the crowd with the chants, the DJ brought great energy, and the pre-walk stretch got participants loose and dancing. Reverend Cheryl and Cynthia provided much-needed support to the volunteer teams and participants. The free Lou Malnati's pizza was a great final touch, allowing everyone to refuel and fellowship after the Walk. The Scholar Team also thought the email asking attendees for their feedback was an effective way to use resources; it is vital to hear community suggestions to improve future Walks.

For increased audience engagement in the future, it is imperative to invest in better audio equipment for the speakers. The microphones frequently cut out, causing some of the speakers' messages to get lost in translation. It is also essential to diversify the speakers at future Walks, in terms of age, race, and religion. While the Scholar Team understands Christianity is an integral part of the organization, having multiple pastors speaking and praying at the event pushed the narrative that Juneteenth is an inherently Christian event. This rhetoric will deter people from participating in future events who identify with other religions and faith groups. Instead, consider bringing in speakers who can talk about current racial issues in Chicago/America and give a "call to action" to help promote social advocacy for young people. The Scholar Team's speech captivated the audience and gained attention on the news, and it did not align with any particular faith. Many participants shared with the Scholar Team that their speech was moving and gave hope for the future of racial/social justice.

Lastly, the registration price of \$35 makes the Walk inaccessible to a large demographic, especially younger generations. This is why the Scholar Team proposed and implemented the discounted \$10 student registration. The Scholar Team understands the Walk was a fundraiser, but it was not marketed as such. Future marketing for the Walk needs to include where the money is going. The Scholar Team discussed the principle of using Juneteenth as a fundraiser. Juneteenth is a celebration of Black freedom and liberation, so limiting who can participate in this event (based on affordability) seems counterproductive and exclusionary.

That said, there are other ways to fundraise without charging \$35. Consider charging a vendor fee or making the Walk free with the option to purchase a t-shirt for \$20. The Scholar Team also recommends a "donate what you can" format. This format makes the Walk more inclusive, while still providing the option to donate to a meaningful cause. Making the Walk more accessible will increase its impact and engagement.



### ***5.3 justBRUNCH Conversations***

In recent years, there has been an increasing call for fostering dialogue between law enforcement and communities. This section uses scholars' experiences as interns attending the justBRUNCH Conversations event on July 10, 2024, to provide feedback and highlight concerns about representation, communication dynamics, and ethical considerations.

This particular justBRUNCH conversation was effective in terms of community engagement and bridging a variety of people together. Many of the conversations surrounded sharing vulnerable stories and attempting to understand a different perspective. These conversations between communities of color and the police force are necessary for change. For many decades there has been a deep division between the two, and providing a space of understanding is an early step in the journey towards reconciliation. One of the memorable highlights was the catering from Lou Malnati's Pizza – some would even say the best pizza in Chicago!

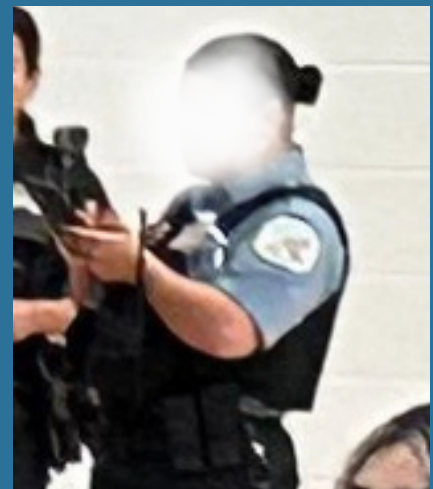
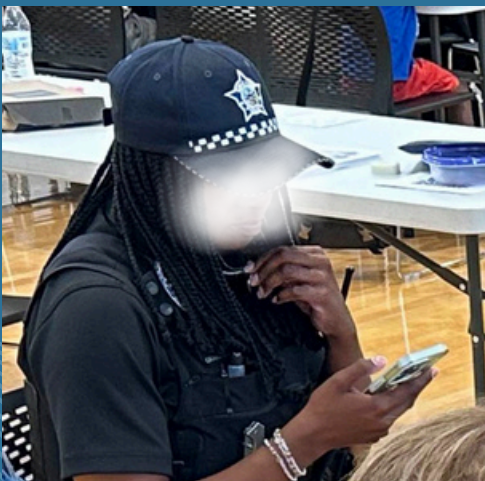
To begin the event, the Scholar Team noticed a guided yoga experience. This small, yet impactful, portion of the event was important for members in attendance to feel safe and center their emotions before they partake in these challenging conversations. The Scholar Team suggests the continuation of this portion of the brunch as it provides a sense of peace and comfort. Additionally, the event space was perfect and had enough space to properly house an abundance of students. Having the event in a community gym adds a sense of familiarity for these students, and this is something to note as a success moving forward.





