



Village of Wisdom's (VOW) mission is to liberate and protect the intellectual curiosity and positive racial identity of Black children. We do this by amplifying the cultural strengths of Black families and creating conditions for Black parents to codesign culturally affirming and liberatory environments inside and outside the classroom.

VOW PROTECTS BLACK GENIUS®

VOW was created by and with Black parents for Black parents. We work with Black parents to create a world that nurtures and affirms the genius and humanity of Black children.



LOCATION

Durham, North Carolina

HOW WE DO IT

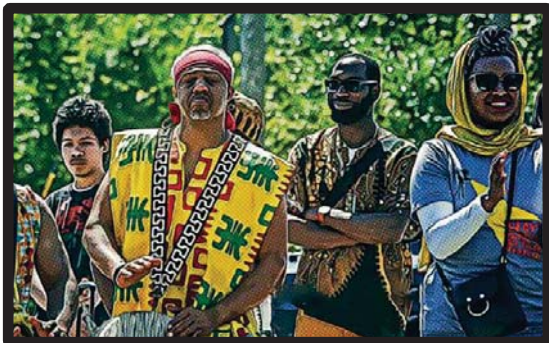
We are moving Black families and communities toward liberation in four ways.

WE BELIEVE BLACK PARENTS ARE CREATORS OF:

CULTURE

VOW TRAINS BLACK PARENTS AS CULTURAL CURATORS OF HERITAGE EVENTS, WEARABLE AFFIRMATIONS, AND VISUAL CELEBRATIONS.

- The Black Genius Breathe video—to affirm Black children as they returned to school—has been viewed more than 5,000 times. Scan QR code to see: 'Breathe with VOW.'
- The Black Genius Showcase and Juneteenth Celebration each hosted more than 1,000 attendees.



COMMUNITY

VOW TRAINS BLACK PARENTS AS COMMUNITY BUILDERS.

- Wisdom Wednesdays provide spaces for parents to heal from experiences with racism, interrogate systems of oppression, and build community.
- VOW has created culturally affirming networks for parents across platforms.

KNOWLEDGE

VOW DEVELOPS STANDARDS WITH BLACK PARENTS FOR CULTURALLY AFFIRMING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS.

- With parents, VOW has presented recommendations to school boards impacting more than **50,000 students**.
- The Keep Dreaming Toolkit for parents and teachers has been shared more than **13,000 times**.
- Parent leaders led community-driven research to expand the Culturally Affirming Climate Survey to elementary school students.

90% of VOW participants reported feeling **better equipped** to help their children navigate racial inequities. Participants also reported that VOW creates a safe space to dream and heal.

LEARNING

VOW TRAINS BLACK PARENTS AS DESIGNERS AND EXPERTS IN CULTURALLY AFFIRMING LEARNING.

- Parents are trained in ethical research methods.
- Parents serve on education advisory boards.
- Parents coauthored a paper on community-driven participatory research published in a peer-reviewed academic journal.
- Parents engaged with educators to impact 2,250 students.



VOW CREATES EVIDENCE THROUGH COMMUNITY-DRIVEN PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation invested in VOW as a Building Evidence to Advance Equity grantee.

VOW is changing what it means to be evidence based, working alongside Black parents to—

- ▶ Reframe who is considered an “expert.”
- ▶ Train Black parents to influence policy, practice, and cultural decisions.
- ▶ Close the research-to-practice gap by leveraging technology, art, and the wisdom of Black parents.



THE DREAMSHIP IS A TWO-YEAR FELLOWSHIP FOR BLACK PARENTS TO BUILD THE WORLD OF THEIR DREAMS.

The Dreamship works at the intersection of education, art, research, and mental health, training Black parents to translate their cultural wisdom into high-quality learning experiences for all learners. The Dreamship provides parents with—

- 10 hours of leadership training
- Community building
- Deliberate rest
- A stipend

“[BLACK GENIUS] HELPED ME FOCUS ON MORE MEANINGFUL WAYS TO GET TO KNOW STUDENTS AND TO MAKE CONNECTIONS WITH PARENTS.”

– TEACHER

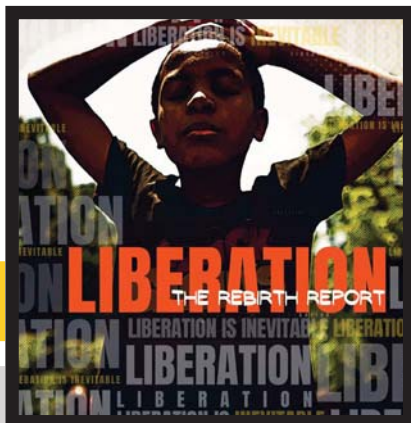
“VOW GIVES CONNECTION WITH IDENTITY, VOICE, AND A PLACE TO BE HEARD.”

– PARENT LEADER

“[VOW] NOT ONLY CREATES SAFE SPACES FOR BLACK FAMILIES, BUT FACILITATES REVOLUTIONARY EXPERIENCES AND EVENTS THAT CHARGE THE COMMUNITY AND REVITALIZE THE SPIRIT. BLACK JOY IS CONTAGIOUS AND VOW CULTIVATES BLACK JOY.”

– PARENT LEADER

READ MORE ABOUT OUR DREAMS IN THE REBIRTH REPORT.



CONTACT US: FIOPS@VILLAGEOFWISDOM.ORG

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