

**S H I B O ◀ ◻**

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**2 ◻ D E I T I O N ◻**

# SHIBOKA

*Front and Back Cover Art: "The Weight on our Shoulders" Maira Magwene Muniz*

*Publisher: Anjanette Miller/Echo*

*EIC of Magazine: Courtney Napier/Black Oak Society*

*Managing Editors: Ihsan Mohammed & Nakia McNeil*

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*[echo-nc.org/shiboka](http://echo-nc.org/shiboka)*

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2<sup>ND</sup> EDITION

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# PUBLISHER'S NOTE



## Anjanette Miller

What a year it's been since our last publication! Last year (Shiboka's first!) we were part of a startup nonprofit, Audacity Labs. In late 2022, Audacity Labs merged with Helius Foundation to become Echo in hopes to be more efficient, more flexible and have a broader reach in the community. Our youth program is now EchoReverb and we are seeing the ripple effects in the community already. We also reached out for the first time to the entrepreneurial community to sell advertising. Please help us thank our sponsors who placed ads by visiting their establishments or following them on social media. I am thrilled that Shiboka had mostly new members this year -

new writers and artists from all over Durham. Courtney and I also gave up most of the control of content and layout to our amazing student editors: Nakia McNeil and Ihsan Mohammed. Both Nakia and Ihsan worked on the first edition of Shiboka and ran our Instagram account. We are so proud of both of these amazing, kind and fierce young women.

This edition's theme is wellness. When the team first met and spent time just talking about their interests and passions, concerns and needs, wellness was a common theme. It is no surprise that the past few years have been difficult, and the teens are well aware of the burdens and consequences, and they had a lot they wanted to say. You will see and read some of their stories here. I'm also completely inspired by Maira's cover art. The progression from the stark black and white on the front cover to a more hopeful, colorful back cover captures the hopeful future the youth would like to create.

Lastly, we have found a new home downtown at ReCity. Here we will have a space designed for teens to hang out and work on any entrepreneurial idea. EchoReverb is committed to helping youth in Durham find ways to explore their dreams and passions and build a community where they have a sense of ownership.

In community,

*Anjanette*

Anjanette Miller  
Co-founder, Echo





# PUBLISHER'S NOTE



## Courtney Napier

Collaborating with Echo NC and the second Shiboka Magazine cohort has been nothing short of inspirational. Anjanette is a woman full of passion, vision, and perseverance – a combination that ensured our success from the very beginning. Mina, Maira, Pilar, Rafiah, Joshuana, Elias, Nakia, and Ihsan are artists to their very core, yet they are also incredible leaders, collaborators, active listeners, and detail-oriented creators. Their individual talents and teamwork resulted in the most beautiful and provocative issue of Shiboka Magazine yet. These students – our future – cares deeply about each other and responsibility we have to see and address the biggest challenges facing their generation. Young people

are in a very real mental health crisis. A combination of copious gun violence, predatory social media experiences, extremist and xenophobic governments, the proliferation of drugs, the climate crisis, and the exponential pressure of academic and economic achievement laid upon them was become a deadly cocktail of trauma and pain for too many. This year's cohort decided to tackle these truths head-on, in ways that their the adults that surround them have been too afraid or too ignorant to imagine. Their pieces reveal a depth of pain that is only, thankfully, rivaled by their tenacious creativity to make their world better for all of us. As you read Shiboka Magazine Vol. 2, I challenge you to let their strength fill you, then find a community cause that will bring us closer to the life they – and all of us – deserve.

In truth and in power,

Courtney Napier  
EIC of Shiboka Magazine  
Founder of Black Oak Society  
Publisher and EIC of BOS Magazine



# EDITORS' NOTE



## Ihsan Mohammed

I love empowering youth and offering them the tools to make their voice heard. I was offered the opportunity to be a part of Shiboka Youth Magazine 1st Edition during my senior year of high school. Initially, I took on this opportunity to make the voice of immigrant-owned businesses in Durham heard. As a result, with the help of mentors, I wrote the pieces *They Stole Our Jobs*, *Success In Business*, and *When The Sunrises*. Shibkoa Magazine fostered a space for me and other youth to explore our interests while having all the support we need to make our voices heard. This year as I embarked on a new academic journey at Meredith College, majoring in Interior Design, I was also excited to become part of the 2nd Edition's

Editing and Coordinating team. Getting to know the youth and offering them a safe space to be themselves and advocate for what concerns them most has been a delight. As a result of this experience, I have learned that sometimes, the youth need space to express their concerns and someone to actively listen to them without judgment. And Shiboka Magazine happens to be that place.



## Nakia McNeil

I've been working with Echo for two years now. It has been an amazing, enriching experience for me. The first edition of Shiboka was about minority owned businesses. I was a writer and created an art piece. In helping to create the first edition, I learned a lot about the interviewing and editing process. I've learned even more this year about the importance of independent magazines for communities, and I was so thrilled that Courtney and Anjanette reached out to me for help with the second edition for the youth of Durham. As a Student Editor for Shiboka, I've been able to share some of the knowledge I gained during my first experience here and it has been hugely fulfilling. It's been so exciting to see what I and my fellow students can create when we really care about a cause. I can't wait to see what we do next.





# WE WANT TO WORK WITH YOU(TH)!

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## WAYS WE CAN COLLAB

- ★ Create content together (social media, anyone?)
- ★ Host events for youth and other mentoring programs
- ★ Conduct community research to get youth input for projects
- ★ Advocate at the local and state levels for public awareness and funding to support youth programs



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# WE ARE NOT LAZY WE ARE NOT LAZY WE ARE NOT LAZY WE ARE NOT LAZY WE ARE NOT LAZY

*by Pilar Hurtado*

## **Am I The Only One?**

Imagine being in your room, and you are doing homework packets due today. The homework packet is due at 11:59 pm, and you realize it is already 6:10 pm, so you decide to take a small nap after working hard to complete that huge packet on time. Suddenly your mom enters your room and notices you taking a nap. While she sees you taking a nap, she yells at you and says, "Get up! You are supposed to do schoolwork instead of being lazy all day and taking a nap."

Many young people in Durham, specifically middle and high schoolers, experience issues like this at home. Many adults from previous generations assume that students struggle in school (or refuse to attend) because they are "lazy," blaming students for their difficulties instead of the school system. This assumption is invalid because it dismisses the voices and opinions of the students regarding their educational experience.

