

WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP SAVE LIVES



Providing programs, resources and opportunities developed to improve both present day and future realities for youth living in underserved communities.



[www.SaveOurStreets.us](http://www.SaveOurStreets.us)

- RESOURCES
- JOB TRAINING
- MENTORSHIP
- SUPPORT
- OPPORTUNITES



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SAVE OUR STREETS NFP  
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Executive Director  
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## THE REALITY CHECK

Positioned along Lake Michigan, Chicago is an international hub for finance, commerce, industry, technology, telecommunications, and transportation. But the city has a darker side as well. In its marginalized neighborhoods, the streets teem with crime and violence, resulting in 456 homicides and 2,619 people shot in 2014. More recent statistics show that Chicago was responsible for nearly half of 2016's increase in homicides in the United States. Over 30% of Chicago's students never finish high school; unemployment has climbed to over 7%; and schools and social service agencies struggle to stay open. Unfortunately, the disenfranchised youth who live in these neighborhoods have little incentive to break this bleak cycle.

On October 20, 2014, an unarmed teenager named LaQuan McDonald was shot multiple times by a police officer at close range, drawing national attention to his unnecessary death. Raised in the on the Westside of Chicago, LaQuan struggled with learning disabilities and complex mental health issues, and like most children living in communities without resources or proper guidance, he was heavily influenced by the drugs and gangs that made up the brutal landscape of his West Side neighborhood. If he had been provided with a safe place to go – a place that offered the right resources, opportunities and intervention – his life may have had a far different ending.

# OUR RESPONSE

While others debated – and still debate – the circumstances that led up to LaQuan’s death, we decided to take positive action by forming Save Our Streets (SOS), a nonprofit organization dedicated to saving Chicago youth who by all accounts are living lives of desperation. We recognize that our youth are the real key to Chicago’s social and economic progress moving forward; that resources matter; that opportunities matter; and that engaging in healthy activities in safe spaces can change the trajectory of an at-risk teen’s life.

To that end, we are building the LaQuan McDonald’s Youth Empowerment Center – a safe, centrally located facility where teens like LaQuan can find refuge from the dangers and harm that plague their communities, where they can take advantage of our supportive services, our caring mentorship, our skills training that focuses on STEM-based programs, and our work-development opportunities designed to prepare them to be positive, productive participants and leaders in their communities.

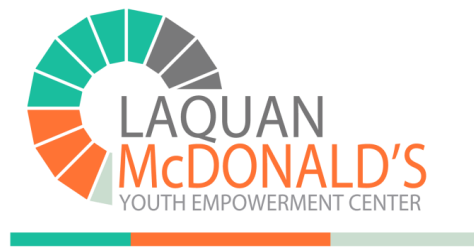
The LaQuan McDonald’s Youth Empowerment Center will be the first multi-level incubator, accelerator, co-working hub dedicated to at-risk youth so that they can qualify for careers of the future that include digital technology, multimedia, and the film and music industries. These are industries that do not require higher education, but do require the formal training programs that our Center will offer. Our Digital Technology, Entertainment and Multimedia Training Hub will allow disadvantaged young people, community groups and residents to learn and apply 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and create new forms of interaction, expression, communication, and entertainment in a digital, musical and video format within the safety of our Center.

## SAVE OUR STREETS NFP

Save Our Streets is a 501c3 registered nonprofit organization committed to implementing strategies and delivering programs for improvement in health, educational attainment, human welfare, and opportunities for at-risk youth and their families. Our mission is to provide positive programs, resources and opportunities developed to improve both present day and future realities in underserved communities so that their residents will be able to participate in civic, social, and economic life and contribute to the positive development of their families and communities.







## OUR VISION

We envision that there will be a time when the term 'disenfranchised' will no longer apply to any of our city's youth; that the cycle of poverty, crime and incarceration will be broken; that Chicago will be known for its resilience, its optimism and its bright young workforce that is trained to take on the new and challenging roles shaping our City's economic future. Just imagine – neighborhoods once known for poverty, crime and violence could instead generate a new generation of engineers, entrepreneurs, teachers, designers and dreamers!

