

JOURNI ASPIRE CHALLENGE 2017 APPLICATION RETURNING TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP FELLOWSHIP

Contestant Capacity

Organizational Background

JOURNi | Contact: Camille Johnson – Chief Operation Officer, Camille@journi.org, 313-212-4585

We're a nonprofit dedicated to bridging the digital divide for Detroit's residents. We partner with community-driven initiatives to provide free tech education to Detroiters in their own communities. Since 2016 we've worked with [Campaign for Black Male Achievement](#), [My Brother's Keeper Detroit](#), and [Grow Detroit's Young Talent](#) to provide free tech education programs to over 60 Detroiters. Over the next 5 years we aim to expose 100,000 Detroiters to technology and technological resources. Entrepreneurship training and support is key to our larger vision. Our programs offer Detroiters pathways to entrepreneurship and financial freedom – placing an emphasis on real work experience, portfolio building, and mentorships that connect our students to gainful opportunities and guide them on their path to success. According to the Kauffman Foundation's report "[Main Street Entrepreneurship by Metropolitan Area](#)," there are nearly 984 small businesses for every 100,000 residents in metro-Detroit. Unfortunately these opportunities do not trickle down to black and brown Detroiters – especially returning citizens. [Detroit is 83% black](#), but our tech and startup ecosystem are overwhelmingly white due to inaccessible, unaffordable tech education and startup training options: [26% of Detroit households don't own or have access to a car](#) and [92% of jobs in the region are not accessible within a 60-minute transit trip](#). Further, the tuition for most programs averages \$6,500 per course – an unaffordable price in a city where the [median household income is \\$26,095](#). The *Returning to Entrepreneurship* Fellowship aims to level the playing field and create more seats at the table – providing returning citizens in Detroit with the business development, software development, and digital design skills necessary to launch and manage the business of their dreams! Ultimately, the resources and training provided during this fellowship will give participants the foundation needed to join Detroit's strong network of small businesses and nonprofits.

Background of Management Team

Brian McKinney – Board Chair

While incarcerated in Michigan, Brian developed and launched the CLEP Project in Correctional Settings and Math & Science Without Bars - research-based programs that discourage recidivism and ease re-entry for formerly incarcerated individuals by providing STEM remediation and preparing participants for the CLEP & AP exams. CLEP has provided 300+ inmates with college credits, with some returning to society and earning degrees. Since re-entry, Brian has helped develop 3 programs serving incarcerated citizens (Pigeon.ly, Pentorship, and Prison Wives) – and founded his own fintech startup (Benjii).

Richard Grundy - CEO

After graduating from General Assembly, Richard served as project manager for a lead web development firm – gaining the skills and experience required to become a successful freelance developer. As Lead Instructor for JOURNi, Richard also has significant experience teaching coding and startup skills to at-risk populations – including opportunity youth, individuals with criminal backgrounds, and individuals who have yet to receive high school diplomas or GEDs.

Camille Johnson - COO

With a background in community and economic development, Camille has experience leading resident-driven and community-focused planning processes and implementation strategies for multi-sector coalitions in Detroit, including the Chandler Park Healthy Neighborhood Strategy. She has also developed outreach and marketing strategies for Detroit-based nonprofits and for-profit startups serving underrepresented, at-risk Detroiters.

Deloris Wilson – Program Director

In her current role, Deloris has developed and is implementing an entrepreneurial training program for millennial entrepreneurs in partnership with the U.S. Black Chambers, Inc. and the Minority Business Development Organization. She has also developed and facilitated training workshops for at-risk youth in Belize, served as a business development consultant for a variety of start-up ventures, and mentored children of incarcerated parents.