## **I Wish I Had More Support**

To remedy the missing voice of students when discussing education, I surveyed Durham County Public Schools students and their caregivers, teachers, and school administrators. According to the survey,

one problem that keeps students unmotivated is the lack of support schools offer. One high school student stated they are "very grateful for the opportunities" their school provides. Still, they wish they "had more support in certain areas." This response represents one of the many reasons explaining why students are not motivated to attend school.

Another high school student also stated that the school should try to "focus more on the mental health of their students." According to the survey, students see mental health support as vital to quality education. Since most schools in Durham don't offer mental health support for all students, many young people are not receiving the quality of education they long for. Students who attend the handful of schools that do offer support do not feel there are enough offerings for access to be fair.

## **I Don't Find It A Fair System**

Even though many parents assume their struggling students are lazy, other parents oppose the label of students who do not attend school. According to the survey, a student's parent stated, "I don't find it a fair system on the classes offered."

Furthermore, DCPS's class selection system develops more stress on the student, which influences the student's mental health. From first-hand experience, school administrators manage most schedules without student input. The system's lack of transparency stresses many students as their class schedules impact other big decisions, such as work, extracurriculars, and social lives.

Overall, the notion that the education system is unfair for not allowing youth to have a voice or say has caused tension between students and the school.

### **Nobody Really Seems To Care For The Students**

Concerning injustice in the education system towards youth, another student from high school feels teachers and caregivers care more about grades than their students' well-being: "Teachers should pay more attention to how students learn instead of categorizing students because of their grades on tests or in classes. Some people are not even learning but have good grades because nobody really seems to care for the students and their learning style".

Even students making A's and B's feel the pressure to perform, affecting their learning retention ability and overall mental health.

*Still, students envision solutions to their issues. One student from Early College stated the following:*

***Many teens in Durham feel dismissed and unheard by caregivers and teachers, feeding self-doubt.***



*Pilar and Cesar Hurtado presenting their app design at Provident 1898 EchoReverb Spring Showcase*


### **More Community Events**

The many issues facing students and their experience in Durham's schools create a big question: How can we improve the educational experience for students? And what roles can the school and community play in addressing these issues? Some students from different schools already have an answer for that. One student started to host community events that were mainly focused on the educational experience of DPS students.. Another student said it would be great if the schools "provide a mental health space for young people to go."

Through surveying Durham's students, it is clear that young people have valuable insights into identifying and utilizing school resources to meet their needs. Disregarding their opinions and creativity undermines the ultimate goal of students, teachers, caregivers, and administrators: to experience and provide quality education.







"My work has one single goal: giving women the inner strength that comes with being at ease, with who they are and what they are wearing."

**Pilar Hurtado Gutierrez**

Untitled, 2023

Digital collage





# REST FOR THE WEARY

*My Experience with Durham Public High School's Wellness Wednesdays Policy*

***By Rafia Ansari***

As I sat in the front row during my Senior Awards Ceremony, I listened to the speaker recount the various events the class of 2023 had experienced. One stuck out to me. When she reached the topic of Wellness Wednesdays, a roar of applause and cheers emerged from the nearly 400 seniors of Jordan High School behind me, calling for its return. Yet again, I realized I was not the only one disappointed by the absence of Wellness Wednesdays.

On Friday, March 13, 2020, former President Donald Trump declared a national emergency in response to the Coronavirus pandemic. After COVID-19 reached North Carolina, Governor Roy Cooper announced that public schools would be temporarily closed for at least two weeks beginning on March 16 to prevent the spread of the pandemic. By March 23, all public schools in North Carolina had closed for the remainder of the school year. Schools reopened in 2021, along with a rise in youth mental health and wellness issues.

Throughout the 2020-2021 virtual school year many educational institutions introduced Wellness Wednesdays, flexible days where students and faculty could take a break for their health and well-being. On these days, teachers were prohibited from introducing new material, which provided them with time to grade and plan lessons. Students used this time to complete homework, ask their teachers questions about their lessons, or engage in wellness activities.

During virtual school, everyone was constantly encouraged by teachers and Charles E. Jordan High School's social media, a public high school in Durham, North Carolina, to take a break on Wellness Wednesdays by going outside or spending time with family and friends. Having a day off during the first year of COVID-19, when many were unsure about their future, helped relieve the stress of many.



*Charles E. Jordan High School's Black Student Union members coloring and snacking at Cultural Cafe, Nakia McNeil*

For the 2021-2022 in-person school year administrators chose to discontinue Wellness Wednesdays, and its absence was immediately felt by Durham's students and staff. During that first semester, I realized how important it is to prioritize my overall health, not only for my academic success but also for my personal well-being. Wellness Wednesdays allowed me to receive more time to exercise, gain more sleep, and meditate. As a result, I was able to focus better in class and remember what I was learning, significantly improving my grades as a result.

Soon after the school year began, students and teachers demanded that Wellness Wednesdays be brought back. Our protests were heard, and Jordan High School's administrators reintroduced our weekly respites. The school days that followed were bright. Jordan began providing students with fun events at school. Students were able to express their creativity by painting picnic tables and hosting a women's

issue project gallery. The librarians cleared out the library for the Sube Ritmo Latin dance club from North Carolina State University to come and teach students how to salsa. Counselors were always available, and therapy dogs also started to make an appearance at school. I participated in all of these events, which helped me decompress and meet new people after the pandemic.

The only controversy with Wellness Wednesday's reinstatement was that students had to attend school or they would be marked absent. This rule was set in place to ensure students were not missing school for unnecessary reasons, but also prevented many students from actually being able to relax and take care of their mental health. Students who were caught up and realized they would not be learning any new material in school still took the day off to prioritize other opportunities. My peers utilized these days to attend work, therapy, medical appointments, and more. I also prioritized this time to volunteer at Pearisontown Elementary School as a teacher assistant. In 2022-2023, Wellness Wednesdays were discontinued, which led to the cancellation of many events and a decrease in the overall health and well-being of youth. Being pushed back into full weeks of school without Wellness Wednesdays has forced me to sacrifice self-care.



*Rafia Ansari and Diana Zapote-Cruz heading to their next class, Kalinda Johnson*



## ***So, what's next?***

After 103,643 COVID-19 cases and 397 deaths in Durham, North Carolina, students are still struggling to cope with the pandemic. For the upcoming school years, I believe Durham Public Schools should bring back Wellness Wednesdays for students of all grades, K-12. This day should allow students to focus on their own needs, whether that means coming to school to work on their studies or staying home to rest and recharge. Students will be able to make the most of these days without the stress of attendance requirements.