This event allows youth to have fruitful discussions about their experiences with the Chicago Police Department and to participate in conversations with law enforcement to prepare for future interactions. However, this event featured law enforcement officers who didn't properly reflect or represent the demographic they were meant to engage with. After speaking with a fellow officer at the event, he revealed that the officers in attendance focused on youth development and were not actively patrolling the youth's neighborhoods. The absence of officers from the neighborhoods and communities these youth interact with daily raises questions as to why certain cops who need to participate in these discussions are not showing up to the event.

There were some critiques of the physical appearance of police in regards to their firearms. The presence of police officers in full combat gear openly carrying guns at an event designed for children creates an intimidating atmosphere rather than fostering a conducive environment for open conversation. Additionally, there were instances where officers appeared distracted, engaging in conversations with other cops or in the back of the room on their phones not fully engaged with the event. As such, the police need to play a more active role throughout the event, such as sitting with the participants rather than standing in the back. From our observations, there were power dynamics established with how the space was utilized. The youth were required to lie down on the ground doing yoga while the adults and cops stood around the room and looked down at them. The way activists design a shared space is important because it sets the tone and dictates power dynamics in play. [21] Cops should be off duty in civilian clothes and take part in the yoga exercise to establish equal footing.



**Chicago Police Distracted Looking at Their Phones**

[21] Preston Ni, "3 Ways Physical Space Defines Power in Relationships," Psychology Today, accessed July 14, 2024, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/communication-success/202001/3-ways-physical-space-defines-power-in-relationships>.

There were also multiple instances in which participants' experiences were invalidated by law enforcement. During the group storytelling session, a police officer interrupts students sharing their stories or making remarks when recounting stressful experiences. During a retelling of a story of a student's experience, the cop added a comment that they "should have chosen their friends more wisely" suggesting that the student was partly responsible for an intense police interaction, despite the student explaining that he was completely new to the city. Another incident, a cop added that the youth's stressful experience translating for their parents during a traffic stop was actually positive and "could have been worse". It was not just law enforcement making unnecessary and concerning remarks. During the storytelling demonstration, Jenny Chang gave an example of a future wish through her partner's perspective and "wished that white kids get punished equally". Her comment suggests that her partner had committed a crime, however the partner's story was about the store owner and police unnecessarily aggressive and racially profiled him and his friends. These incidents highlight instances where participants' experiences were invalidated by law enforcement, often accompanied by comments that subtly or directly implied victim blaming.

In future events, The Scholar Team recommends having a team of adults trained in trauma-informed practices, especially important given the vulnerability of children sharing stressful or traumatic experiences with law enforcement, as cops lack the training to properly handle these situations. Trauma-informed practices have been found to "profoundly impact how the community engages with the public justice system. By prioritizing empathy, understanding and empowerment, a trauma-informed approach destigmatizes the sharing of suffering, provides a safety net for victims and enhances the community's trust in their justice system". [22]

Another concern of this event regards consent. The students at this event seemed to be part of a summer program and their attendance is mandatory, there should be other options of who to interact with. Additionally, future interns should have the option to observe rather than being compelled to assist. Engagement in civic activities is valuable, but given diverse personal experiences with law enforcement, some interns may feel uncomfortable participating due to their political beliefs and personal experiences.

[22] "Trauma-Informed Care Builds Resilience for Survivors of Human Trafficking and Violence," IJM USA, accessed July 15, 2024, <https://www.ijm.org/news/trauma-informed-care-builds-resilience-survivors-human-trafficking-violence#trauma-informed-care>.

There were some rhetorical issues. For example, victims of police violence are labeled in the "disgruntled" and "high risk" category as opposed to the "abiding" and "low risk" category. These categories raise the question of "high risk" to who/whom? These labels are reductive, portraying grieving families and dissenting voices against the Chicago Police Department as unreasonably unhappy or simply dissatisfied.

JJA argues that it is the "standing in the gap" between communities and law enforcement. But in using words like "abiding", "disgruntled" and "enlisting students", it is adopting the language and perspective of law enforcement. With this bias towards law enforcement, JJA should be transparent about its partiality. Rather than advertising JustBrunch as a middle space, JJA should be direct and advertise that this event is in partnership with Chicago Police Department (CPD) and favors their perspective.

