

THE DRUM

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UPCOMING EVENTS

TRUTH IN SENTENCING TOWNHALL

March 28, 1pm-3:15pm
University of Michigan School of Social Work,
Room 1840 - ECC
1080 S University Ave Ann Arbor, MI 48109
The Truth in Sentencing Town Hall will have a panel of Michigan legislators that will discuss the ballot initiative that aims to end Truth in Sentencing as well as take questions and comments from their constituents on the issue. Let your voices be heard!

PROJECT REENTRY MARCH WORKSHOP: TAXES!

March 29, 2pm-4pm
Detroit Public Library
5201 Woodward Ave Detroit, MI 48202
Professor Nicole Appleberry and students from U of M's low-income taxpayer clinic will facilitate a workshop about filing your taxes.

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP CONFERENCE

April 3, 8am-4pm
Damon J Keith Center, Wayne State Law School
471 West Palmer Avenue Detroit, MI 48202
This conference will focus on the intersection of social entrepreneurship and one of the major social justice issues of our day, criminal justice reform.

REDEEMING KIMBERLY EVENTS:

Labor of Love
March 28th, 2pm-5pm
Church of the Messiah
231 E. Grand Blvd. Detroit, MI 48207

Women Defense Group
March 30th, 5PM
Church of the Messiah
231 E. Grand Blvd. Detroit, MI 48207

REDEEMING Kimberly Resources Fair
Samaritan Center
March 31st, 11am-2pm
5555 Conners St. Detroit, MI 48213

THE STATUS QUO HAS NOT GIVEN UP

BY LACINO HAMILTON

I have thought and wrote quite a bit about the discussion that was had at the African American Community, Law Enforcement, and Mass Incarceration event featured in the last issue of The Drum. What follows is my perspective to the recent wave of criminal justice reforms, mass incarceration, and some of the lessons learned that can be useful moving forward. This is an excerpt of the book I'm working on, *Visibly Invisible*. *Editor's note: this piece has been edited for length and clarity.*

To begin, most if not all of the recent criminal justice reforms have brought immediate relief to thousands of families and communities that would otherwise still be suffering under the full weight of the state. I also think if we step back and take a more critical look, we will see that the process of understanding the reality in which we are enveloped demands a certain theoretical understanding of what is happening. Therefore, my reflection is important to the extent that I can make the reality clearer.

First, all those who challenge poverty, inequality, unemployment, white supremacy, citizenship suppression, sexuality and gender oppression, are also part of the fight against mass incarceration since mass incarceration is a key U.S. political strategy of hiding these injustices.

Second, I am on the inside experiencing mass incarceration first-hand. While a lot of the reform that is taking place is not immediately seen or felt on the inside, it is clear that a lot has been happening.

All over the country there has been an uptick in public discussion of money bail, mandatory minimum sentences, mass incarceration, life without parole, and reentry. There have been some nominal wins for better prison conditions, such as massive strikes against solitary confinement and migrant detention facilities. Massive cuts to prison spending. Prison closures. Reduced prison populations (though the jury is still out on how much of that is happening). Diversity of new tactics. And greater strength, resolve, creativity, and vision in the inevitable fights ahead in the cycles of struggle, counter-struggle, and so on.

Still, I would be remiss if I did not reflect on the harsh realities closing in around us, or the real possibility that the state and the public's interests appear to be converging, but each to different ends. The public's need for criminal justice reform is to making lives whole again. The state's need for criminal justice reform is to create accommodation for a repressive model and keep the overall political situation unchanged.

Continued on page 2...



ACCOUNTING AID SOCIETY

3031 WEST GRAND BLVD, SUITE 470 DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48202-3194

Do you need help filing your taxes or want general financial assistance? Reach out to Accounting Aid Society for free services! To use AAS' free assistance, you must make an appointment.

To schedule an appointment, call **(313) 556-1920** or email **info@accountingaidociety.org**. When scheduling an appointment, try to verify that you have all of your 2019 year-end documents and ask which ones you will need to bring for your appointment.

The Status Quo Has Not Given Up, continued from page 1

Is the current wave of criminal justice reforms intended to challenge the state's disproportionate balance of power to grant or deny reforms, or are reforms to give a complex, or simply new, set of bureaucratic, political, and economic procedures to move from a "tough on crime" system to a so-called "smart on crime" one, where very little changes? I believe it is the latter.

