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I SAW! The Experience of Learning in DC™

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**LIVING IMAGES IN MY WORLD PROGRAM© Johnson 2010**

***“A History Beneath Us –Forgotten Sacred Ground Across The River Creek”***  
**2011 Summer Pilot Project**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/I-SAW-The-Experience-of-Learning-Global-Communities-TM/177105239052296>



**2011 Final Report**

**Community Based Education Project**

**By Quentina Johnson, Creative Director of Curriculum & Academic Program  
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## 2011 FINAL REPORT FOR I SAW! COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

### -Current Project-

### ***“A History Beneath Us-Forgotten Sacred Ground Across the River Creek”***

**Mission:** I SAW! The Experience of Learning in DC™ ignites youth leadership and social empowerment through innovative intergenerational learning experiences in the District of Columbia developed to nurture, cultivate and inspire creative intellectual genius.©

**Purpose:** We implement youth led community based education projects to promote the leadership abilities and creative intellectual talents of DC teens rising out of a history of urban challenges so they can make valuable contributions to their communities.©

**Goal:** To preserve the legacy of a lost thriving African-American community buried about two hundred years ago in a Georgetown cemetery, youth led field research teams aim to uncover and document history.©

### **-2011 Previous Outcomes of Youth Led Research Teams for Summer Pilot Project-**

Hari Jones, curator of the African American Civil War Museum mentored high school research leaders and their middle school research teams. He illustrated how to use primary sources in field experiences, with the input of local historians and scholars to uncover the identities of five previously unknown African-American Civil War veterans buried in Mt. Zion/Female Union Band cemetery.

### **We Met Our Goals As Demonstrated By The Following Results:**

#### **Summary**

The identities of **five** previously unknown African-American Civil War veterans buried in Mt. Zion/Female Union Band cemetery were uncovered by high school research leaders and their middle school research teams using primary sources through field experiences with the input of local historians and scholars as mentors.

#### **-End Products-**

- 1) Produced media, interviews and creative expressions into an interactive learning website on a Facebook page documenting the project's research and historical discoveries to a global audience; <http://www.facebook.com/pages/I-SAW-The-Experience-of-Learning-Global-Communities-TM/177105239052296>.
- 2) Produced a video documentary titled, ***“We Are Not Afraid of History! (Part 1)”*** for a community screening and panel discussion premiering to an estimated **30 audience members** at a Smithsonian Museum site on 8/11/11 and later the African-American Civil War Museum on 11/12/11 to an estimated **85 audience members**.  
<http://www.afro.com/sections/news/washington/story.htm?storyid=73048#.Txdr2P6ZOH8.facebook>.
- 3) Produced a **67 page web based portfolio journal** record of field research notes reflecting the depth of their learning experiences to a global audience.
- 4) Produced links to Facebook pages of The Humanities Council, African American Civil War Museum, DC Social Innovation Project and Generations United to *outreach their combined estimated following of 3,019* likes on Facebook.
- 5) Produced a Twitter @I\_SAWU account with **91 twits**.
- 6) Produced high performance levels aligned to DC's literacy in social studies common core standards.  
<http://dcsocialinnovation.org/#/portfolio/4559585602>.



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## 2011 FINAL REPORT FOR I SAW! COMMUNITY PROGRAMS MEASURABLE DATA:

### Summary

DC teens lack opportunities to demonstrate successful outcomes and high levels of academic performance with **60% to 62% failing** to meet adequately yearly progress at local schools. Real life projects based in field experiences focus on problem solving to address a need within the community and indicate a youth's successful application of knowledge.

### **-Methodology-**

We use action research methods with a qualitative study of evidence based outcomes: a) field notes and data collection in teen journals; b) experiential learning workshop portfolio rubrics; c) significance of youth research findings; d) community attendance for panel discussions and forums; e) pre and post surveys; f) increased follower on social networks; g) narratives and; h) results producing a lasting social change.

### **-Project Evaluation-**

- a. Research Significance- **o names** in Mt. Zion Female Band Union Cemetery were documented and identified as African American Civil War Veterans according to review of literature and archival search of historical sources and newspapers. The I SAW! youth led project documented and identified **five names of African- American Civil War Veterans.**
- b. Pre-Survey & Post Surveys- **Only 10%** of youth researchers knew about community based projects and Mt. Zion/Female Union Band Cemetery and Black Georgetown before the I SAW! project and **100%** of youth researchers responded with accurate information on community based projects, Mt. Zion/ Female Union Band cemetery and Black Georgetown after project.
- c. Field Notes- **67 pages** of youth research team notes were contributed to an online journal.
- d. Experiential Learning Workshop Portfolio Rubrics- An estimated **85%** of middle school researchers demonstrated a performance level above **80%** to meet the criteria for literacy in social studies aligned to DCPS common core standards.
- e. Community Program Pre Survey- An estimated **93%** of audience surveyed indicated they did not know about community based education projects or the Mt. Zion/Female Union Band cemetery and the history of Black Georgetown before the video documentary screening and panel discussion.
- f. Program Satisfaction Questionnaires- **85%** Youth rated project's learning experience **4 and 5 on a scale of 1-5** with five highest.
- g. Narrative-Qualitative observation by Humanities Council Visiting Scholar <http://hcwdc.blogspot.com/2011/07/living-images-in-my-world-history.html>

### **Findings of Interest-**

Despite attending under-performing schools with social economic challenges, DC teens used an interdisciplinary experiential learning model to consistently demonstrate high levels of performance in higher thinking skills, problem solving and critical thinking aligned to DC's literacy in social studies common core standards.