- **Abiding** 'Low Risk' Families
  - Parent and Teen Households
- **Disgruntled** 'High Risk' Families
  - Parent and Teen Households
- Police officers **CAPS** (Community Alternative Policing Strategy)
- **Street Outreach Professional** (formerly incarcerated individual men & women) \* Tio Hardiman & Lavonne Troupe (Together Chicago- West side, Near West)
- Host: **Conversations Facilitator**

#### justBrunch Guest List 2024

#### Primary objective – The Why?

Enlisting students from various communities and organizations who are enthusiastic about **Bridging & Standing in the Gap** between community residents and law enforcement in identified and targeted neighbors throughout Chicago. They will recruit their peers including their parents to a shared meal together and facilitate multiple **JustBRUNCH Conversations** with the **Chicago Police Department (CPD)** in identified neighborhoods that experience high crime and lack of adult/parent supervision.

#### justBrunch Primary Objective 2024

[22] Cherone, Heather. "Repeated Police Misconduct by 141 Officers Cost Chicago Taxpayers \$142.8m over 4 Years." WTTW News. Accessed July 14, 2024. <https://news.wttw.com/2024/01/22/repeated-police-misconduct-141-officers-cost-chicago-taxpayers-1428m-over-4-years>.

[23] Lauren Cole, "Committee on Public Safety: 20-Year Analysis," Chicago Justice Project, March 18, 2022, <https://chicagojustice.org/2021/06/08/committee-on-public-safety-20-year-analysis/>.



A panelist during the event claimed that police corruption is something of the past that no longer happens and fear of police is unreasonable. These claims cannot be supported by factual evidence and there are many statistics that prove otherwise. In fact, Chicago has spent over \$295 million to resolve lawsuits alleging more than 1,000 Chicago police officers committed a wide range of misconduct — including false arrest and excessive force — in 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022, according to WTTW News’ analysis. [22]

These figures underscore that the issues within the Chicago Police Department are not isolated incidents but indicative of an issue within the police department itself. Research by the Chicago Justice Program with a 20-year analysis of agenda items from Chicago’s Committee on Public Safety reveals a lack of oversight of policing structures. To truly facilitate an objective space for dialogue, this event needed to bring in expertise to address corruption, misconduct, and the lack of accountability in the Chicago Police Department.

Research conducted by the Chicago Justice Program, analyzing two decades of agenda items from Chicago’s Committee on Public Safety, highlights significant shortcomings in the oversight of policing structures. These findings emphasize the urgent need for comprehensive reforms to address allegations of corruption, misconduct, and the lack of accountability within the Chicago Police Department.

To genuinely foster an unbiased platform for dialogue, the recent event should have included expert voices to address these systemic challenges instead of writing off the fear of police as combating issues “within the home.”

By solely focusing on altering perceptions about law enforcement and amplifying voices that minimize concerns about police conduct, the event overlooks the harsh realities of police brutality and violence. It fails to acknowledge the expansion of what critics call the Chicago police state, which has involved the unconstitutional detention and mistreatment of countless individuals in interrogation facilities without legal representation as well as the framing of innocent individuals. By disregarding these crucial narratives and perspectives, JJA risks perpetuating the erasure of racialized policing issues in Chicago and within the context of the United States.



### ***5.4 EQUALS Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Initiative***

The EQUALS Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Initiative seeks to allow people to build relationships with people of different backgrounds and expand their cultural knowledge and awareness. There is tremendous value in transcending societal barriers and stimulating open dialogue about diversity, equity, and inclusion. The EQUALS Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Initiative seamlessly blends technology with human connection through weekly Slack discussion prompts, relevant themes, and thought-provoking reading materials. The Scholar Team hopes JJA will implement EQUALS for cohorts to come, and offers the following feedback to increase the program's efficacy.

While participating in the EQUALS Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Initiative, the Scholar Team identified an absence of structure and accountability for participants. The weekly Slack post prompts participants to like the message after checking in with their partner, but the accountability ends there. There are no other measures, such as self-reports or check-ins, to confirm participation. Thus far, fewer than half the participants have liked each weekly post, indicating that a better solution is needed to incentivize consistent participation.

The Scholar Team recommends introducing a weekly Google Form for each pair to complete after their check-in. On the form, participants can report their progress, recent learnings they wish to share, and any concerns. This weekly standard will keep participants on track with the program, so they can most benefit from the experience. Secondly, the Scholar Team suggests an in-person EQUALS gathering, once a month. This face-to-face conversation would offer a great opportunity to debrief and reflect on the month's prompts. Creating a space for participants to share their stories and learn from each other will only accelerate their personal growth and understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion.





