

Business, Arts, Theater, Sociology (BATS) Project - Winter 2021

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The World Changers

What is the Winter 2021 BATS project?

The Winter 2021 BATS project is a community and leadership development program including the Vitio Fellows, First Ward Fellows, and Art 390 students. Throughout the semester we work towards three deliverables: holding a community focus group and applying to boards and commissions within Saginaw County, development of a comic book containing the community visions of all First Ward Fellows, and finally a joint final presentation. During this project the Vitito Fellows act as “project managers” and leaders, the First Ward Fellows are our dreamers, and the Art 390 students are the creators. With six members total our joint team, the World Changers, bring to the table a wide variety of skills and experiences that help us to accomplish what our name implies - changing the world.

Meet the Team: Our Vitito Fellows

Samuel Johnson

B.S., Major: Computer Information Systems,
Minor: Finance & Cybersecurity, 2023



Sydney Czyz

Bachelor of Professional Accountancy,
2022



Meet the Team: Our First Ward Leadership Fellows

Bria Gregory

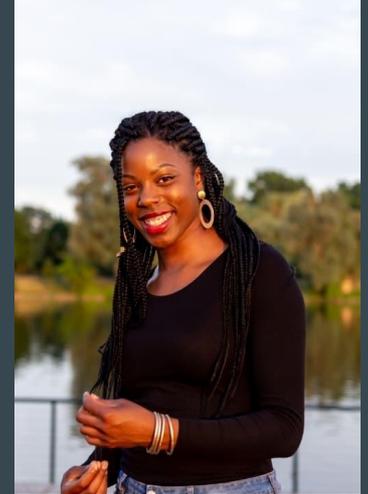
B.A. Sociology, 2019



Indigo Dudley

Major: General Studies, 2021

Minor: Music/Musical Theatre/Black
Studies



Boards and Commissions - Center for Civil Justice Board (Bria)

The Center for Civil Justice Board pushes for change in the Saginaw area through legal and political actions, educational initiatives, and collaborative strategies. They maintain and improve the safety net programs so that they are accessible to those who need them.

Bria chose this board because it is a topic near to her heart, starting with being the daughter of a Detroit police officer. With the work that she has done in the past, from social work, to Youthcare at a juvenile facility, to a finance mentor for those who are economically disadvantaged, it is clear that there is a deep rooted passion for civil justice. Bria will be the only person of color serving this board, this gives her a unique and important point of view. All this in mind, Bria plans to work passionately and with dedication to implement change in her time serving Saginaw County.

Boards and Commissions - Saginaw Arts and Enrichment Commission (Indigo)

The Saginaw Arts and Enrichment Commission is an entity within Saginaw focused on supporting arts and culture within the Saginaw community. In an effort to develop our community, the Saginaw Arts and Enrichment Commission holds numerous events each year and has been doing so since its beginning in 1986. The commission meets on a monthly basis and all members are appointed by Saginaw city council members.

Indigo is passionate about this particular commission because of her intrinsic love for art. As a model, clothing entrepreneur, and more, Indigo feels a strong passion for the arts and is able to recognize the need for individuals to have exposure to the arts.

Indigo feels that she can bring a fresh, young, and diverse perspective to this board as she is a young community member and will be the only person of color serving on this board.

Focus Groups

In an effort to hear from the Saginaw community we held a focus group with a variety of Saginaw community members. Both elected officials, current board members of various boards around Saginaw, and regular citizens took part in providing insight to both Indigo and Bria on how to be an effective board member and key issues facing their particular Saginaw board.

Focus Group Outcomes- Bria

The focus group held on Friday April 2nd was very insightful in regards to the board that Bria has chosen to sit on. She has chosen to be a part of the Center for Civil Justice Board. Two questions were asked to the panel of Saginaw residents, 1. What are some issue facing this board, 2. How can these issues be addressed in the community.

The main takeaways from this evening is that there needs to be better legal resources for low income residents and that there is a need for education in civil literacy. Bria also received valuable advice on how to sit on a board. The greatest being that sitting on a board requires more than just passion about what you're fighting for, but also connections to make things happen and facts to help you educate others.

Focus Group Outcomes- Indigo

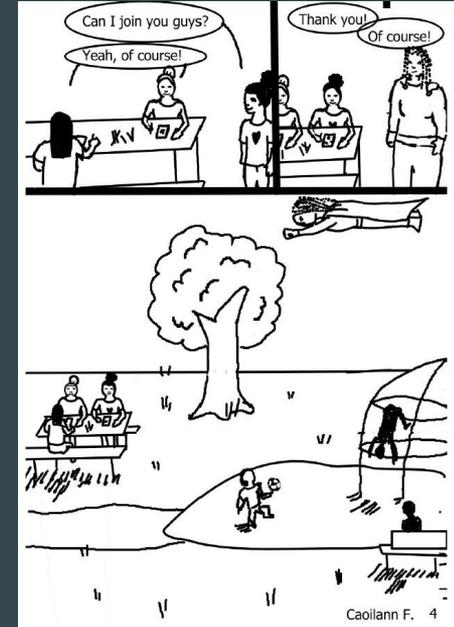
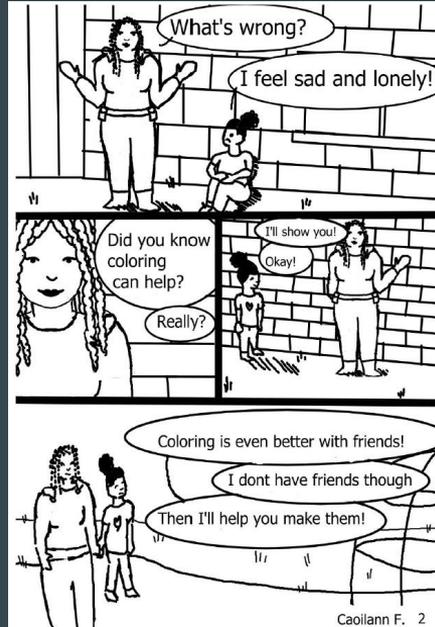
The focus group held on Friday April 2nd was very insightful in regards to the board that Indigo; The Saginaw Arts and Enrichment Commission. Two questions were asked to the panel of Saginaw residents, 1. What are some issue facing this board, 2. How can these issues be addressed in the community.

The first issue addressed was the fact that Indigo is unable to stay for the full term due to her future endeavours, it was suggested that she push for a position for younger leaders whose lives aren't staying in Saginaw. Another solution addressed was that many of this commissions events are targeted to children and the elderly, and while still important groups, events need to be targeted to all. The main theme throughout this discussion was ensuring that diversity is highlighted, in the board, in their thoughts, in the events they put on, and the art they display.

Community Vision Comic

The Art 390 students were tasked with capturing the community vision of our First Ward Fellows. We all worked together to produce a storyline designed by the First Ward Fellows and pictured by the Art 390 students about what the First Ward Fellows want to see in our community. Each First Ward Fellow received 4 pages to lay out their community vision to be added to a master 48 page comic book comprised of the community visions for all First Ward Fellows.

Community Vision Comics - Bria



Artist: Caoilann Ferguson

Final Thoughts

We hope to see Indigo and Bria make it on their respective boards/commissions as we firmly believe they are going to do great things. They will announce their applications during a signing ceremony at the First Ward Community Center on May 28th.

While we were initially only meant to be a team at the beginning of the semester, we have all formed a bond and are now more than just a team. We are in fact, friends first and colleagues second.