America has developed a criminal justice system that has encouraged mass incarceration regardless of actual crime rates, more or less interrelated with the political assault on people's rights to health, education, work, healthy environment democratic process, etc. Mass incarceration's raw material is people of color, the poor, women (the fastest growing population of prisoners), the homeless, mentally ill, illiterate, drug and alcohol dependents, and workers that are on the fringes or left out of the economy altogether. Recent reforms are a political project that preserves this status quo, albeit on somewhat altered terms.

After over five decades of mass incarceration, the current wave of criminal justice reforms are part of the recalibrating of the wider system of social control in order to implement more sophisticated surveillance, policing, detention, imprisonment, and parole for future production structures, class relations, and a new round of political assault on people's rights.

According to The Sentencing Project, criminal justice reforms have resulted in over 39 states achieving declines from their peak prison populations since 2009. But contradictory and ambiguous outcomes have been produced depending on the jurisdiction and policy changes. For example, here in Michigan the prison population has declined from around 53,000 to 38,000 prisoners over recent years. This number does not include the thousands of Michiganders who are confined in county jails or to their homes via e-carceration. The decline in Michigan's prison population attributed to criminal justice reforms is rather misleading.

Given the continued motivations for imprisonment, there is no doubt that states will manage to cage record numbers of people just as, if not more, effectively under the current wave of reforms as under the prior practices. When the public thinks something has changed when it really hasn't, the ill effects are easier to hide.

I do not see things getting better if we can just win one reform or another. The fundamental criminal justice problem is not militarization of the police, prosecutorial misconduct, or even mass incarceration. All these problems surely need solving,

but the fundamental issue is that, little by little, the power of the state through the prosecution, has forced families and communities to give up their share of taking care of themselves.

Transformative currents have stirred. We are in this radical period in American history where people are beginning to think more for themselves and questioning the system more. Questioning not only criminal justice reforms, but conventional frameworks, specifically the role reforms play in working for political change.

So, what are some of the lessons from reform that I think can be useful? These reforms should create space to imagine greater gains if we see them as a means, not an end. While we struggle for reforms to exact as much immediate relief as possible, for abolitionist thought to develop and find as broad an audience as possible, we must grapple at the same time with the underlying structural shortcomings of the criminal justice system and its relationship to other injustices.

The status quo has not given up. Every time we advance, there will be counterforces attempting to push us backwards, or turn accomplishments into hollow victories, e.g.: people of color are still oppressed, women are still treated as second-class citizens, immigrants are still openly under attack, and prisons remain garbage cans for human beings.

We are too closely intertwined, geographically, politically, and economically, for the social problem of one not to affect the other. We must use any and everything learned in the struggle to defend basic human, civil, political and environmental dignity until power is no longer disproportionately concentrated in the state and its agents.

FOLLOW US

@SADOREENTRY



CONTACT US

Email: reentry@sado.org

Phone: 313.256.9833



JUST MERCY SCREENING & PANEL BY JOSE BURGOS

On February 19, 2020 the Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth, in collaboration with Safe and Just Michigan sponsored a screening of the movie Just Mercy. The movie is based on the life story of Attorney Bryan Stevenson, founder of the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI). Mr. Stevenson has represented and won the release of innocent men who have sat on death row for decades. He also argued and won cases in front of the United States Supreme Court, which earned the release of men and women who were sentenced to die in prison for crimes they were convicted of committing as children.



What made this movie screening so special was the fact that it was attended by some of the very same formerly incarcerated juvenile lifers for whom Mr. Stevenson fought so hard. After the movie, SADO's Reentry Specialist Jose Burgos joined Troy Rienstra from Safe & Just Michigan and Karen McDonald, a candidate for Oakland County Prosecutor's office for a brief discussion about the movie and the criminal justice system.

DID YOU SEE THE FILM OR READ THE BOOK THAT IT'S BASED ON? WRITE AND TELL US WHAT YOU THOUGHT.

STATE APPELLATE DEFENDER OFFICE 645 GRISWOLD, SUITE 3300 DETROIT, MI 48226

OR EMAIL US AT REENTRY@SADO.ORG



TAKE ACTION TO EXPAND EXPUNGEMENT LAW

Check out this opportunity to have your say on criminal justice policy from our friends at Just Leadership USA's #WORKINGfuture campaign and the Detroit Justice Center: "In November 2019, House bill Package 4980-85 passed through the Michigan House. The bill package expands expungement (set asides) to include a wider array of misdemeanors, felonies, and traffic offense as well as makes the process automatic for certain offenses. We are waiting for a Senate hearing so that we can enact these reforms in 2020. **This is what you can do to help make that happen:**

1. Call as many of the Senators listed below as you can, particularly if you are in one of their districts
2. Ask to speak to the policy aide for the Senator. If there is no answer, leave a message and proceed with the script. If they say that person is unavailable, ask to leave a message and proceed with the script.