*Our vision has led us to move aggressively on the following:*  
Implement strategies to decrease youth violence and mass incarceration;

1. Deliver programs to improve health;
2. Increase educational attainment;
3. Focus on human welfare and socialization;
4. Provide employment opportunities for at-risk youth; and
5. Develop infrastructure to strengthen the family.



# ***The Center will be a place where Chicago youth will:***

Feel physically and emotionally safe from danger;

Become comfortable trying new activities;

Socialize with their peers;

Pursue their interests;

Develop digital media skills;

Gain technology literacy;

Improve communication, creativity, collaboration,  
and critical thinking;

Learn entrepreneurship;

Build confidence;

Develop a sense of self-worth;

Teach others; and

Become pioneers in the entertainment industry.



Video Production, Broadcast and Editing (Virtual News Sets)

## THE FACILITY

The LaQuan McDonald's Empowerment Center will be a safe place where our neighborhoods' at-risk youth can explore, express, and create. It's activities and programs will be guided by its core philosophy that youth are best engaged when they're following their passions, collaborating with others, and becoming 'makers' and 'doers,' rather than watching life's out-of-reach opportunities pass them by. Because film and music are in alignment with youth's interests, the technologies involved in these industries inspire positive engagement. Our facility and staff will provide opportunities to create and edit media projects that involve, but are not limited to, video, audio, music, photography, digitization and illustration.

Computers will be available for youth to work on digital media projects as well as school assignments. They will also have access to our computer lab for general computing activities, such as word processing, web browsing, email, social networking and gaming. In addition, we will offer fully-equipped group collaboration rooms for the purpose of hosting or participating in video conferences, virtual meetings/trainings, digital editing, or design project development. Comprehensive online training, eBook, and book resources will also be available. Our staff will be accessible during all hours of operation, offering basic assistance as well as one-on-one instruction to novice users.

Training sessions will include the following:

- **Digital Media and Technology;**
- **Sound and Film Recording;**
- **Music Production;**
- **Video Editing and Production;**
- **Radio and TV Broadcasting;**
- **Basic and Advanced Computer skills;**
- **Graphic Design and Printing;**
- **Sound Stage and Lighting.**

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

## Assumptions & Projections:

1. The initial investment to purchase the property for our facility will cost \$65,000. We anticipate that it will cost approximately \$4,493,800 to fully own and renovate the center for its intended use.
2. Start-up costs will be covered by strategic partnerships, sponsorships, fundraising activities, and grants – with strategic partnership accounting for 75% of the total costs, fundraisers 10%, and grants 15%.

## SUSTAINABILITY:

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SOS is committed to creating a financially sustainable Center that will play an integral role in our community for years to come. We anticipate that there will always be a need for space where youth can socialize and relax; that community organizations will continue to have a need for office and recreation spaces; that affordable entertainment and recreation opportunities will continue to be important; and that the need for high-quality and inexpensive graphic design and printing will continue to rise.

We have put in place a comprehensive plan for financial success:

1. The center will use solar power to keep recurring energy costs manageable.
2. While the after-school programs will be free for students, we will require a modest membership fee for the use of other components of the center such as recording studios, green screens production room, etc.
3. We will generate additional revenue by renting shared office space for other nonprofit organizations, special events hosting, and recreational activities.
4. Additional revenue will come from the on-campus custom print shop.
5. Although we will apply for grants to supplement our programs, our organization will not solely rely on them. We are committed to organizing monthly fundraising projects and events to off-set the cost of our in-house programs and monthly activities.

# IMPLEMENTATION PHASES:

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Opening a facility of this size will be a challenging undertaking. We plan to implement it in five (5) phases. These five phases will allow for the youth center staff to expand slowly over time. This will keep initial costs down and allows for ample leadership oversight. The five-phase approach also allows us to initiate operations as soon as possible and gives SOS staff time to pilot a variety of approaches and work out any logistical problems before moving on to full-scale operation.