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Entrepreneurial Education Delivery Solution

Participant Recruitment Plan

Our participant recruitment plan for *Returning to Entrepreneurship* will leverage two existing relationships: our relationship with Janella Robinson, Regional Prisoner Reentry Specialist for the State of Michigan Department of Corrections; and with Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation (DESC) – with whom we partnered to provide summer youth employment programs. Ms. Robinson reached out to JOURNi in December 2016, requesting that we create a workforce-training program for Oakland, Wayne and Macomb county returning citizens under her oversight, who represent 60% of the state's returning citizens population. DESC already has a framework in place that screens returning citizens and connects them to workforce development and employment programs /opportunities. JOURNi will create the screening and recruitment process for *Returning to Entrepreneurship* – developing exercises that assess the reading, math, logic, and problem solving skills of prospective fellows. We will then work with these two partners to recruit returning citizens who are interested in entrepreneurship and have the ability to participate in the program.

JOURNi will also work with community leaders associated from Campaign for Black Male Achievement and BMe – such as Ray Winans, Shaka Senghor, Blair Anderson, and Mario Bueno – to assist in our recruitment efforts. These men are returning citizens who have committed their lives to uplifting and empowering minority men in Detroit through community programs and initiatives that provide social services, mentorship, and leadership development. Their presence will encourage our returning citizens to become *Returning to Entrepreneurship* fellows, commit to completing the fellowship, and dedicate their lives to empowering themselves and their communities through entrepreneurship and service.

Classroom Instruction

Returning to Entrepreneurship will feature a 3-pronged curriculum aimed at providing returning citizens with the fundamental skills needed to launch a small business with low cost and high return. The 19-week program will feature 6 weeks of entrepreneurship training, 6 weeks of web development training, and 3 weeks of digital design training.

Entrepreneurship Training

Deloris Wilson and Marcus Harris (Operations Officer of [ARISE Detroit](#), Adjunct Professor of Introduction to Entrepreneurship and Operations Management for Small Businesses at [Wayne County Community College](#), Managing Director of Urban Strategy Services, and Lead Trainer for [ProsperUS Detroit](#) and [SWOT City](#)) will develop our entrepreneurship curriculum. Both individuals have experience creating and implementing intensive entrepreneurship curriculums for underserved, underrepresented, at-risk minorities. This curriculum will focus on providing returning citizens with the support needed to take their business from ideation to implementation – ensuring that they understand the nuts and bolts of Detroit's current entrepreneurial ecosystem while providing the education required to complete an effective business plan, and develop funding/earned revenue strategies; their brand identity; marketing and outreach strategies; and product/service development strategies and processes by the end of our program.

Web Development Training

JOURNi has a community partnership with Hack Reactor – the leading [TEXT]. Thanks to this partnership, *Returning to Entrepreneurship*'s 6-week web development course will teach participants Code Ramp – Hack Reactor's nationally renowned introductory coding curriculum. Throughout this intensive course, fellows will learn fundamental coding skills including CSS, HTML, and JavaScript. The course will also provide additional entrepreneurship training – having fellows complete real client projects that build

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their portfolio and teach the project management, customer interviewing, team building, and [NAME] skills required to run their own businesses.

Digital Design Training

Marketing and branding materials are essential to building a business' brand, customer base, and following. Our 3-week digital design training will give fellows a crash course in Adobe Photoshop – teaching them the fundamental skills required to create logos, develop social media images/content, and create their own marketing/outreach materials. Fellows will also receive one-month of paid membership for the Adobe Photoshop software.

Online Resources

During the first week of Returning to Entrepreneurship, fellows will set up a Google email account that will connect them to Google Drive containing all of the fellowship's course slides, course materials and other relevant resources. Fellows will also be connected with online entrepreneurial, educational, and social resources such as [Lynda](#), [Khan Academy](#), [Class Central](#), [Hootsuite](#), [Mail Chimp](#), [Asana](#), [Toggl](#), [Canva](#), [Creative Commons](#), [Creative Market](#), [Infogr.am](#), [Wave](#), [Startup Stash](#), [Startup Resources](#), [Squarefront](#), and more. Fellows will be provided with personal laptops and personal wi-fi hotspots - as well as access to community centers such as Wayne County Community College – that will allow them to access these resources outside of class meeting times.