Senate Judiciary Committee: Pete Lucido (Republican - Macomb County), 517-373-7670; Curt VanderWall (Republican - District 35), 517-373-1725; Jim Runestad (Republic - Oakland County), 517-373-1725; Ruth Johnson (Republican - Oakland & Genessee County), 617-373-1636; Tom Barrett (Republican - Ingham County), 517-373-3447; Stephanie Chang (Democrat-Detroit), 517-373-7346; Jeff Irwin (Democrat - Ann Arbor & Ypsilanti), 517-373-2406)

Call Script Text: "Hi, my name is [Your Name] and I am a Michigander from [Your city or county]. I would like to talk to Senator [Senator's name] policy aide regarding expungement legislation.

I believe that a conviction should never be a life sentence. Too many Michiganders are forced to encounter a lifetime of barriers long after completing their sentence.

We urge you and your colleagues to pass House Bill Package 4980-85 with no further carve-outs and to expand what is eligible for automatic set aside. Our community's economic security and safety depends on faire chances and a Clean Slate. Thank you for your consideration."

For more information, visit jlsa.org/campaign/workingfuture/, scroll to "Resources" and click "#WORKINGfuture Michigan"

CITIZEN SPOTLIGHT

TIMOTHY CLARK

HOMETOWN:
PONTIAC,
"YAK TOWN"

HOBBIES AND INTERESTS

I have many hobbies. Working out, working on cars, gardening, staying busy, drawing and painting, and hanging out with friends, family, and my lady.



SUCCESSSES AFTER INCARCERATION

Getting to know everybody like my great grandkids and old friends who are supportive and positive in my life. I am still running into different people and it's great to get with old friends who are positive and to reconnect with family.

STRUGGLES AFTER INCARCERATION

Trying to fully adjust after so long. There are a lot of things you perceive to be a certain way, but you have to stop and figure it out because it's not the same way as it was. Such as running into people in the community you have been knowing all your life and you can't recognize them. There are situations that can be a "blast from the past." For example, my friend pulled out a picture and I was in it and I couldn't even recognize myself from that early on (7th grade). Also, there are little things, like not being familiar with technology or using a phone to take pictures. Sometimes I feel like I am caught up in the moment, when everything around me is at a fast pace.

MESSAGE TO THE COMMUNITY

Once you come to focus and you have a vague idea what your purpose is in life, every day is a lesson and everyday there is something to learn. Take it a step at a time and think before you take action. The best advice I can give is praise god every day you wake up and open your eyes because there is always something for you. Pay attention because blessings come in all forms and fashions.



MEET THE TEAM



CARLEE GIORDANO

University of Michigan Social Work Student
Graduating December 2020

HOMETOWN: ALPENA, MI

HOBBIES AND INTERESTS

Dance teacher for 7 years, theatre, hiking, and reading biographies and mysteries.

MESSAGE TO THE COMMUNITY

I hope to help Project Reentry holistically assist clients and the community. I am particularly interested in finding ways to broaden the opportunities and capacity for peer support and interpersonal development with our clients and staff.