Different ways to advocate include students reaching out to their local school board and state legislature, two locations where major decisions are made about public schools. Anyone can vote for pro-public school candidates, defenders of public education. Staying involved within your community through keeping up with current events, volunteering, and tutoring can help students stay informed about what is going on within the education system after graduating.



*Jayda Hill and Diana Zapote-Cruz conversing outside the 400 building during lunch, Kalinda Johnson*



*Caroline Robert spending time outside in her hammock between the 300 and 400 building during Wellness Wednesday in 2022, Rafia Ansari*





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Photos from left to right: Stephen Haye's sculpture "The Flying W" inside of his Durham studio (photographed by Elias Hasan); one of the sculpted figures in Haye's "Cash Crop" installation (courtesy of Stephen Haye); Inside of Haye's studio during his interview with writer, Elias Hasan. (photographed by Elias Hasan)

# EATING THE LEFTOVERS OF THE ANTEBELLUM SOUTH

**Growing up in South Carolina was like living in the dish of food that  
enslavers left behind**

*by Elias Hasan*

Until last year, I lived in South Carolina. Wherever you turn in Charleston or Greenville, big white houses are sitting atop grandiose lawns of beautifully preserved flowers. The signs announce these places as “Historical Site” or “ \*Insert Historically White Surname\*Plantation”.

As a child growing up around these spaces, I was always curious about what “Historical sites” really meant. Who lived in these homes? Why are they being taken and respected so seriously?

My white history teacher scheduled a field trip to one of South Carolina’s historic plantations. When I went home that day to ask my parents to sign my permission slip and give me the five-dollar fee, I also asked them questions about where this teacher was taking us. My parents sat me down and answered all my questions about plantations. Sitting down writing this today, I can still remember the shock I felt as they told me the truth behind the “historical sites” up and down every major street. These plantations were the homes of enslaved Black people and their slaveholders. The shock arose from realizing the physical proximity of these historic events to the room I was sitting in with my parents.

"TODAY, I WRITE IN HONOR  
OF THOSE WHO DIDN'T HAVE  
THE RESOURCES TO  
CONTROL THEIR NARRATIVE."

I also asked them questions about where this teacher was taking us. My parents sat me down and answered all my questions about plantations. Sitting down writing this today, I can still remember the shock I felt as they told me the truth behind the “historical sites” up and down every major street. These plantations were the homes of enslaved Black people and their slaveholders. The shock arose from realizing the physical proximity of these historic events to the room I was sitting in with my parents. Just up the street, my people were tortured in horrible and hate-filled ways simply based on the deep and rich darkness or lightness of our skin.

Some might argue that field trips to plantations can be useful as a purely educational experience, but I argue that these trips can also be very emotional, and even traumatic, for many Black students. Why would the most beneficial way to understand the generational trauma that slavery has brought upon our people to be to revisit those specific areas? Should schools make field trips to the site of the Wounded Knee Massacre, where hundreds of Indigenous People were killed by settlers, thinking it could be a purely educational experience and nothing more for Indigenous students? I think about it like this: The answer to understanding trauma is not always revisitation.

When researching for this article, I was lucky to be introduced to Stephen Hayes, an incredible multidisciplinary artist and professor from Durham, North Carolina. I sat down with him in his art studio with a full list of questions. I ended up with one, and the conversation flew from there.

When I met with Stephen Hayes at his studio, he promptly introduced me to a sculpture of a horse entitled “Flying W.” Stephen makes art about the Black experience through the lens of slavery, taking slavery’s leftovers that we are force-fed every day and making a fresh meal of truth.

Must we either learn about the history of slavery the way that White America wants us to understand it, or we don't learn it at all? After the interview, I hopped back in the car and reeled within the realities of the raw deal American children have been served.

I will always appreciate my parents for giving it to me straight all the time, but everyone doesn't have that. So what can parents do to help their young children understand the perils of slavery? Through research and interviews, I realized the best way might be to think about the kind of person that a parent wants their child to become. If a parent wants their child to be as outspoken and free as possible, they should give the truth to their kid as straight as they can. However, if they would like their child to be more curious, then maybe feed the facts to them slowly and offer them accurate resources to research in their own time.

Most importantly — whichever path you choose to understand the full history of slavery in the United States — let the knowledge you learn inspire you to be the change that you hope to see in the world. For some, this looks like giving themselves what they wish they had. **Being the change may mean being the thinker, teacher, writer, or administrator that does the best that they can to educate students with their wisdom and example.**





## SPORTS. ATHLETICS.

# HOW MUCH DOES LIFTING WEIGHTS IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH?

## ➔ Make Lasting Friendships



When you see friends struggle with the barbell - know: **those who literally got your back** as spotters can be relied on **outside the weight room**.

Are you a nerd, engineer, rebel? Powerlifting is full of misfits who are waiting to make lasting friendships and bonding through **anime, heavy metal, activism, art...**

## ➔ Take a phone break



Studies show that spending more time on the **phone** causes **depression** and **isolation**. TikTok, Facebook, Instagram and other apps have entire departments

devoted to magnetizing us to the screen. We can do better. Instead of consuming viral media - we can learn, create and enjoy athletic training. **Physical activity** triggers a release of dopamine and serotonin over time and play a crucial role in **mental well-being**. Unlike continuous clicking and scrolling that gives us a dopamine rush followed by a dopamine crash, leaving the brain craving for easy thrills.

## ➔ Being Bullied? Get strong! Girls, you too!



Being overweight is one of the most common reasons children and adolescents are teased at school. (1) Bullied kids suffer from physical victimization and

exclusion and are even being threatened. It has been reported that **obese people** earn less, are **less likely to be hired**, or are more likely to **remain unemployed**. (2) If you'd rather not contribute to the unnerving statistics - devote time each week to train with weights and learn how to prepare healthy, nutritious meals.



Errol Watson, Rookie Riot 2023

There is more to being an athlete than football, basketball and the Olympic sports. Anyone can be an athlete - including you!

**"Athlete - a person who exercises regularly and pushes themselves to keep improving"**

Everyone can find a sport they enjoy - be it calisthenics, powerlifting, running, yoga or many more. The best athletes on the planet have two things in common: they have had their friends' and **family's support** and they had a **good coach**. A coach tailors training to each athlete, helps them stay accountable and keeps them focused when the going gets tough!