Mentoring

Returning to Entrepreneurship incorporates mentorship into every step of the fellowship, ensuring that participants are able to fully benefit from the expertise and resources that are at their disposal.

Speaker Series

Our fellowship will incorporate a weekly Speakers Series that introduces our participants to minority leaders who are driving innovation in technology and entrepreneurship. These leaders will serve as informal mentors for our fellows – sharing their own experiences and challenges, and providing insight and guidance to the fellows throughout the program and beyond.

Mini-Apprenticeship

Our mini-apprenticeship will connect fellows with entrepreneurs who have started businesses in the same industry, affording them the opportunity to spend almost a month shadowing entrepreneurs who are operating in their desired industry or sector. Through this mini-apprenticeship our fellows will learn everything from business management to product development to the partnership building and outreach skills required to keep their aspiring business afloat and profitable.

Direct Mentoring

Leveraging our partnership with CBMA to provide direct mentoring to our returning citizens – connecting them with black men in Detroit who have overcome challenges, fought for equality, and started or led successful businesses and initiatives.

Community Connections

JOURNi believes in a holistic approach to community development and *Returning to Entrepreneurship* will reflect that commitment. The program will connect fellows to community organizations, nonprofits, faith-based institutions, and government programs that provide socioeconomic support to Detroiters - including [Eastside Community Network](#), [Matrix Human Services](#), [Samaritan Center](#), [DESC](#), [Coming Home Directory](#), [ArcGIS Resources for Returning Citizens](#) and more. These community connections will provide our fellows with the wrap-around resources necessary to ease and facilitate their transition from incarceration to reentry.

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Access To Capital

Access to Micro-lending

The *Returning to Entrepreneurship's* entrepreneurship training course will include one day of presentations from SBA Micro-Lending Intermediaries servicing the Metro-Detroit area – including Center for Empowerment and Economic Development and Detroit Midtown Micro-Enterprise Fund. These presentations will educate fellows on the SBA Micro-Lending opportunities that are available to them and provide the information required to help them qualify for these particular funding sources. Fellows will also have the opportunity to informally pitch their business ideas to the relevant SBA Micro-Lending Intermediaries and receive feedback on how to strengthen their eligibility for funding through these sources.

Connection to Capital and Funding Opportunities

Returning to Entrepreneurship's entrepreneurship training course will also feature a two-day funding and entrepreneurship support summit showcasing additional micro-lending, grant, business development resources and support available to our fellows – including [Detroit Economic Growth Corporation](#), [Motor City Match](#), [Kiva Detroit](#), [Hatch Detroit](#), [Detroit Development Fund](#), [ProsperUS Detroit](#), [Accelerate Michigan](#), [DTX Launch Detroit](#), [Michigan Funders](#), [Cooperative Capital](#), [New Economy Initiative](#), [BUILD Institute](#), [Michigan Black Chamber of Commerce](#) and the [Michigan Small Business Development Center](#). [Shannon Smith](#) – a JP Morgan Chase Detroit Global Philanthropy Associate, whose focus is investing minority-owned small businesses in the city – will also provide direct guidance during these presentations. Together, these 2 days of impactful presentations will provide our fellows with the knowledge and connections required to pursue local funding and investment opportunities.

Looking inward, our fellows will also receive support and guidance from [Benjii](#) – a fin-tech startup that provides quality, cost-effective solutions to individuals and small businesses. Benjii has a proven track-record of streamlining small business accounting and financial management by handling bookkeeping, reporting and tax return preparation needs, while putting clients in the perfect position to be eligible for and receive small business loans and other financial support.

On a national level, we will connect our fellows with accelerators and fellowships that we have participated in or are associated with - including Points of Light Foundation [Civic Accelerator](#), [Echoing Green](#), and other small business accelerators. These initiatives provide a wealth of resources to social impact-focused and minority-owned entities, helping them refine their business models and access additional sources of funding in order to effectively scale their efforts.