

FILMS

2026 SOCIAL IMPACT STORIES

Social Impact Storytelling Curriculum

Led by Executive Director, Dr. Jimmeka Anderson and Executive Director Fellow, Lanaa Dantzler, each Teen Director received their own social impact advisor to provide consulting on their topics for their films and to help them amplify their work in their social impact area.

FILM: THE LIZARD

BY WHITNEY JOHNSON

MEAH BARRINGTON, PRODUCTION COACH | LANIQUA
RICHARDSON, EDITOR | ALEX BONNER, ALUMNI COACH |
TIMOTHY RICHARDSON, CINEMATOGRAPHER

MEAH BARRINGTON ALEX BONNER LANIQUA RICHARDSON TIMOTHY RICHARDSON

THE LIZARD

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY
WHITNEY JOHNSON

WHEN A POPULAR HIGH SCHOOL GIRL LANDS HER DREAM HOMECOMING DATE, A SINGLE PIMPLE SPIRALS INTO A PSYCHOLOGICAL NIGHTMARE THAT SHATTERS HER CONFIDENCE, DISTORTS REALITY, AND LEAVES SCARS FAR DEEPER THAN THE MIRROR CAN SHOW.

A BLACK GIRLS FILM CAMP PRODUCTION



LOGLINE: When a popular highschool girl lands her dream homecoming date, a single pimple spirals into a psychological nightmare that shatters her confidence, distorts reality, and leaves scars far deeper than the mirror can show.



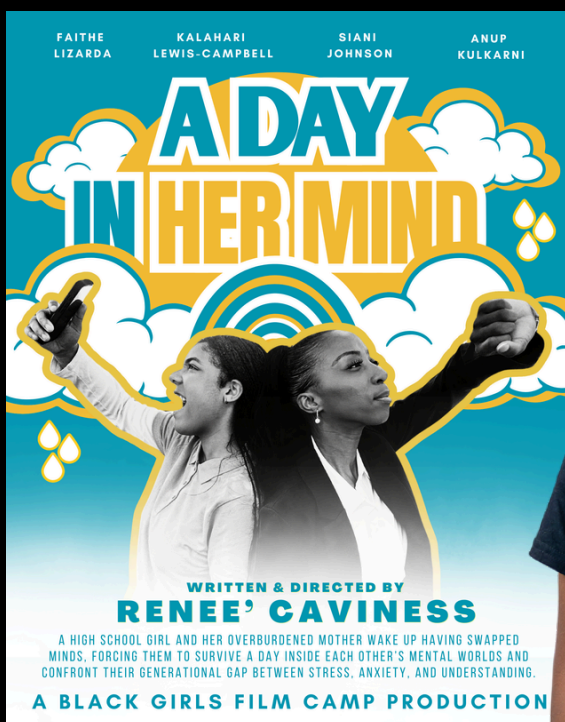
MEET THE SOCIAL IMPACT ADVISOR: MARLO S. POWELL M.S. CSP, LAPC

Marlo Powell is a School Psychologist and provisionally licensed Professional Therapist (LPC) with over 21 years of experience in mental health and education. Her work focuses on supporting inner-city youth and young adults through school-based psychological services, while also empowering adults through her private therapy practice. Outside of her professional work, Marlo enjoys making and selling scented candles and songwriting.

FILM: A DAY IN HER MIND

BY RENEE' CAVINESS

FAITHE LIZARDA, PRODUCTION COACH | SIANI JOHNSON,
EDITOR | KALAHARI LEWIS-CAMPBELL, ALUMNI COACH |
ANUP KULKARNI, CINEMATOGRAPHER



LOGLINE: A high school girl and her overburdened mother wake up having swapped minds, forcing them to survive a day inside each other's mental worlds and confront their generational gap between stress, anxiety, and understanding.



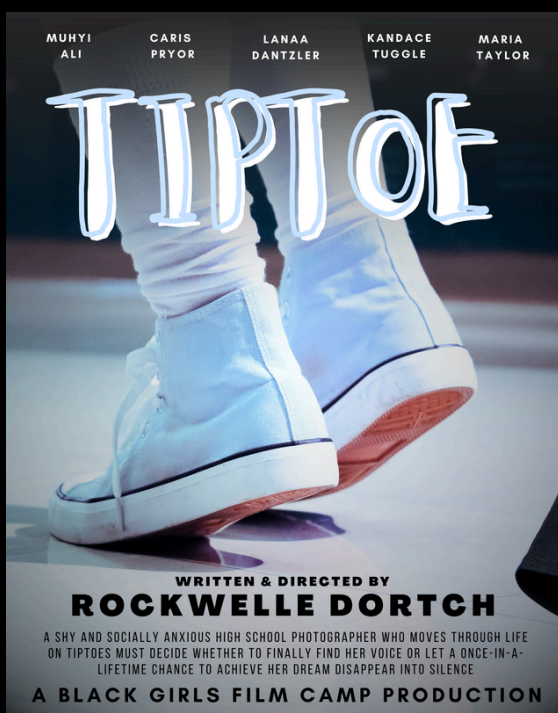
MEET THE SOCIAL IMPACT ADVISOR: VICKI SHABO

Vicki Shabo is a gender equity expert, policy advocate, and coalition builder who has helped advance paid leave, equal pay, and pregnancy fairness policies affecting millions. At New America, she works with policymakers, advocates, researchers, and the private sector, advises journalists and entertainment creatives, and shapes narratives on work-family justice. Shabo has testified before Congress and state legislatures, and her writing appears in major national outlets.

