



# PRESS RELEASE

MAYOR'S OFFICE • Mike Duggan, Mayor

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## Detroit among first 10 US cities to be awarded grants from Obama Foundation

- Detroit-based, City partner Black Family Development awarded \$500,000 to improve quality of life among young men of color
- Matching grant from The Skillman Foundation brings total award to \$1 Million
- Grants support intervention efforts like Project Ceasefire, Detroit's crime reduction initiative, Restorative Practices and Joven-Noble training.

Black Family Development, a Detroit-based organization with demonstrated success and effectiveness in improving the lives of young men of color, received a major boost thanks to a \$500,000 grant award from the Obama Foundation. The grant was awarded under the Obama Foundation's My Brother's Keeper (MBK) Alliance Impact Cities program, a new national competition to identify and invest in communities that are making steady progress to substantially improve the lives of boys and young men of color.

Detroit was one of ten cities nationwide to be selected as an Impact City and receive the competitive grant through the Foundation, which was established last year by former President Barack Obama to continue much of the life-changing work he began while in the White House. The competition was made possible thanks to generous support from the Ford Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation and Microsoft.

"Detroit is the ideal city to impact, expand and build upon the national and local work of My Brother's Keeper which began here in 2014," said Alice Thompson, CEO of Black Family Development. "We have the right partners, leadership, robust and achievable goals that will improve the life outcomes for boys and young men of color."

"We are thrilled to announce Black Family Development as one of the 19 organizations we believe can show the nation what it takes to build safe and supportive communities where boys and young men of color can thrive," said Michael D. Smith, Executive Director of MBK Alliance and Director of Youth Opportunity Programs at the Obama Foundation. "The MBK Alliance team is committed to providing these communities with the tools, support, and access they need to accelerate impact that meets urgent needs and tackles the systemic barriers that prevent too many of our children from achieving their dreams."

Following President Obama's announcement that Detroit's Black Family Development Inc. won a \$500,000 grant from the MBK Alliance, the funds were matched by another \$500,000 from The Skillman Foundation.

“Black men and boys are important contributors to the success and growth of the families, organizations and communities they are a part of. As a longstanding advocate of Detroit’s boys of color, The Skillman Foundation is honored to match the Obama Foundation’s contribution to support the great work of Black Family Development and its partners,” said Tonya Allen, President & CEO of The Skillman Foundation.

### **Supporting our young men of color**

With the \$1 million in funding, Black Family Development will continue ongoing transformative efforts to strengthen and enhance the lives of children, youth, and families and especially young men of color. The grants will support restorative practices and justice training, which focus on improving relationships between people and communities through programs that specifically work on maintaining or improving grades and attendance at school; showing improved behavior, conflict resolution and coping skills; showing increased self-esteem and improved resistance to negative peer pressure, and showing improvement in job readiness skills.

Restorative practices and justice training programs supported by Black Family Development’s award from the Obama Foundation include:

- R.E.A.L. (Restorative, Engaged, Aspiring, Leading) Brothers, a diverse program focused on establishing a new community leadership collaborative for MBK with Black Family Development as the lead organization in partnership with the Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation, Project Ceasefire Detroit and the Detroit Crime Commission. A minimum of 2,300 young boys and men of color will be engaged in four platforms of violence prevention work and gang diversion. Black Family Development, in partnership with the Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation, will scale restorative practices efforts through youth and adult trainings and provide training on the Joven-Noble Curriculum. The R.E.A.L Brothers collaborative work will also yield improvements in school attendance and grades, and help participants access workforce development opportunities.
- Project Ceasefire Detroit, a crime prevention partnership between law enforcement, faith-based leaders and community stakeholders to reduce gun violence. Ceasefire Detroit will engage 300 male students from seven high schools with their proven curriculum, which includes a weekly discussion series, summer development and employment initiatives, and two annual youth summits. In 2017, Ceasefire police precincts experienced a 19 percent reduction in homicides, and a 26 percent reduction in nonfatal shootings.
- The Detroit Crime Commission, a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization supporting initiatives and projects to improve public safety in Southeast Michigan. The Detroit Crime Commission will seek to scale the results of its New Beginnings program, which has used high-level gang intelligence to significantly suppress and divert gang activity.

Together through the REAL Brothers program, Ceasefire and the Detroit Crime Commission will focus on a continuum of violence reduction programming for two specific populations: those who are likely to engage with the criminal justice system and those who are returning from it. Collectively, these efforts represent a deepening of many of the goals established in the 2015 My Brother’s Keeper Detroit report and the start of a new chapter.

### **Grant marks significant progress Detroit's violence reduction**

The major award from the Obama Foundation is the latest sign of significant progress in Detroit's crime and violence reduction efforts. Mayor Mike Duggan said the award signals recognition of progress Detroit is making toward reducing violence in the city.

"The generous support from the Obama Foundation, My Brother's Keeper and The Skillman Foundation show that our programs like Project Ceasefire are working," said Mayor Mike Duggan. "Together with Black Family Development and all of our partners, we're going to continue this work to make Detroit a safer city and lift up young men of color."

In 2017, precincts in the Ceasefire program experienced a 19% reduction in homicides, whereas non-CF precincts experienced a 1% reduction. Ceasefire precincts also experienced a 26% decline in nonfatal shootings and a 43% decline over two years in homicides and non-fatal shootings of youth younger than 15; the decrease was 33% for young men ages 16-24 and 18% for those over 25. Non-Ceasefire precincts experienced a 9% decrease in non-fatal shootings in 2017.

The Detroit Crime Commission, meanwhile, has identified 160 gangs and engaged more than 1,450 gang members. As a result of comprehensive intelligence gathering, Part I violent crime has been reduced by 37% since 2014; and Part II property crime has been reduced by 12.4% since 2014.