Thankfully, these days you need far fewer resources to hire a coach than past generations did! All you need is an internet connection to fill out an application and get your weekly updated training program.

# CLAIM YOUR STRENGTH

by Katya Gorbacheva



Katya Gorbacheva, Rumble at the PIT 2022

**TOTAL BODY LAB is headquartered in Durham.** We are on a mission to help people get better at strength sports and get closer to their genetic potential. We will teach you what to eat, how to train and how recover optimally. **Katya Gorbacheva and her team** have trained hundreds of athletes across the globe ranging 16-72, some of whom started lifting at 45, 55 and 65 years old.

**Katya Gorbacheva**, one of the strongest vegan women on the planet, is a nationally qualified powerlifter with USAPL, Elite Powerlifter with USPA / IPL, and is a proud member of the **PlantBuilt Vegan Strong**. Katya's personal Record is 936 lbs of total weight lifted in **squat, bench and deadlift** at 161lb body weight. Katya's passion is to educate guys and girls on how to start lifting weights safely and to make sports a fun part of lifestyle.

Katya is passionate about fit tech, athletic performance coaching, and environmentalism. The three came together in her coaching company, **TotalBodyLab**, where a team of elite powerlifters help people worldwide succeed in competitive **strength** sports and **personal wellness goals**.

Katya has been featured on Great Vegan Athletes, Plant Based News, Vegan Linked, Veg fest Expos, Vegan Proteins Give Her Dollars, Duke Alumni Network and more. ■

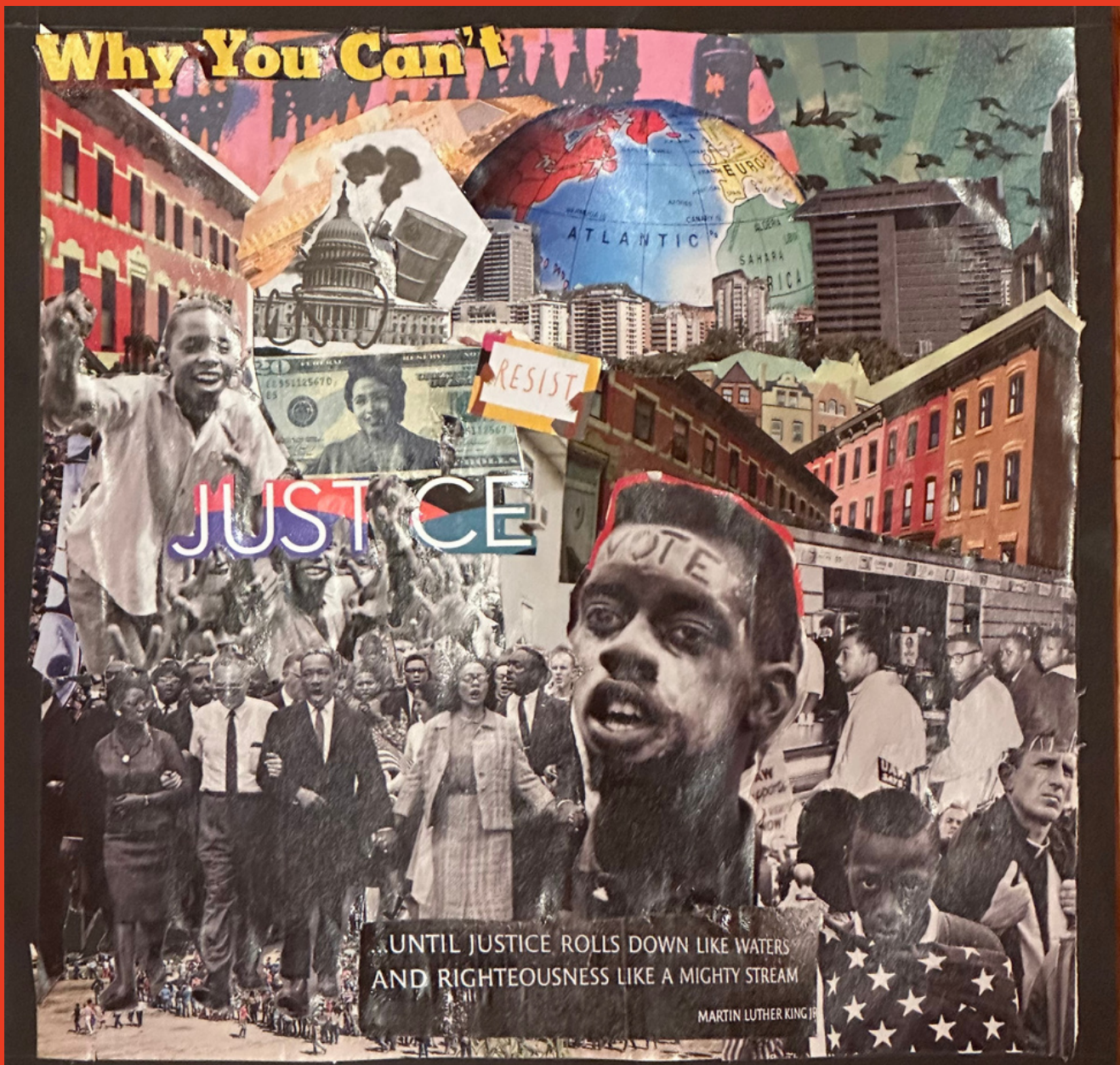
**JOIN TEAM TOTALBODYLAB!  
APPLY FOR COACHING**



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Mina Alina Azhar  
*The Compass Points 37.0902° N, 95.7129° W*, 2023  
 Mixed media collage in frame

# THE COMPASS POINTS

37.0902° N,  
95.7129° W

by Mina Alina Azhar

*"I have the audacity to believe that people everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equity and freedom for their spirits."*

*Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., "I Have A Dream"*

Racism is colloquial within the American mind. It's whispered in the ears of students, murmured in the news, yelled out by politicians on stages, and tucked in between the pages of our textbooks. It is something that is an unfortunate result of human nature and world history, an obstinate stain on humanity.



Our education system is not exempt from this disease of prejudice, and its symptoms are experienced by millions of students on a daily basis. These symptoms lead to students of colour being stuck in cycles of oppression and generational curses, and they uphold racist processes, like the school-to-prison pipeline.