**Nineteen out of 24** middle school researchers had been previously determined to have behavioral challenges or were identified for special education at public schools. All were enrolled in the community center's violence prevention program due to the impact violence had in their lives. An outstanding middle school researcher noted by the contribution of extensive field research notes in his journal had two deceased brothers lost to street violence.

As teens applied a conceptual understanding of primary sources in their data collection, the youth led action research project provided DC teens the opportunity to create a solution to help preserve and maintain the honor of the cemetery specifically by finding and uncovering the lost identities of **five** African American Civil War Veterans.



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## **2011 FINAL REPORT FOR I SAW! COMMUNITY PROGRAMS**

### **Lasting Social Impact:**

It was confirmed by Mr. Hari Jones the curator of the African American Civil War Museum that the Veterans Administration can provide new tombstones for the African American Civil War veterans and thus improve upkeep of the aging cemetery based on the youth led research.

### **-Community Outreach-**

- 1) Community program attendance at the film screening reached a combined audience of an estimated **100**.
- 2) Howard University's History department has now been contacted to investigate the Mt. Zion burial ground's archeological significance for study.
- 3) Publicity for the project was evident in the Afro- American Newspaper and on air interviews of a high school research leader on WHUR's Steve Harvey Morning Show and WPFW's Askia Muhammad news radio program.

### **2012 Projected Outcomes for Youth Led Research Teams-**

- a) Use field experiences and primary sources with the input of DC historians and scholars to develop bios of the five names previously uncovered and identified as African American Civil War Veterans.
- b) Identify and interview descendants of the community interred at Mt. Zion/Female Union Band cemetery.
- c) Uncover names of more unknown identities of African Americans within the cemetery who were Civil War veterans.
- d) Produce a video documenting research project.

### **Summary**

Now, that the youth led project has found evidence of Civil War Veterans it will be ongoing in its quest to restore the identity and legacy of more names lain to rest in the Mt. Zion/Female Union Band cemetery. Ongoing community partnerships are being established to continue youth led research project on lost identities of African Americans in the cemetery estimated 3,000 burials.

### **Projected Future Outcomes:**

- a) Bios of names identified by ongoing research youth led teams in Mt. Zion/Female Union Band Cemetery will be digitized on line.
- b) Ongoing youth led investigations will continue to identify elderly descendants of the community buried in the 200 year old cemetery to record oral histories as shared stories documented by DC youth under the training of Dr. Jowers-Barber, Director of The Oral History Project.
- c) The project will gain funding to sustain itself as an ongoing youth led research project with the aim to educate a global community with an interactive web site increasing its followers.
- d) Youth will continue to interpret their research in creative expressions as socially motivated artists in public forums to inspire community awareness and discussions.
- e) Community partnerships with universities, historians and scholars will increase the identification of more Civil War veterans and will ultimately get the Veterans Administration to create a memorial at the cemetery honoring its legacy.



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## 2011 FINAL REPORT FOR I SAW! COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Funding sources and amounts received during grant period May 2011 thru November 12, 2011.

### Summary:

Small grants from three organizations along with the personal cash contributions from I SAW! staff and private donors were used to meet any budget shortfall associated costs to provide for funding toward video equipment, metro cards, renting private bus transportation to field learning experiences and research sites as well as ensuring consultants, historians and workshop presenters received stipends for their important input. High school lead researchers received stipends. We purchased supplies needed for promotional materials and paid a film consultant to do final editing of video documentary. Food and refreshments were provided by cash contributions of I SAW! staff.

### **-List of Funding Sources (Not including I SAW! staff cash contributions)-**

- 1) \$2,700-Columbia Heights Youth Club
- 2) \$2,000-Humanities Council of Washington DC
- 3) \$1,000-DC Social Innovation Project
- 4) \$5,612-**donated volunteer hours** of in kind service by project director, artistic director and the program youth coordinator.
- 5) \$300-private donors.

**\*\*\* A Line Item Budget is available at request with supporting attached documents\*\*\***

### **2012 Current Upcoming Project & Timeframe**

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At least two community planning meetings will take place during February. The project start date is anticipated in March or when funding needs are met. Presently, we are still seeking grants to fund the project March 2012 through June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Our intended goal is to select and cultivate 10 outstanding high school leaders who will successfully coordinate with 5 local college interns to lead 30 DC middle school researchers from academically under-performing schools enrolled in afterschool community centers within Ward One.