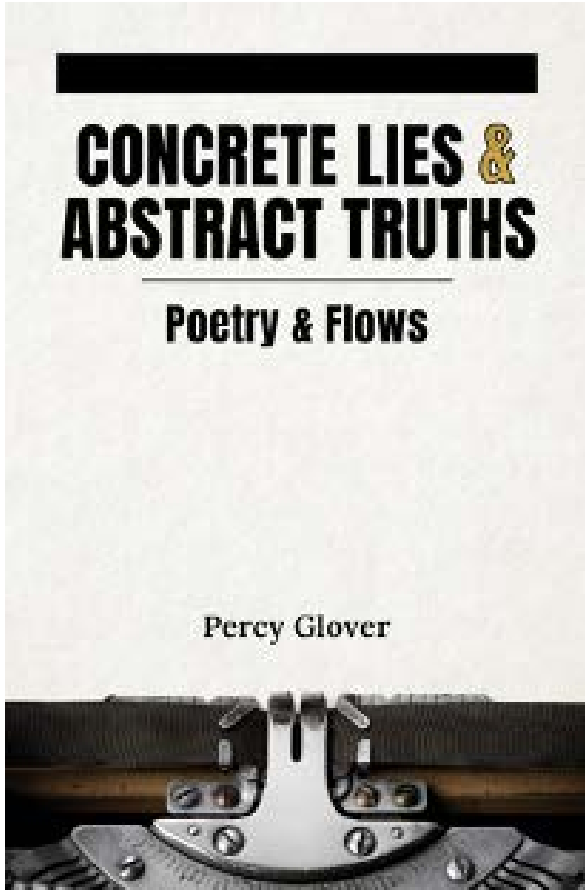
READ



WATCH



LISTEN

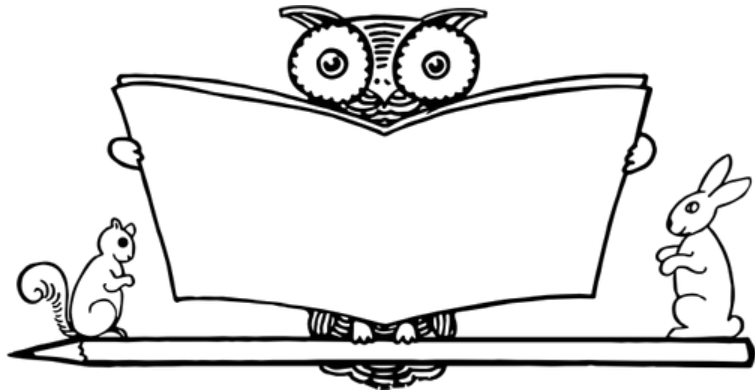


READ

SADO's Reentry Specialist, Percy Glover just published his first book, **Concrete Lies & Abstract Truths**. Described as poetic self-help with a therapeutic design, Concrete Lies and Abstract Truths is a collection of writings that inspire, motivate, and provoke thought. Crafted from a lens of Glover's direct and indirect experiences, the collection provides every reader a journey that is educational and challenging. With every word, a new door opens.

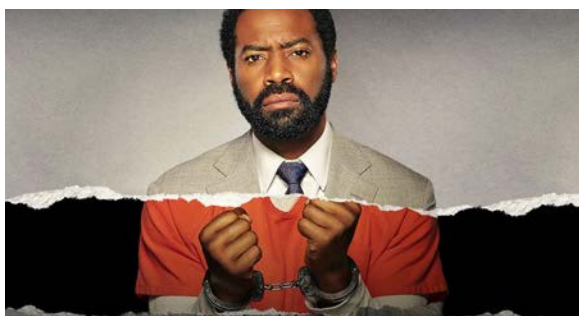
Order the book now at:

<http://nationalworldwidesyndication.org/shop>



WATCH

Check out a new series produced by rapper 50 Cent called **For Life**. It's about a Black male who was sentenced to life in prison for a crime he did not commit. While serving time he started reading literature about law, he then became a lawyer fighting for the rights of other inmates. He was able to practice law while in prison. It airs on ABC every Tuesday at 10 pm Eastern



LISTEN



Raise the Age is a new policy that will take effect in Michigan later this year, and it will end the practice of treating 17-year-olds as adults in Michigan criminal courts. Want to know more about this policy and why it matters? Check out this **podcast from the Campaign for Youth Justice** featuring Jason Smith of the Michigan Center for Youth Justice.



MICHIGAN LIBERATION CANVASSER

\$16/hour

Contact Kimberly: kim@miliberation.org

Make sure to register for our online canvassing training at least one week before the March 3 event. After attending the training session, you will be contacted with the addresses of the canvassing locations in your selected city.

Check out our website for more information:

<https://www.mprca.info/>

CAREERS & OPPORTUNITIES

COMERICA PARK - COOKS WANTED

At Comerica Park, we provide food and beverage concessions, casual dining, luxury suites catering, and retail for our partner, the MLB's Detroit Tigers.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Pleasant and friendly; enjoys working with people; 18 years old or over
- Able to work seven hours in a fast-paced industry.
- Understanding and able to perform basic cook level or higher soup, sauce production and protein fabrication.
- Capable of following job procedures and supervisor's instructions.
- Demonstrates the ability and desire to take initiative; capable of formulating and intelligent and informed decision.
- Able to report to work at assigned time.

Seeking interested candidates 3-5years experience in a high-volume fast pace environment. Responsibilities to include but not limited to: Hot/Cold Production Prep.