FILM: TIP TOE

BY ROCKWELLE DORTCH

MUHYI ALI, PRODUCTION COACH | KANDACE TUGGLE, EDITOR |
CARIS PRYOR, ALUMNI COACH | LANAA DANTZLER, ALUMNI
COACH | MARIA TAYLOR, CINEMATOGRAPHER



LOGLINE: A shy and socially anxious high school photographer who moves through life on tiptoes must decide whether to finally find her voice or let a once-in-a-lifetime chance to achieve her dream disappear into silence.



MEET THE SOCIAL IMPACT ADVISOR: TASNIM SULAIMAN

Tasnim Sulaiman is a Licensed Professional Counselor and Founder & CEO of Black Men Heal, a nationally recognized mental health organization advancing equitable access to culturally responsive care. Since launching Black Men Heal in 2018, Tasnim has pioneered an innovative model that provides free therapy for men of color by clinicians of color—eliminating financial, cultural, and systemic barriers to treatment. A sought-after speaker and media consultant, her work has been featured on The New York Times, NBC Nightly News, The Breakfast Club, and Netflix.

FILM: BUILT TO STANDARD

BY MIKAYLA MOORE

MAKAYLA BROWN, PRODUCTION COACH | LAUREN MCGARRETT,
EDITOR | AALIYAH IDRISSE, ALUMNI COACH | DOMINIC EASTER,
CINEMATOGRAPHER | MIRA JOHNSON, ALUMNI CREW



LOGLINE: Engineered as a living, physical weapon and discarded after the war, a female soldier embarks on a journey to reclaim her identity and challenge a world that insists her purpose was preconstructed and nothing more.



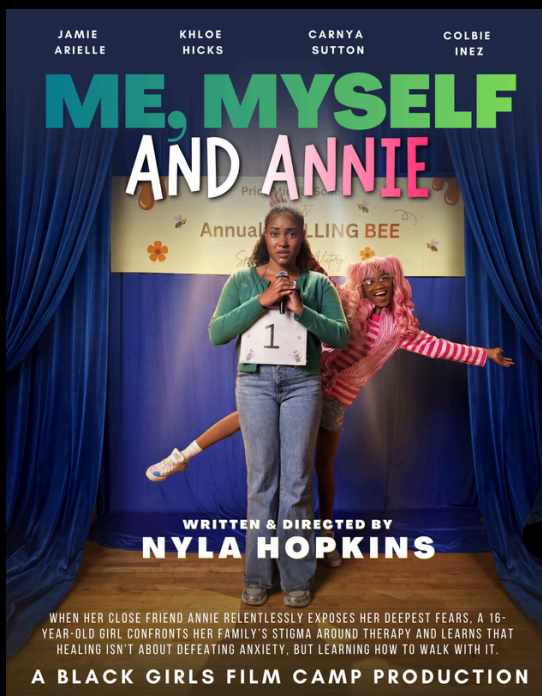
MEET THE SOCIAL IMPACT ADVISOR: DR. JULIA JORDAN ZACHARY

Julia S. Jordan-Zachary is professor and chair of the Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies Department at Wake Forest University. She is the author of Black Women, Cultural Images and Social Policy, Shadow Bodies, and Erotic Testimonies. Her scholarship spans books, edited volumes, and multimedia projects, including the award-winning documentary Healing Roots and the digital archive Black Women Talk COVID, centering Black women's politics, representation, and lived experiences.

FILM: ME, MYSELF, AND ANNIE

BY NYLA HOPKINS

JAMIE ARIELLE, PRODUCTION COACH | CARNYA SUTTON, EDITOR
KHLOE HICKS, ALUMNI COACH | COLBIE INEZ,
CINEMATOGRAPHER



LOGLINE: When her close friend Annie relentlessly exposes her deepest fears, a 16-year-old girl confronts her family's stigma around therapy and learns that healing isn't about defeating anxiety, but learning how to walk with it.



MEET THE SOCIAL IMPACT ADVISOR: ALLYSON ROBINSON, MSW, LCSW

Allyson is the founder and lead therapist of Arise Wellness, LLC, a Charlotte-based virtual therapy practice providing compassionate, evidence-based care. A licensed clinical social worker in North Carolina and South Carolina, she specializes in treating anxiety, depression, ADHD, and relational challenges through individual, couples, and family therapy. Allyson is also a trained licensure supervisor and brings over a decade of experience across diverse clinical settings.

FILM: SAFE SPACE

BY AVA'MARIE ARNOLD

ERIKA SMITH, PRODUCTION COACH | GEORGIA JENKINS, EDITOR
Auset Adams, ALUMNI COACH | EDGAR ROMERO,
CINEMATOGRAPHER



LOGLINE: An 18-year-old's first solo doctor's visit turns into a nightmare, forcing her to fight for herself and others to be heard in the mental health industry.