## 6. FUTURE INITIATIVES & EVENTS

### *6.1 Opal's Scholars Summer Program*

On June 19, 2024, roughly 60 people from across the state gathered together in the early morning on 31st Beach Street to participate in Chicago's inaugural Opal's Walk for Freedom. Chicagoans were joined by people across the globe in Los Angeles, New York, and Tokyo, Japan to stand together in unity for racial healing and support for the unfinished project towards true liberation against structural racism and violence.

Given the short turnover from the national organization to host this year, there was a two month scramble to arrange this event from social media advertising, obtaining water and food supply, preparing mechanized bags, designing registration. With such a large upheaval to execute a seamless event, the Scholar Team recommends building the Opal's Scholars Summer Program to get an early start on organizing for Opal's Walk for Freedom. This opportunity allows youth community members to get hands-on involvement with JJA and provides the generation of justice leaders with organizing experience.





***The Scholar Team curated a sample timeline to guide the development of the Opal's Scholars Summer Program.***

**January:** Applications for the Opal's Scholars Summer Program open. The application can be made on Google Forms or a similar platform. Applicants will be asked to write about instances in which they've exemplified Mother Opal's strong characteristics of service, leadership, social change, and racial justice. The application will be shared on social media and with local schools, youth organizations, and community churches.

**February:** Applications for the Opal's Scholars Summer Program close and selections begin. If needed, additional interviews can also be conducted during this stage. Youth accepted into the program should demonstrate a commitment to social progress, interest in racial equity, passion for volunteering, willingness to work with others, and eagerness to learn new skills.

**March:** Applicants are informed whether they have been selected, and confirm their acceptance into the program. JJA hosts an in-person orientation where the Scholars meet the JJA team, bond with their cohort, watch coverage from previous Opal Walk for Freedom events, learn the history of Juneteenth, and gain more context on their roles.

**April:** The Scholars are placed on four committees based on their interests and experiences: Marketing & Social Media, Community Outreach, Program & Entertainment, and History & Education. Each committee will elect a chairperson to serve as a liaison between JJA staff, community volunteers, and the respective committee. The four committees will meet virtually in April, as many universities will still be in session. On the next page, we've outlined the duties of each committee.

1. **Marketing & Social Media:** Create fliers, informational posts, and promotional videos for social media platforms; create the Eventbrite; update the website.
2. **Community Outreach:** Identify potential partnerships between organizations; email corporations and businesses about sponsorships; contact potential vendors.
3. **Program & Entertainment:** Contact community leaders and activists to speak at the Walk; coordinate food trucks and entertainment (drummers, dancers, DJ, etc.).
4. **History & Education:** Create presentations on the history of Juneteenth to help conduct educational visits to community centers (YMCA, public libraries, schools, etc.) about the importance of the holiday; create informational handouts



**May – June:** The Scholar committees work to organize the walk via weekly in-person meetings at the JJA office. Each Scholar committee shall also attend online meetings with community volunteers, where they deliver reports to share their progress. The Opal’s Scholars Summer Program cohort meets with JJA to debrief the event, propose changes for next year, and celebrate a successful program.



## 6.2 *justMARKETING Internship*

The Scholar Team proposes a paid virtual internship program for high school and college students. The main goals of the JustMarketing Internship are to address the lack of youth directly involved in JJA and to equip young Chicagoans with the tools to be changemakers. The JustMarketing Internship will enhance JJA's impact and outreach, while allowing local youth to give back. The Scholar Team suggests partnering with high schools, universities, and organizations in the Chicagoland area for recruitment. The JustMarketing Internship should cast a wide net across diverse racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and religious backgrounds.

The Scholar Team noticed the current JJA team needs assistance with digital design, website and social media management, and consistent marketing. Social media outreach, marketing, website management, and digital design are areas where involving interns would help grow the organization substantially. The interns will be in charge of producing fliers and posting on social media for all programming and events throughout their tenure. In addition, they should create and implement productive marketing strategies to expand JJA's exposure throughout the Chicagoland area (reference the marketing section for more guidance on specific marketing strategies). Weekly meetings over Zoom and frequent check-ins with JJA staff will be essential to ensure that social media content continues to align with JJA's mission statement.