## ***Five Phases:***

Phase 1 – Purchase of property

Phase 2 – Renovation of main sections for training

Phase 3 – Construction of Print Shop, Computer Lab, Classrooms and Shared Office Space

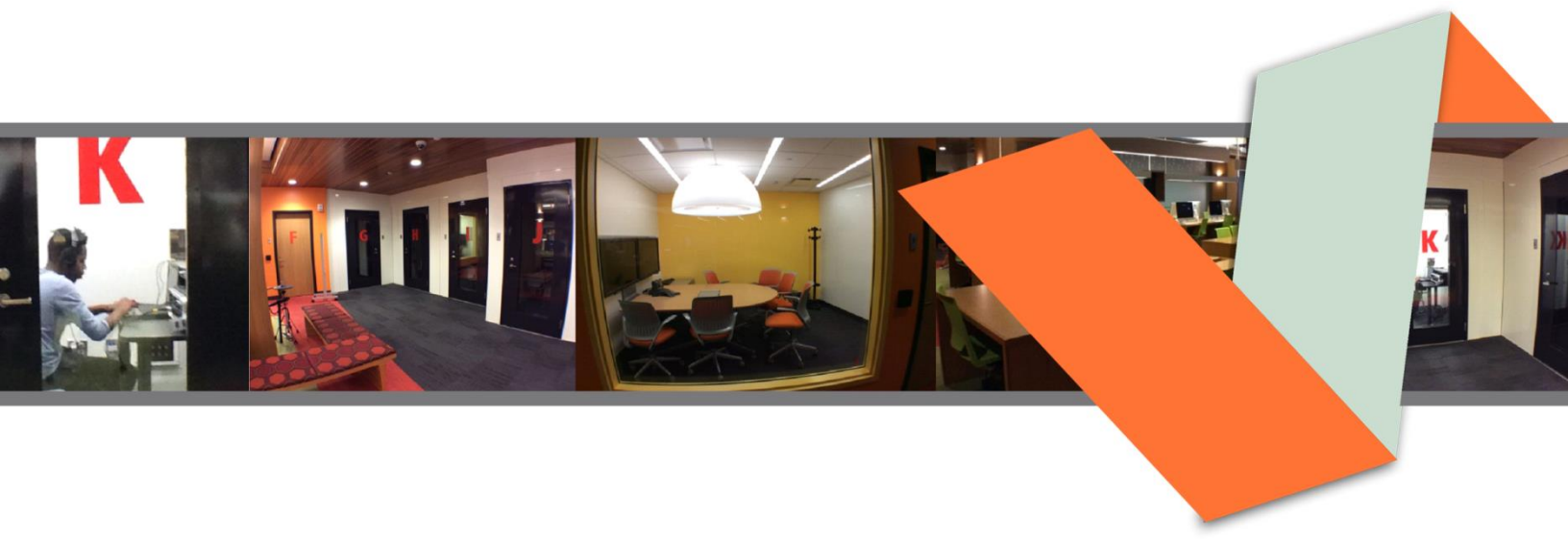
Phase 4 – Construction of Recording and Video Editing Booths, News Room and Tech Room

Phase 5 – Completion of all five floors, equipment requisition, and new staff orientation

# BREAK EVEN ANALYSIS:

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Although we expect staffing costs to consume a significant portion of our financial resources, with the backup help of trained volunteers, facility rentals, weekend events, sponsorships, and fundraisers, SOS expects that the LaQuan McDonald's Empowerment Center will break even and become fully sustainable within three (3) years.







### *Maurice Gunn / President, Board of Directors*

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Maurice Gunn has 15 years of experience in business management, marketing, promotions and graphic design. He is an entrepreneur, business owner and former producer of Chicago Only Radio. In those roles, he has demonstrated his ability to facilitate revenue growth, increase profit and gain market share in a competitive industry. As a strategic thinker, competent mediator and persuasive communicator, he engages well with stakeholders, customers and team members. Best known as a man with integrity and commitment, he is positioned to take Save Our Streets to the highest level of success.



### *Vincen Smith / Vice President, Board of Directors*

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Vincen is real estate developer and a Senior Engineer at Commonwealth Edison Company (ComEd), a subsidiary of Exelon Corporation, the nation's leading competitive energy supplier. He has 16 years of experience in the field and holds a Bachelor's of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is President of the Proviso Community Coalition, an active mentor of community youth, and a volunteer for the African American Business and Community Development initiative, the Greater Chicago Food Depository, and the Exelon community programs.