MEET THE SOCIAL IMPACT ADVISOR: DR. DIANA LOUIS

Diana Martha Louis is an Assistant Professor of Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Michigan. She earned a B.A. from Cornell University and a Ph.D. in English from Emory University. Her research explores mental health in African American life, literature, and history. She is the author of *Colored Insane*, a groundbreaking study of race, psychiatry, and Black resistance to oppressive medical and cultural narratives.

FILM: WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE

BY JADE WATKINS

ZURI JOHNSON, PRODUCTION COACH | JAZMINE BUNCH, EDITOR
CAMILLE S. RAMBERT, ALUMNI COACH | ALEXSISS JACKSON,
CINEMATOGRAPHER | KAI KNIGHTS, ALUMNI CREW



LOGLINE: When new student Evie, desperate to belong, discovers her maladaptive daydreams may reveal the hidden struggles of others, she must face her bully and learn that everyone is fighting battles you can't see.



MEET THE SOCIAL IMPACT ADVISOR: DR. CHANEL TANNER

Chanel Craft Tanner is Director of the Women's Center at the University of Virginia, leading programs that confront gender inequity and amplify women's voices. She previously led Emory University's Center for Women. Chanel holds a PhD in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies from Emory, with scholarship rooted in Black feminism and hip hop studies. A Crunk Feminist Collective member, she co-authored Feminist AF. She is a proud advocate for justice.

FILM: WORTH THE WAIT

BY NANA ASARE

KEISHON GROVES, PRODUCTION COACH | KEARAH-ARMONIE
JEUDY, EDITOR | AVERY KELLEY, ALUMNI COACH | AZURI
VALLATINE, ALUMNI COACH | SOUL UHEGWU, CINEMATOGRAPHER



LOGLINE: When pressure from her boyfriend and peers pushes her toward intimacy she isn't ready for, a 16-year-old Black girl must find the courage to set boundaries and define her own self-worth over fear of judgment.



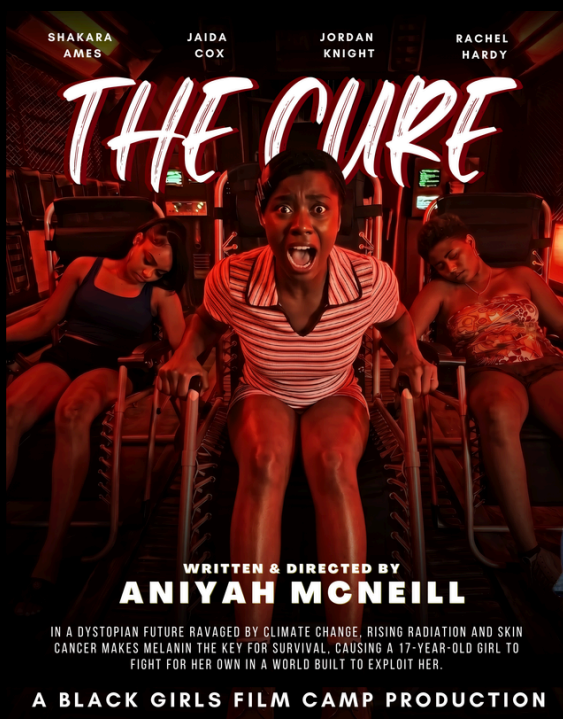
MEET THE SOCIAL IMPACT ADVISOR: DR. APRYL ALEXANDER

Dr. Apryl Alexander is the Metrolina Distinguished Professor of Health and Policy in the Department of Health Management and Policy at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She is also the Executive Director of the UNC Charlotte Violence Prevention Center. She received her doctorate in clinical psychology from the Florida Institute of Technology with concentrations in forensic psychology and child and family therapy. Dr. Alexander is an engaged public scholar who has been featured in numerous media outlets, including The Associated Press, Essence Magazine, USA Today, and NBC Nightly News, discussing her research and advocacy work.

FILM: THE CURE

BY ANIYAH MCNEILL

SHAKARA AMES, PRODUCTION COACH | JORDAN KNIGHT, EDITOR
JAIDA COX, ALUMNI COACH | RACHEL HARDY,
CINEMATOGRAPHER | ADDISON BELHOMME, ALUMNI CREW



LOGLINE: In a dystopian future ravaged by climate change, rising radiation and skin cancer makes melanin the key for survival, causing a 17-year-old girl to fight for her own in a world built to exploit her.



MEET THE SOCIAL IMPACT ADVISOR: DR. MICHELLE MEGGS

Dr. Michelle Meggs is a Ratchet Womanist scholar, ordained Baptist minister, and cultural theologian dedicated to the flourishing of Black women and girls. She serves as the DeiVision Minister of Christian Education and Discipleship at Friendship Missionary Baptist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. Holding advanced degrees in Africana Women's Studies and theology, she coined the term Ratchet Womanist as a liberatory framework rooted in Black cultural expression, theological resistance, and joy. She is an author, preacher, and appointed member of the North Carolina Council for Women and Children.

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