

A photograph of a woman with dark skin, smiling warmly. She has her hair styled in thick, light-brown braids. She is wearing clear-framed glasses, a dark blue blazer over a maroon top, and a necklace with a heart-shaped pendant. She is standing in a library, with bookshelves filled with books visible in the background. The image is partially overlaid by a light blue shape on the right and a purple rectangle at the bottom.

# Speaker Kit

Valerie  
Boyer



# Valerie Boyer

## NORTH AMERICANA HISTORIAN

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**Valerie Boyer is a woman of many callings. She is a vocalist, musician, dancer, poet, activist, minister, historian, and most of all an educator.**

Born and raised in Galveston, TX, Valerie Boyer was groomed in southern hospitality and shares that kindness everywhere she goes. Her life's work reflects the southern colloquialisms of her childhood and the tenacity of her adulthood. As the founder of Rebecca Owinale Foundation, LLC., Valerie is intentional about being a mirror, giving people a beginning, and making sure everyone feels empowered to live out the mantra, "we were here, we are here, you can't erase us." As a Social Studies educator and one of the youngest Smithsonian Affiliates to date, Valerie has carried her work and research to the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC), the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), Walsh University, Ohio Black Expo, Streetlight Guild, Ohio State University, Ohio Advocates of Diversity, and countless other prestigious organizations and institutions.

Presently, Valerie is the School & Community Programs Coordinator at Ohio History Connection. As a woman of faith, Valerie serves in ministry at Oakley Full Gospel Baptist Church. She is a proud graduate of Howard University and currently resides in Columbus, Ohio.

### CONNECT WITH VALERIE



**Want to work together? Let's chat!**

**BOOK NOW**



# Workshops & Topics

## **CODED LANGUAGE OF NEGRO SPIRITUALS**

### **SPEAKER TOPIC/WORKSHOP FACILITATION**

Negro Spirituals, which have since been renamed African American Spirituals, have been sung by enslaved people and their descendants since as early as the 18th century, and are still sung today. This talk covers what makes them such a brilliant form of resistance by discussing the hidden messages coded within them. When someone who didn't need to know, such as an overseer or master, heard these songs, the assumption was often that they sang about heaven, scripture, or biblical reference in folklore. They had no clue that these freedom seekers were singing songs of liberation, escape routes, planned resistance, and so much more. This fun, interactive, engagement gives everyone a chance to participate.

## **JUNETEENTH AS SACRED DAY**

### **SPEAKER TOPIC**

Juneteenth seems to be a repetitive turning point in the life of African Americans throughout all eras of history, dating back to 1847, through Emancipation, Reconstruction, deconstruction, Great Migration, Renaissance, Sharecropping, Jim Crow, Civil Rights, Black Power, Hip Hop, Internet, all the way through today. For Black Americans, Juneteenth is not an ending. Juneteenth is very much a beginning. Juneteenth is Afro-futurism. Juneteenth is a pull of the soul. Juneteenth is sacred.

# Workshops & Topics

## **POETRY, PROPHECY, AND AFRO-FUTURISM**

### **SPEAKER TOPIC/WORKSHOP FACILITATION**

"Write the vision, and make it plain." "The present is an egg laid by the past with the future inside its shell." It may not always have always had a name, but afrofuturism has always been the bedrock of the African American cultural aesthetic and sociological and communal engagement. Seeing ourselves in the future is not only a survival mechanism, it is a prophetic declaration that we have always been and always will be part of the lush landscape of humanity's advancement in science, technology, history, fantasy, and so much more. Ironically enough, we engage this practice often without realizing it. So what would happen, and/or change if we were aware? What does it look like to intentionally and consciously engage in a sustainable and thriving communal future?

## **HYMNS, HIP-HOP, HOOTTIN' & HOLLERIN' HOLINESS**

### **19TH CENTURY COUSINS FOR 21ST LIBERATION**

From the beginning of time of enslaved cargo on these shores, all the way through the fabric of this ever-evolving American experiment, you have always been able to get a glimpse of the location of Black persons based on our music. The beautiful part is, that the code embedded in the communal sharing of these things was the way of sharing political conscious awareness of what is happening in real-time. Westernization and colonization often suggest that we separate our sacred and our secular, but one of our preserved Africannisms is our inability to tell anything but our truth, which includes our relationship with the divine. With this awareness, how are the functions of negro spirituals and hip hop as a genre remotely related? What exactly should we be listening for? And how does speaking these codes aid in collective liberation?