Pay Rate: \$12 - \$16 Based on Experience

After submitting your application, you will receive a text and email invitation within 24 hours to begin our pre-screening and on-demand text interview process. Tell us about yourself, answer a few questions and quickly qualify for the position on your own time, all from the convenience of your mobile device!

Apply at:

https://culinaryagents.com/users/sign_up?intent=job_apply&job_id=198967

NEIGHBORHOOD DEFENDER SERVICE RECEPTIONIST

The Receptionist is an integral part of the defense team who demonstrates a commitment to serving marginalized persons and communities. As a member of the inaugural staff member at the organization, the Receptionist will help shape our present and future—contributing to a collaborative environment and culture of excellence in alignment with our values. At NDS Detroit, how we represent our clients is as important as individual case outcomes and our ideal Receptionist approaches the cultivation of a positive office culture and the representation of indigent clients with equal rigor and commitment.

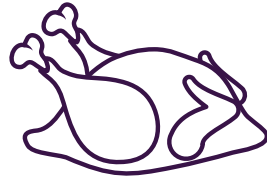
The ideal candidate will bring:

- A demonstrated commitment to criminal justice, indigent defense, racial equity and social justice issues and the Wayne County communities.
- Demonstrated customer service experience in managing a high volume of office visitors and continuous external and internal incoming calls.
- Doggedness and resilience combined with people and situation smarts.
- A deep commitment to punctuality and consistency.
- An ability to work with minimal supervision.
- Knowledge of word processing systems and basic computer usage in a network environment.
- An ability to quickly build relationships across varying identities, income levels, races and ethnicities.
- A high level of organizational and administrative skills to multi-task in a very fast-paced environment.
- Clear and effective communication skills, both orally and in writing.
- Bilingual (Spanish or Arabic) individuals are encouraged to apply.

Compensation is commensurate with experience. Full medical and dental benefits, as well as other benefits, are provided. Interested applicants should email a cover letter, resume, and writing sample to DetroitHiring@ndsdetroit.org with the subject line, "Detroit Receptionist." Please send your application as one document, preferably PDF. For more information about NDS, please visit our website at <http://www.ndsdetroit.org>.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

BAKED CHICKEN WITH BRUSSELS SPROUTS AND SWEET POTATO



INGREDIENTS

- olive oil spray
- 16 ounces Brussels sprouts, halved
- 2 medium sweet potatoes (8 oz each), peeled and diced 3/4-inch
- 4 large chicken thighs, on the bone, with skin (7 ounces each)
- 1 3/4 tsp salt
- fresh black pepper, to taste
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoon dried rosemary

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Spray an oval baking dish with oil.
2. Place the sweet potatoes on one side and the Brussels sprouts on the other. Spritz or toss the vegetables with olive oil and season with 3/4 teaspoon salt, black pepper to taste.
3. Season both sides of the chicken with 1 teaspoon salt, garlic powder and rosemary. Place chicken thighs on top of the vegetables, skin side down.
4. Bake 30 minutes, set the chicken aside and stir the vegetables.
5. Place the chicken back in the dish skin side up and cook until the chicken skin is browned and the vegetables are roasted and tender, about 30 to 35 minutes more. Optional, broil 2 to 3 minutes for crisper skin.

APP OF THE MONTH

Mint is the free money manager and financial tracker app that does it all. It brings together your bank accounts, credit cards, bills and investments so you know where you stand financially. See what you're spending, where you can save money, and track your bills in Mint Connect to your bank, credit card, and other accounts to help track incoming and outgoing money. Search "Mint" in the app store on your phone to download and get started.