The education system is far from perfect in many regards. Its stifling schedule leads to abhorrent mental and physical health for students and creates worker-bees for the purpose of keeping our capitalistic society going. For students of colour, the negative effects of the education system are exacerbated due to acts of racism and prejudice in the classroom and in the curriculum. Due to the colonial history of the American school system, racism is commonplace, both on a personal and systemic level. In all, students of colour are expected to maintain their education in a system designed to keep them out of the classroom.

**Methila, a Bengali Muslim student shared this when asked: “Has racism played a role in your education?”**



Photo by Jon Tyson on Unsplash  
- hopscotch on pavement



Photo by RutMit on Unsplash  
person holding black graduate cap

*“Yes, it has. Countless times, on the first day of school after being called for [the] roll I have been told, ‘oh I just know you’re gonna be good’. It’s nice to hear sometimes, don’t get me wrong, but it sucks to be held to a standard ALL THE TIME. I have definitely noticed teachers expecting more from me, even if they don’t know me. Just last month, I ended up getting a 57% on one of my unit tests. I usually study for tests, but this time I had forgotten. My teacher saw my result, ‘you’re not supposed to get a grade like that, I’d expect someone like you to do better.’”*

What Methila experienced is known as a microaggression, a comment, remark, or note that is subtle in its discriminatory nature. Microaggressions can lead to students feeling insecure, isolated, and prevent them from participating fully and reaching their full potential. I myself have felt reduced to my identities by others’ gaze within the school, being asked about Arabia and Islam as though I have a degree in the topics, even when the conversation does not pertain to those subjects.

While discussing this subject, the question of “how can people of colour (POC) students navigate this environment” comes to mind. So what are possible solutions to overcoming the hurdles of systemic racism?



In confronting any problem, you must look at its root; in this case, the root is educators. We must uplift and support POC teachers and those who choose to pursue the educational field. To change an entire system is an arduous process, and teachers are the easiest way to impact students directly. POC students deserve and require safe spaces within the system, and to prevent harm, steps like going to POC majority schools and surrounding oneself with others of similar background/ethnicity are necessary.

Charter and private schools created by minorities deserve proper funding and support as they offer tools to students of colour that private predominantly white institutions can not offer.



Photo by Ivan Alecsik on Unsplash  
empty classroom with chalkboard

Kashi Bazemore, a teacher at Josephine Dobbs Clement Early College High School, and the founder of several charter schools says that we must warn POC students of racism and discrimination before they enter Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs). Prejudice should not prevent students of colour from getting the education they deserve, especially since many POC majority schools are underfunded, due to systemic racist practices like gerrymandering and redlining, and students of colour are already at a disadvantage in American society.

The disease of racism does not have to be malignant or fatal, if it is treated and kept under surveillance, and students learn to ameliorate its effects. In order to break the running wheel of racial generational curses, POC must be provided with the tools needed to excel within systems designed to keep them under the heels of white supremacy, capitalism, and prejudice. To thrive and acknowledge the pain of those who have paved the way for us, learning how to navigate a world that has been created by the oppressor is crucial.



Photo by Alicia McNeil

**we are: Let's Talk Racism Conference**  
**What's at Stake? Understanding the**  
**Attacks on Truth-Telling in Education**

*In the wake of increasing legislation banning material about black history in public schools across the U.S., three black Jordan High School Students, Nick Hale [one from left], Grady Dupree-Isaac [one from right], and Nakia McNeil [far right] were invited to North Carolina Central University's campus to speak with Brittany Del Rosario [far left], the Children and Families Program Coordinator with we are about how they believe the lack of addressing racism in schools will affect students. A recurring theme of this conference was children being robbed of the power that comes with a comprehensive education and how important it is for students to feel empowered and to have a say in what happens in classrooms. Students deserve to have their experiences and opinions taken seriously.*



# THE EAGLE: NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY

*Article, Images, Colourgrading by Mina Azhar*



*Buildings on NCCU's campus: History Classroom*

North Carolina Central University (NCCU) is the newest of North Carolina's twelve established Historically Black Colleges or Universities (HBCUs). Founded in 1910 by Dr. James E. Shepard, Central has played a crucial role in not only the development of young African-American (AA) minds, but also in the larger Durham community overall. Both Black Wall Street and the Hayti District, prominent communities to both AA culture and to Durhamites in general, were involved in the growth and development of Central's graduates, providing jobs and opportunities.

NCCU, similarly to many HBCUs, rose as a result of educational inequality caused by American racism. With the ratification of the 13th amendment in 1865 bringing little change to the American outlook on race and Separate but Equal remaining in relevance until 1954, the need for AA education was voracious.

NCCU is a symbol of perseverance: defying standards and systems of oppression to this day via the pursuit of knowledge and erudition. In a world where an educated black or brown person is seen as a threat, institutions like Central remain beacons of light within our communities. They serve as a reminder of progress and a nudge towards the furtherance of equality for all.









# INSIGHT COLEARNING



Are you looking for a high school where you can discover who you are and who you want to become?

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A promotional image for DJ Dogg. On the left, a man with a beard and sunglasses, wearing a black leather jacket over a white shirt, looks directly at the camera. The background is a bright blue sky with white clouds. On the right side of the image, there is a large white logo that reads "DJ dogg" with a stylized dog head inside the "o", and the hashtag "#INTHEMIX" below it. At the bottom right, there are social media icons for Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, followed by the text "@DJPDOGG" and "DJPDOGG.COM".

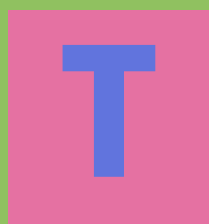
**DJ dogg**  
#INTHEMIX

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# THE LUNCH CREW



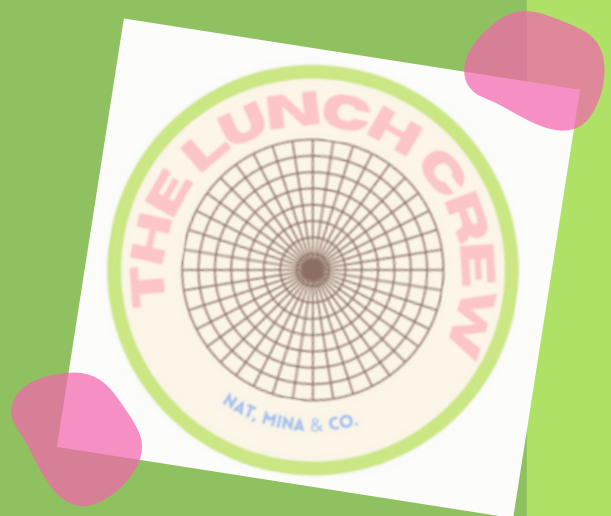
he Lunch Crew is a podcast created and run by minority-students: co-hosted by Natalie Deaver and Mina Azhar and coordinated by Aline-Sitoe Sy.