The justMARKETING Internship will be split between the two school semesters: January-June and August-December. On the next page is a general timeline for the scholarship application.





**October/May:** Applications for the JustMarketing Internship open. The application would highlight the same four pillars listed in the Opal's Scholars Summer Program: service, leadership, social change, and racial justice. The application should be shared on social media and with local schools, youth organizations, and community churches.

**November/June:** Applications for the JustMarketing Internship close and selections begin. If needed, additional interviews can also be conducted during this stage. Youth accepted into the program should demonstrate a commitment to social progress, interest in racial equity, passion for volunteering, willingness to work with others, and eagerness to learn new skills.

**December/July:** Applicants are informed whether they have been selected, and confirm their acceptance into the program. JJA hosts an online event where the Scholars meet the JJA team, bond with their cohort, and gain more context on their roles.

Providing a stipend for this internship is critical in incentivizing talented youth to apply for the internship. This increases the appeal of the internship, while allowing for students to make money during the school semester as opposed to a part-time job. The Scholar Team recommends utilizing local and national networks to fund this paid internship program. Chicago's new "My CHI. My Future." [24] a micro-grant program provides funding to small community-based, youth-serving organizations. There are also federal youth engagement and mentorship grants on online platforms like youth.gov. Moreover, many major corporations have applications for nonprofit sponsorships and donations, such as Walmart's "Spark Good Local Grants" [25] and Chick-fil-A's "True Inspiration Awards." [26]

[24] Mayor Brandon Johnson, Department of Family and Support Services Announce My CHI. My Future. Micro-Grant Program," [www.chicago.gov](https://www.chicago.gov), accessed July 14, 2024,

[https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/mayor/press\\_room/press\\_releases/2024/march/mychi-myfuture-microgrants.html](https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/mayor/press_room/press_releases/2024/march/mychi-myfuture-microgrants.html)

[25] "Spark Good Local Grants Guidelines," Spark Good Local Grants Guidelines, n.d., <https://walmart.org/how-we-give/program-guidelines/spark-good-local-grants-guidelines>.

[26] "True Inspiration Awards," Chick-fil-A, n.d., <https://www.chick-fil-a.com/true-inspiration-awards>.



### ***6.3 justCUTS Barbershop Talk***

The Scholar Team proposes the justCUTS Barbershop Talk event to encourage vulnerability, unity, and mentorship among young men of color. The barbershop is a staple of Black and Brown communities. It's more than just a place for haircuts; it is a haven of support, empowerment, and camaraderie. These spaces foster a sense of belonging and cultural pride, hosting lively conversations encompassing pop culture, politics, and personal growth. The justCUTS Barbershop Talk seeks to strengthen youth identity and development through an intergenerational exchange of wisdom and experiences. This event strongly aligns with JJA's mission statement and goal to uplift local youth.

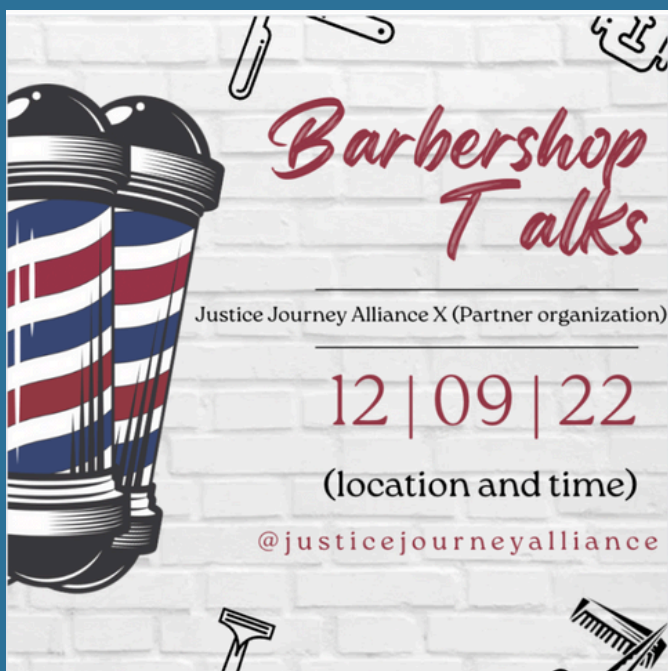
The Scholar Team envisions the justCUTS Barbershop Talk occurring over the summer, inspired by Men's Mental Health Awareness Month in June and Illinois' passing of the Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair (C.R.O.W.N.) Act in July 2022. [27] These two important dates and acknowledgments are the foundation for this event.