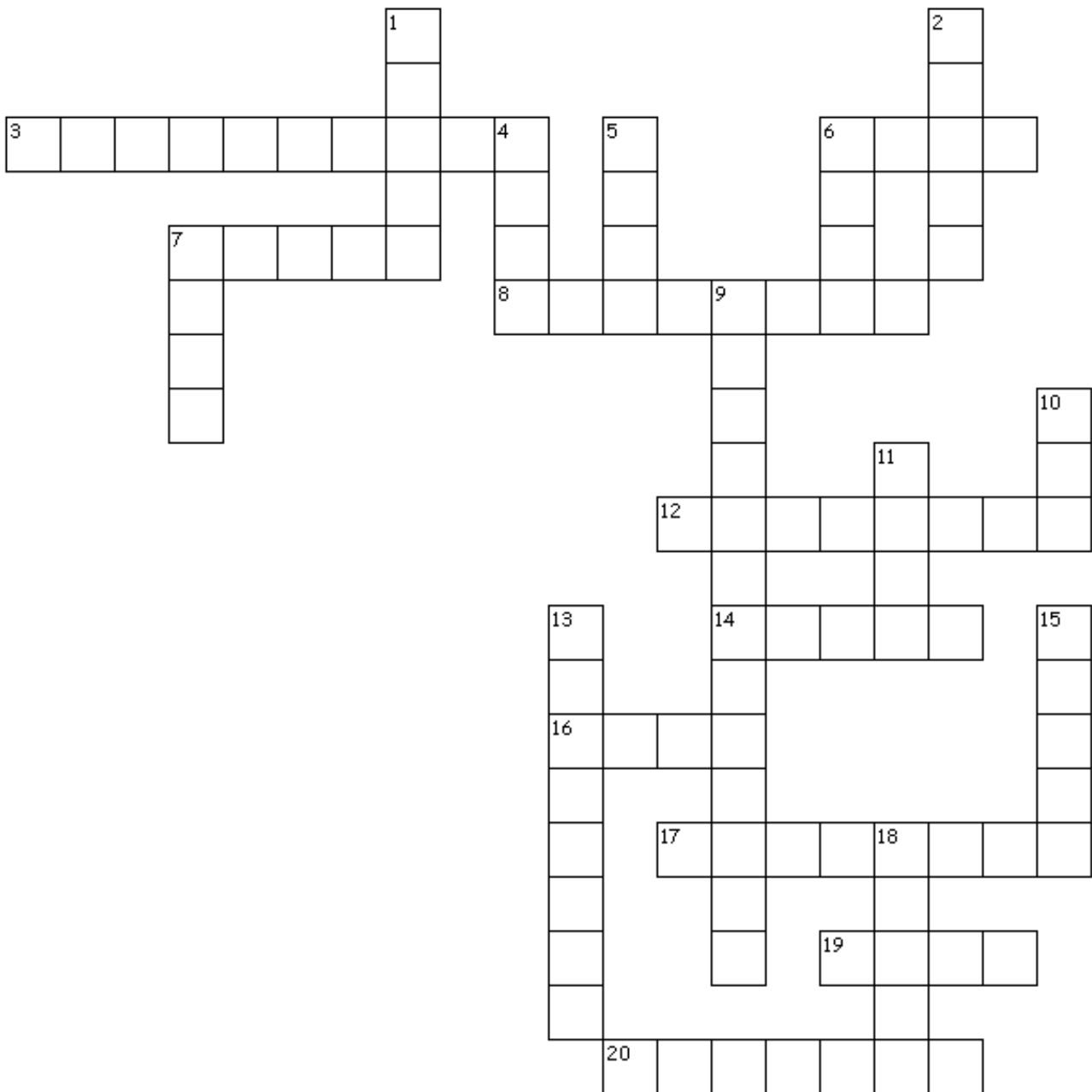


FEBRUARY WORKSHOP RECAP

Thanks to everyone who made it our February workshop. In celebration of Black History Month, we hosted a panel on "Entrepreneurship 101" during which business owners shared their journeys to get where they are today. Many thanks to our panelists, Eric Williams of the Detroit Justice Center, Roby Davis of Rosedale Vision, Jose Rivera of Detroit Clothing Line, Real Estate professional Osbie Jackson, and Vern Fuller MDOC Liaison for Suburban Truck Driving School. Shout out to A'Narris Monger, SADO's Americorps VISTA team member, for organizing. Come out this month for our next workshop on taxes, Sunday March 29 2-4 p.m. at Detroit Public Library 5201 Woodward Ave Detroit MI 48202.



FINISH THE LYRIC CROSSWORD



Across

3. "Don't go chasing _"
6. "_ Don't Lie"
7. "If you don't know, know you know"
8. "_ pushing down of you, pressing down on me"
12. "_ Criminal"
14. "Eye of the _"
16. "_ a good job in the city"
17. "I wanna dance with _"
19. "Sittin' on the _ of the bay"
20. "Sunday morning rain is _"

Down

1. "Good _ Miss Molly"
2. "Don't worry, be _"
4. "Don't _ Believing"
5. "I love rock 'n' roll so put another _ in the jukebox baby"
6. "I Am Not My _"
7. "Hey _, don't be afraid"
9. "Very _, writing on the wall"
10. "Some people want it _"
11. "Set _ to the Rain"
13. "Shake it like a _ picture"
15. "This is the Casper Slide part 2! It's time to get _"