The podcast was founded as a safe-space, one to freely express emotions and thoughts without the fear of judgment that often comes about in today's digital world. Natalie said this when asked what the podcast means to her.

→ *I'm able to spend time with my friends outside of school. It gives me a place to vent and just talk about things. I can be myself and not be confined because it's literally my podcast (in the sense that no one else but us owns it)".*

The podcast covers a variety of topics, both serious and personal with off topic conversation littered through. One listener described it as being on FaceTime, or a phone call, with the podcast following the flow of a regular conversation and making the viewer feel as though they themselves are present. The hosts also include guests on the podcast often, providing a diverse cast of characters for listeners to tune into.

The Lunch Crew is available on Spotify and created via Anchor, now called Spotify for Podcasters, and is best contacted at @the.lunchcrew on Instagram. As of right now, 5 episodes are published and the podcast is on hiatus for the academic and religious purposes of its creators.







# THE OPIOID CRISIS IN DURHAM, NC

*by Joshuana Korvie*

*"I dedicate this article to you, my friend. This is for you and others affected by this crisis. I love you so much. Please take this message to heart as a reminder of how much I care about you and how much you are needed in this world."*

*— An excerpt from my letter to a friend*

The city of Durham, North Carolina, known for its lively culture and thriving community, is facing a critical issue: the Opioid Crisis. This is a serious and devastating epidemic that has affected the lives of many individuals, including teenagers.

In April 2023, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that 14% of high school students admitted to misusing prescription opioids. In this article, I will delve deeper into opioid abuse in Durham, NC, highlighting the increasing trend among youth, and discuss my efforts to make a difference.

The opioid crisis has hit Durham County hard, with a significant rise in opioid-related incidents that mirrors the nationwide trend in the United States. The Durham County Department of Public Health has reported a shocking 70% increase in opioid-related deaths over the past five years. In 2022, Durham recorded an astounding 558 overdose deaths annually, a huge jump from previous years. These statistics are alarming, highlighting the urgent need for targeted interventions and support systems to tackle this epidemic in the county.

Unfortunately, the issue of youth opioid misuse has become a harsh reality in Durham. The Duke Center for Child and Family Policy released a report stating that about 53% of Durham's youth have been exposed to opioids on school grounds. This statistic is alarming, as adolescents are more susceptible to the dangers associated with opioid use, such as addiction, overdose, and long-term consequences (according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). Peer pressure, stress, mental health issues, and easy access are major factors contributing to teens' attraction to opioids.

I am a high school student, and I think that societal pressure to grow up quickly and the impact of influential people in our culture who encourage risky behavior are major contributors to this trend. I also have a more personal reason: I have a friend who is struggling right now with addiction. I want to take every possible step to keep my friends and other teenagers from developing drug addictions. I wish to support them in reaching their greatest potential. If you care about this issue, as well, I encourage you to take action where you are and advance a healthier, more welcoming community for all. And if you are struggling with addiction, know you are loved, important, and surrounded by people who want to see you free and happy again.

## Where to Begin

### ***Genesis SA/DWI/MH Services:***

***118 East Main Street  
Durham, NC 27701  
919-321-6643  
[genesisdwiseservices.com](http://genesisdwiseservices.com)***

### ***Trosa:***

***1820 James Street  
Durham, NC 27707  
919-419-1059  
[trosainc.org](http://trosainc.org)***

### ***BAART Community Healthcare:***

***800 North Mangum Street, Suite 400  
Durham, NC 27701  
919-683-1607  
[baartprograms.com](http://baartprograms.com)***

### ***El Futuro:***

***2020 Chapel Hill Road, Suite 23  
Durham, NC 27707  
919-688-7101  
[elfuturo-nc.org](http://elfuturo-nc.org)***

### ***Healing with CAARE, Inc.:***

***214 Broadway Street  
Durham, NC 27701  
919-683-5300  
[caare-inc.org](http://caare-inc.org)***

### ***UNC Substances Treatment and Recovery(STAR):***

***1101 Weaver Dairy Road  
Suite 102 and 103  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514  
984-974-1000***



# HEALING Together



***An interview with Methila Nasiri, the founder of Healing Together,  
a student created website for student mental health resources.***

***By Mina Azhar***

**Mina Azhar: What does mental health mean to you?**

Methila Nasiri: Mental Health to me is feeling like you're living. It's about being able to cope with daily stressors and maintain a sense of balance in your life. Being able to accept and manage mental illness, such as depression or anxiety, and seeking appropriate treatment to improve your quality of life. Mental health is also about personal growth, self-awareness, and having a sense of purpose or meaning in life. Mental health is not shameful. Mental health is about getting the help ***you need and deserve so that you can feel like you can breathe, when you're actually breathing.***



*Photo by Robina Weermeijer on Unsplash*

**MA: Does school factor into your mental health? If so, how?**

MN: School 100% factors into my mental health. It's such a big part of my life, how could it not? After School we only have about 3 hours left before the sun goes down, and the day comes to an end. It's so hard to find time to just focus on me. Out of the 24 hours in a day, I spend more time at school and sleep than I am able to on things that actually bring me peace and happiness. My focus on my mental health is all about taking care of me.

**MA: How have other factors impacted your mental health (ex: gun violence, drug usage at school, racism)?**

MN: We live in a country where things like discrimination, racism, and violence are almost inescapable. Of course, it affects me. It affects me a lot more than I wish it would. Sometimes I find myself thinking about how people might view me as I step out into the world, and honestly as a Brown Muslim woman, it's hard to not think of the worst. It's even harder, when someone embodies those thoughts right in front of me. Saying things to me or about me, as if I'm not the same species as them.

To dig a little deeper, it's upsetting to say how many of my peers' lives are lost on a daily basis because of gun violence. "Peers" isn't even the best word. Classmates. As soon as the news spreads, it's a gut feeling that is unshakable, "one of us is gone." It's extremely hard to stay positive, when your school principal is directing a moment of silence over the morning intercom as often as mine does.