### *Keeana Barber / Treasurer, Board of Directors*

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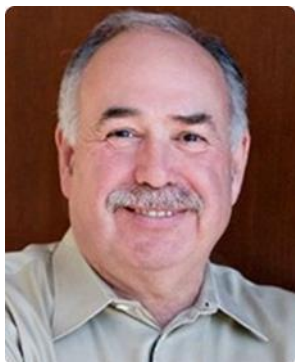
A graduate of Northwestern University, Keeana has over 10 years of marketing experience and is CEO and Founder of WDB Marketing, a company specializing in graphic design, brand management, marketing solutions, and full-service printing. Her company has provided services for over 2,000 businesses and entrepreneurs in industries such as retail, professional services and not-for-profit organizations throughout the Chicago area. Her company produces all of its print services in-house, making it the first African American-owned full-service printing manufacturing in the South Suburbs.



### *Ji Ou / Secretary, Board of Directors*

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Ji is a Data Analyst at Deloitte Digital PRSPX. She oversees the customer relationship management (CRM) database and works to improve file sharing and collaboration between sales teams as well as developing and creating reports to improve efficiency in business operations. Ji previously worked for Damco, where she gained experience in supply chain management and ensuring the data integrity of systems. Ji holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Financial Mathematics and Actuarial Science Field of Study Mathematics at the Ohio State University



## Phil Ellett

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Phil has more than 40 years of experience in high-tech businesses based in both North America and Europe and has held positions in sales, marketing and executive management. His experience as a CEO and Board Member (of both private and public companies) has equipped him with the insight to help companies maximize shareholder value. His professional specialties include corporate restructuring, strategy design and implementation, and fund arising. During his career, Phil worked with executives and Board Members to develop business plans; implement merger and acquisition strategies; design sales channel structure; and secure financial investments.



## Chinmayi Sheshadri

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Chinmayi is a Financial Analysis. Her professional experience includes working at American Express in the Operational Risk Management (ORM) Center of Excellence, a department that complies with the company's enterprise-wide Operational Risk Policy and the regulatory requirements of US Sarbanes-Oxley Act (SOX), thereby supporting the Financial Reporting risk assessment procedures. She helped maintain business level procedural documents to support the implementation of the operational risk framework and analyzed operational risk events.



## Sadhana Sridhar

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Sadhana is a Network Support Engineer at Amazon. She is a highly self-motivated graduate student from the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department of the University of Illinois at Chicago. Sadhana holds a Bachelor of Engineering degree in Electrical, Electronics and Communication Engineering and serves as a Computer Science Research Assistant at the University. She is a CCNA and a Red Hat Certified Administrator and not only has extensive knowledge within the discipline of Computer Science, but also has solid experience in its practical application.



## Aysha Kaushik

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Aysha is an internationally-experienced finance professional with progressive roles in financial planning and analysis and controllership in teams across world-class organizations. She holds a Master's Degree in Finance and has a successful track record in business partnerships, establishing internal controls and driving business efficiencies. She is experienced in long-range and short-term planning, forecasting, monthly close activities, ad-hoc analysis and financial modeling to provide actionable impactful insights.



## Elizabeth Mosley, Ed.M.

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Elizabeth is a development and strategic planning consultant and an educational policy equity advocate. She holds a degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Sacramento, California Area. Elizabeth has a wealth of experience that includes, but is not limited to, academic and technical writing and editing, leadership, mediation, project coordination, grant management, fundraising, and staff supervision. She is outcomes-driven and committed to inclusion and is committed to helping start-ups, individuals; groups and organizations bring their goals to reality.

## Jinya Chen

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Jinya is a Financial Analyst at The Coca-Cola Company. She holds a Master's Degree in Accounting from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. As a Financial Analyst she plays a role in financial planning, analysis and projections. She helps forecast future revenues and expenditures to establish cost structures and determine capital budgeting for projects – thus driving process and policy improvements. She is a valuable asset to SOS as we move forward with capital and operating expenditures.



## Tess Williams

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Tess is a consultant with Compris, a marketing consultant company based in Dallas and serving, businesses in diverse industries that includes technology, oil and gas, energy, healthcare, retail and academia. Core services include corporate communications; branding, messaging & positioning; content development & distribution; lead & demand generation; digital & social media management; and marketing asset development. Tess has almost 17 years of experience in business development and brings her professional knowledge to SOS.





## **SAVE OUR STREETS NFP**

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