# Workshops & Topics

## SOUL ROLES

### SPEAKER TOPIC/WORKSHOP FACILITATION

Do you know who you are? Does it matter? What does it have to do with how we navigate the world anyway? Soul roles are the roles that all of us carry at our core, informing our work, ourselves, the lives around us, and how we show up in them. They're fluid, ever-evolving, and constantly working in conjunction with the community around us, but be clear. They are there. They transcend occupation, family hierarchy, friendships, relationships, etc., because at our core who we are will always come out. How different would we engage ourselves, and our world if we could see each other, hear each other, and work for change, down to the soul.

## BOUND BY BRILLIANCE

### THE HIDDEN TIES BETWEEN INDIGENOUS AND BLACK AMERICANS

Like most generational family squabbles, the truth is the right conversation exposes how we really are better together, than we are apart. Throughout history, the narratives of Indigenous Americans and Black Americans have often been told separately, yet beneath the surface lies a deep, interconnected story—one of shared struggles, resilience, and cultural exchange. In this discussion, we will uncover the hidden symbiotic relationship between these two communities, exploring how their histories, traditions, and resistance movements have intertwined over centuries. From early alliances and shared survival strategies to cultural fusion and solidarity in the fight for justice, this talk will shed light on a powerful and often overlooked legacy of unity. Join, as we reconnect the threads of this rich, complex history and reflect on its relevance today.

# Workshops & Topics

## YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

A NON-EXHAUSTIVE LIST OF SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTISE

### PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT:

- Overcoming challenges and resilience
- Goal setting and time management
- Self-awareness and emotional intelligence
- Managing stress and anxiety

### SOCIAL SKILLS:

- Building healthy relationships
- Conflict resolution and empathy
- Leadership development
- Inclusive behavior and combating discrimination

### ACADEMIC SUCCESS:

- Study habits and effective learning strategies
- Choosing a career path

### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

- Volunteering and civic engagement
- Advocacy for social change
- Community leadership opportunities

### HEALTH AND WELLNESS:

- Nutrition and physical fitness
- Mental health awareness and support
- Substance abuse prevention
- Sexual health education

### DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP:

- Online safety and cyberbullying
- Responsible use of social media
- Digital literacy and critical information evaluation



# CLIENT TALK

## TESTIMONIALS & ENDORSEMENTS

“Valerie Boyer is a gifted, charismatic speaker. She easily identifies with whatever audience that she is speaking with and helps them to feel connected and engaged rather than uninterested and indifferent.”

**ERICA GRIMES**  
HS COUNSELOR

“Valerie illumines the griot traditions which challenge the conventions and norms of both the classroom and the performance stage. Valerie is a highly skilled, engaging teacher/performer, with a deep understanding of community needs, class content and its culturally relevant contexts.

As an *edutainer* – vocalist, actor, writer, dancer, orator, and griot, she has developed creative content that align with lesson modules and/or communal needs.”

**GAMAL BROWN**  
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR - THE  
LINCOLN THEATRE  
ASSOCIATION



“Valerie Boyer is a gifted, charismatic speaker. She easily identifies with whatever audience that she is speaking with and helps them to feel connected and engaged rather than uninterested and indifferent.”

**DONTE WOODS SPIKES**  
EDUCATOR

“Valerie Boyer is an engaging and dynamic speaker, distinguished by her confident presence and exceptional ability to connect with diverse audiences. Her skill in adapting her tone and language to suit any setting ensures she remains both relatable and captivating.

Valerie’s delivery commands attention, leaving her audience eager to listen and inspired by her words.”

**ANDRE CHATMAN**  
STATE YOUTH DIRECTOR, OHIO  
FGBC INTL.



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## FEATURED MEDIA

PERFORMANCE: 7 Villages

 **WATCH NOW**

NEWS: Valerie Boyer helps usher in  
Streetlight Guild poetry celebration

 **READ ARTICLE**

NEWS: How a Columbus barber  
helped the Underground Railroad

 **READ ARTICLE**

PERFORMANCE: Backstage at the Lincoln

 **WATCH NOW**

NEWS: Kwanzaa Celebration Begins

*Spectrum News 1*

 **READ ARTICLE**

NEWS: Crowd -- and awareness --  
grows at Ohio History Connection's  
Juneteenth Jubilee festival

 **READ ARTICLE**

## OTHER APPEARANCES

Toni Morrison Day Celebration  
*Speaker, Bexley Public Library*

Underground Railroad in Ohio  
*Facilitator, Ohio Humanities*

Portal to Ohio

*Gallery Exhibit, Featured Poet/Spoken Word Artist, Urban Art Space*

FORWARD Religions Conference  
*Presenter, Smithsonian National  
Musuem of African American History &  
Culture*

Gibbs Education

*Textbook Editor*