**MA: What compelled you to start the website?**

MN: To be honest, part of the reason I started this website was to help the students in my school. ***I don't think our school system does a very good job to make sure their students are in a good state of mind and are doing well mentally.*** Every classroom you look into there are students with their heads down, legs bouncing and shaking, and students glued to their phones trying so hard to tune out the teacher.



You can't blame them either, the constant cycle of coming and going to school *everyday for 7 hours a day, 5 days a week, 4 weeks a month, 9 months a year*. They expect students to de-stress everything they felt the whole week, do whatever they need to, then get it together, and come back for another week of the same thing. I want to be able to make sure that in the time they do have, that they are using it to help themselves. Not because I think they should, but because they deserve it. A lot of them are too scared to speak to an adult or counselor directly, but that doesn't make them any less worthy.

**MA: Do you have any advice for other teens regarding mental health? If so, what?**

MN: It's essential to recognize that mental health is just as important as physical health. Take care of your mental health by prioritizing time for yourself, self-care activities, and even *simple things such as getting enough sleep, and eating well*. It's also crucial to develop healthy coping mechanisms to deal with stress, keeping it all in is not going to help at all. Try talking to a friend, family member, and if that doesn't help even try talking to yourself. It sounds a bit funny, but at the end of the day, you are the only person who really has your own back. Try writing down your thoughts and responding to them as if they were your friends. Most importantly, if you are experiencing symptoms of mental illness or emotional distress, don't hesitate to reach out for help. *Seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness. You deserve any bit of support you can get.*



**Scan QR Code to access  
website and link to resources.**



*Photo by Priscilla Du Preez on Unsplash*

**MA: What do you hope the website will achieve?**

MN: The goal of this website is to provide a safe, supportive, and accessible platform for people to learn about and address their mental health needs. *I want to be able to reduce the stigma surrounding mental illness and encourage people to seek help* when they need it. Also by educating the public about the importance of mental health and promoting a culture of mental wellness. By providing the necessary resources and support, I want people to be able to lead healthier, happier, and more fulfilling lives.





# Digital Brilliance Hour

BUILDING CHARACTER, CONFIDENCE, AND  
BRILLIANCE WITHIN THE MINDS OF OUR YOUTH  
THROUGH STEAM

DESIGNED FOR AGES 12-19

<http://www.digitalbrilliancehour.com>



## DIGITAL BRILLIANCE HOUR

### WHAT IS IT?

Digital Brilliance Hour (DBH) is a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) after-school program designed to provide teens with hands-on activities related to STEAM. Through a 12-week workshop, students' experiences include training, work implementation, product packaging, and presentation. The curriculum focuses on enhancing students' skills in software development and music production. Collaboration, communication, and decision-making skills are fostered through team-building assignments.

“

**DBH has allowed my son to have more confidence in himself, which has led to him overcoming a lot of his speaking disabilities, along with his grades improving.**

**-- P. Scott (Parent)**

### WHAT WILL THEY LEAVE WITH?

At the workshop's conclusion, students will have game + music products and a business portfolio. Students will gain the following soft skills:

#### Team-building Skills

Sharpen communication skills in a team structure

Plan, Organize, and Prioritize work under deadlines

Presentation Skills

### MUSIC PRODUCTION LEARNING TRACK

- Students create their own professional music albums.
- Students learn how to create their own background music/beats.
- Students plan and execute strategies for album and business marketing.
- Introduction to sampling
- Mood and Melodies
- Introduction to mixing/engineering
- Introduction to Music Theory

### GAME DEVELOPMENT LEARNING TRACK

- Students learn the fundamentals of software development and design.
- Students code their own video game demos.
- Students learn about game engines.
- Students plan and develop game products. This involves the storyline, design, mechanics, features, and business marketing.
- Introduction to Git
- Introduction to Stage Design
- Introduction to Graphic Design
- Introduction to Model Creation

If there are additional questions, please reach out to [info@digitalbrilliancehour.com](mailto:info@digitalbrilliancehour.com)

# SHIBOKA 3RD EDITION

## Call for Interns

SHIBOKA is Durham's for youth, by youth magazine, amplifying youth voices on the issues that matter most.

### For the Shiboka 3rd edition-

9-12th grade  
Graphic Artists  
Writers  
Photographers

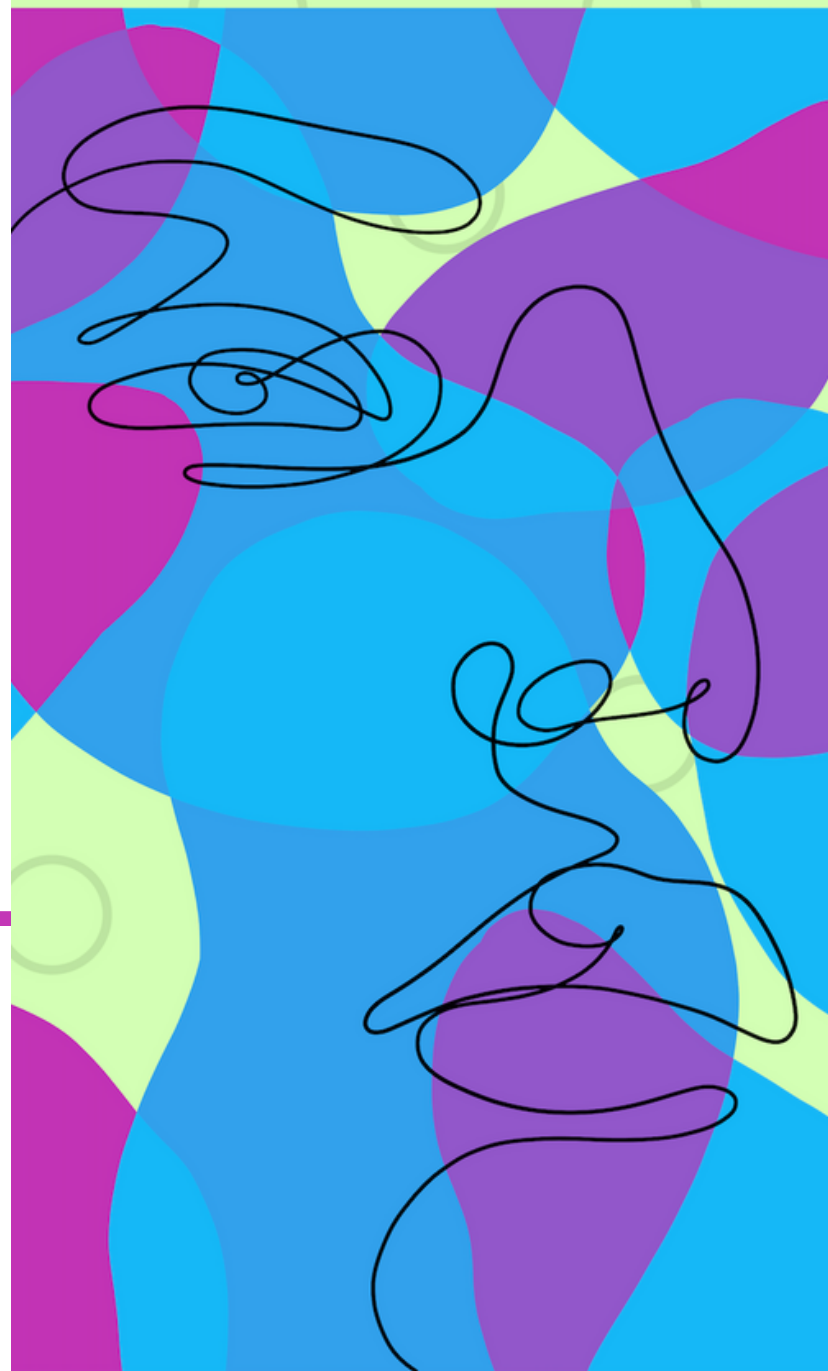
Join us for our 3rd edition of Shiboka MagaZine - a magazine for youth voices.