The justCUTS Barbershop Talk would begin with a guest speaker addressing all the participants. The Scholar Team believes in the importance of representation and therefore recommends the guest speaker be a fellow young man of color. The participants will be far more receptive to the speaker's message if they see themselves in him. The speaker should share their experiences with identity, discrimination, and toxic masculinity as a man of color. Additionally, the speaker should touch on the C.R.O.W.N. Act and how they celebrate and embrace self-expression through their natural hair. The speaker's vulnerability about their experiences and community will encourage the participants to do the same later in the event.

[27] "As Illinois' CROWN Act Goes into Effect, We Catch up with Jett Hawkins, a Boy Who Made Legislative History with His Hair," Chicago Tribune, January 16, 2023, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/2023/01/16/as-illinois-crown-act-goes-into-effect-we-catch-up-with-jett-hawkins-a-boy-who-made-legislative-history-with-his-hair/#:~:text=The%20CROWN%20Act%20bans%20race>.

Following the guest speaker, participants will break off into small groups accompanied by a barber of color. Each barber will then provide free haircuts to the participants while facilitating and participating in authentic group discussions. The conversations should surround identity, discrimination, empowerment, and personal inspirations/heroes. Creating a safe space for participants to share their stories is key. Traditional societal norms and toxic masculinity have pressured men, particularly men of color, to suppress their emotions. By embracing vulnerability, men of color can break down these barriers, promoting mental health and emotional well-being. This openness can inspire others within their communities to seek support and share their own experiences, creating a culture of empathy and understanding while also demystifying toxic masculinity.

Community support, networking, and outreach are key aspects of this event. Free haircuts will incentivize attendance for local youth, and stipends will encourage participation from community barbers. Seeking collaboration with barber training schools is a mutually beneficial promotion, as the services are more cost-effective and the trainees are eager to gain experience. Lastly, reaching the target audience, young men of color in Chicago, is essential to the success of the Barbershop Talk. The Scholar Team suggests sharing promotional materials with schools, youth organizations, churches, and community centers. The Scholar Team generated two potential fliers for the event, attached below.







## 7. FURTHER LEARNING

### ***Detention, Policing & Punishment***

- Chicago Torture Justice Center 8th and 10th Grade Curriculum
- Chicago Justice Project Resources
- Chicago Police Board and Information: *The most comprehensive archive of misconduct allegations against the Chicago Police Department*
- Chicago Data on Police Shootings and Injuries
- Ryan Miller, *What does 'defund the police' mean and why some say 'reform' is not enough*
- Simone Weichselbaum and Wendi C. Thomas *More cops. Is it the answer to fighting crime?*
- Michelle Alexander *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration In The Age of Colorblindness*
- *Abolitionist Futures Reading List 2022*
  - Intro to Abolition
  - What's Wrong with Reform
  - Feminist, Queer, Anti Racism Abolition
  - Policing, Anti-Racism & Abolition
  - Transformative Justice
  - Everyday Abolition
- The Sentencing Project
- The Innocence Project

## **Race**

- Being Anti Racist
- *Angela Davis, "Freedom is a Constant Struggle"*
- *Robin D. G. Kelley, "Black Study, Black Struggle"*
- *Carmichael, Stokely. "The Basis of Black Power,"*
- *Dr. Robin DiAngelo discusses 'White Fragility'*
- *Kimberlé Crenshaw The Urgency of Intersectionality*

## **LGBTQ+**

- *Archie Bongiovanni and Tristan Jimerson A Quick and Easy Guide to They/Them Pronouns*
- *E. Patrick Johnson, Honeypot: Black Southern Women Who Love Women*
- The Trevor project
- ACLU LGBTQ Rights
- Fighting for equality
- Being An LGBTQ+ Ally

## **Other**

- *UChicago United, DisOrientation Books*
- *INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence INCITE!, The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*
- *Koch Brothers Exposed* (documentary)
- *Adam Sanchez, What the Koch Brothers Want Students to Learn About Slavery*



## 8. MOVING FORWARD

The Justice Journey Alliance, Leadership Foundation of Chicago has immense potential. The current programming actively reaches a loyal audience, but it is imperative that JJA further engages youth voices to create a more equitable organization and sustainable change. The Scholar Team believes the recommendations described in this report will build on past success and current initiatives, creating new growth for JJA. JJA's exposure to new perspectives and communities will ultimately forge a brighter and more inclusive future for the organization, the city of Chicago, and the fight for racial justice.







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