

A photograph of a woman with braided hair, wearing glasses, a dark blazer, and a necklace with a heart pendant. She is smiling and standing in a library with bookshelves in the background. The image is partially overlaid by a light blue circular graphic on the right side.

Speaker Kit

Valerie
Boyer-McBride



Valerie Boyer-McBride

NORTH AMERICANA HISTORIAN

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Valerie Boyer-McBride is a woman of many callings. She is a vocalist, musician, dancer, poet, activist, minister, historian, youth advocate, and most of all an educator. Born and raised in Galveston, TX, and a proud graduate of Howard University.

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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 historian and artist, 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 lives a life as a cultural educator, Ohio's youngest Smithsonian Affiliate, 3rd youngest Smithsonian Affiliate in the country, and CNN's #2 "40 Under 40 Historian of the Year." Valerie is a proud wife to William McBride, and proud bonus mom to two amazing children.

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

THE OHIO INFLUENCE ON HARLEM RENAISSANCE ERA

SPEAKER TOPIC/WORKSHOP FACILITATION

Black Ohioans During the Harlem Renaissance is an immersive cultural history presentation that illuminates the overlooked role Ohio played in shaping one of the most creatively explosive eras in American history. Positioned at the crossroads of the Great Migration, Black Ohioans built communities, created art, launched newspapers, and cultivated political power that echoed far beyond the state's borders — often directly influencing Harlem's writers, musicians, thinkers, activists, and social institutions.

This program highlights both well-known and hidden Ohio narratives, making the Harlem Renaissance feel local, tangible, and relevant for students, families, educators, and community members.

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, SPEAKER,
ENTREPRENEUR

“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.



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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 Contributor and Editor