*While working in this program, I realized it opened a door to new opportunities and it gave me a voice, a say in the things I want to speak about in my community.*

Check out the 1st edition of the magazine and other amazing Echo projects at:

<https://www.echo-nc.org/echoreverb>

Scan QR Code to Apply



# SHIBOKA

BOS MEDIA & FOR YOUTH, BY YOUTH



# CONTRIBUTORS



**Maira Magwene Muniz** is currently a sophomore and attends C.E. Jordan High School in Durham. Her interests are in the fields of social studies, technology, and art. Maira has taken advantage of Jordan's diverse set of electives such as Sociology and African American Literature classes. Outside of school, she participates in the Nasher Teen Council at the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University. Shiboka has been another opportunity to connect with Durham students as well as work and explore with them. Maira's art contribution *The Weight on Our Shoulders* was the first time she created art intended for professional use and it was an eye-opening experience about magazine production.

**Rafia Ansari** is a graduating senior at Charles E. Jordan High School in Durham, North Carolina. She will be attending North Carolina State University in the fall of 2023, where she plans to study Business Administration. Rafia is passionate about health and wellness, education, and being outdoors. She is a member of the Dear Asian Youth chapter at her school, co-chair of the School Improvement Committee for the National Honor Society, and an avid volunteer. Through her first published article "Rest For The Weary", Rafia has been able to share her experiences and inspire others to take action against educational inequalities.

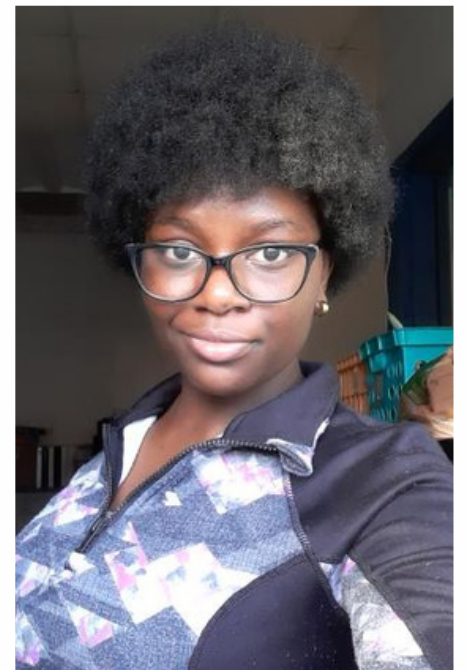


# CONTRIBUTORS



**Mina Azhar** is a current sophomore and a student of J.D Clement Early College High School in Durham, on the campus of North Carolina Central University. She plans to pursue a career in civil engineering as she has an interest in the intersections of physicality and social issues. In school this has translated to being a student government elected official and the Historian for the National Honors Society. Outside of the classroom, this has been working with social justice organizations, among them, Shiboka. Shiboka was an opportunity to publish meaningful work and have important conversations about communal issues with fellow students. Mina's articles, "The Compass Points 37.0902°N, 95.7129°W" and its artwork, "Healing Together" and "The Eagle", were all based on personal experiences and her first published works.

My name is **Joshuana Korvie** and I'm a junior at Durham School of Technology High School. I'm passionate about saving people and making a profound impact on their lives. This fervor is driven by two interconnected paths: bio-instrumentation engineering and community service. Also, my commitment to community service brings me this sense of purpose as I strive to bring justice to the undermined and unheard to create a better future. My journey at Shiboka Magazine has been transformative. Surrounded by exceptional mentors and supportive peers, I've been able to find my voice. To freely express my passions.

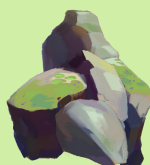


# CONTRIBUTORS



My name is **Elias Hasan**, a high school freshman in Durham, NC. During this experience, I've gained exposure to other members to the Durham community, as well as got the chance to work with an immaculate team of people who have all given the most creative parts of themselves to come to this epic conclusion (the magazine you just read!) I hope you take away a new perspective from reading and understanding the words written. Thank You, Elias Hasan

Greetings, My name is **Pilar Hurtado** I am a rising Senior at Early College. When I heard about a youth magazine located in Durham, I was curious to know what it's all about. Once I decided to join the program, I realized how it open doors to new opportunities and it gave me a voice to the things I wanted to speak about my community. As a result of this internship, I learned that typing is not just to voice my opinion but to demonstrate the pattern there has been in many different communities. I learned that each individual has their own experience that can be expressed in a variety of ways: art or writing an article or doing a documentary and so on. Overall, being in this program has helped me develop the skills I didn't know I had and gave a wider view of multiple perspectives within a certain topic.







Maira Magwene Muñiz,  
*The Weight On Our Shoulders*,  
2023  
Digital Art

# SHIBOKA

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2ND EDITION

*[echo-nc.org/shiboka](https://echo-nc.org/shiboka)*

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