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Voqal Announces 2020 Voqal Fellowship Recipients

Longmont, Colorado, January 23, 2020 – Voqal is excited to announce the 2020 cohort of its fellowship program. The Voqal Fellowship is an investment in people as individuals and budding entrepreneurs; a talent accelerator aimed at giving those often overlooked by traditional funders a chance to enact their visions at center stage.

“As we enter the new decade, we are excited to support another cohort of progressive entrepreneurs as they work to create a more socially equitable world through innovative ideas,” said Voqal Director of Grantmaking Brenda Williams-Sears.

The 2020 class will continue the Voqal Fellowship legacy of supporting changemakers who are making a real difference in the world. Members of this year’s class are:

Aarica Coleman, More Equitable Housing Policy

Coleman’s project is focused on developing a local housing policy in Minnesota that can be used as a reparation measure for Black Americans with a particular focus on housing within the economic system. Coleman is a native of the Twin Cities working in housing policy and development in the public sector.

Allison Park, Urbanity

Park’s project Urbanity is a new social platform for urban Asian Americans who want to see, share, and rank content that reflects their communities, histories, and identities. Park is a long-time community organizer, artist, activist, and strategist using media, communications and culture to advance social justice across movements and communities in New York City, Texas, Alaska, California, Florida and more.

Irene Romulo, Cicero Independiente

Romulo’s project is focused on creating a hyperlocal space for civic engagement rooted in accessible news production by and for people of color, non-English speakers and those who are excluded from traditional media models. Originally from Chicago, Romulo is an immigrant and housing activist and the co-founder of Cicero Independiente, a bilingual, local news outlet for people living in Cicero, Illinois.

Johnaé Strong, Razing to Restore

Strong’s project Razing to Restore is an online organizing training platform connecting emerging social actors to political education, organizing and restorative practices, through on-demand learning modules developed by national organizers and healers. Strong is an educator, organizer and writer who has been working at the intersection of social movements, healing and education for over a decade.

Kate Werning, Healing Justice Podcast Support Community

Werning’s project, a virtual and in-person support community for activists and social justice leaders, will build off of the vast listenership of Healing Justice Podcast and bring daily mental health and sustainability supports to leaders’ lives. Werning is a decade-long community

organizer most shaped by the immigrant and workers' rights movements, is a Lead Trainer with Momentum equipping movement leaders across the country and has worked on progressive political campaigns. She's also a healing practitioner, and founded Healing Justice Podcast in 2017, which has since exceeded 1 million downloads and cultivated community at the intersection of collective healing and social change worldwide.

Kedar Reddy, Organiz

Organiz enables progressive organizers to win on social media by making social media actions easier to coordinate and crowdsource. Reddy is an anti-caste activist, game designer and a creative technologist. He's passionate about building tools to help progressive organizers win.

Manu Lewis, Lifestyle Empowerment Project

Lewis's project Lifestyle Empowerment Project aims to improve the economic, family, and community status for African Americans by targeting and serving Black males who are stuck within the gang, click, and drug culture. Currently residing in Minneapolis, Lewis is engaged in community, lifestyle recovery and restorative justice efforts and has been recognized for his outstanding leadership, commitment, impact and volunteerism in the community.

Piper Rose, Our Queer Body

Rose's project Our Queer Body is a membership-sustained, online education platform that hosts Queer educators of diverse backgrounds and experiences to share their wisdom on topics related to embodied health including self-inquiry, self-expression, self-pleasure, pleasure with others and healthy relationships. Rose is an artist and entrepreneur with over 10 years of experience.

The Voqal Fellowship officially begins with a convening in Denver this weekend where Fellows will have the opportunity to meet one another and develop the community that is central to the Fellowship. Voqal Fellows will receive a \$30,000 stipend and are expected to complete their projects in six months.

About Voqal

Voqal is a national collaboration of EBS (Educational Broadband Service) licensees that work to advance social equity by creating an educated, empowered and engaged public. Voqal makes grants and impact investments, expands internet access and digital equity, offers fellowships and protects the public airwaves. Our efforts focus on the education and enrichment of all, not just those who are well-off socially, economically and politically.