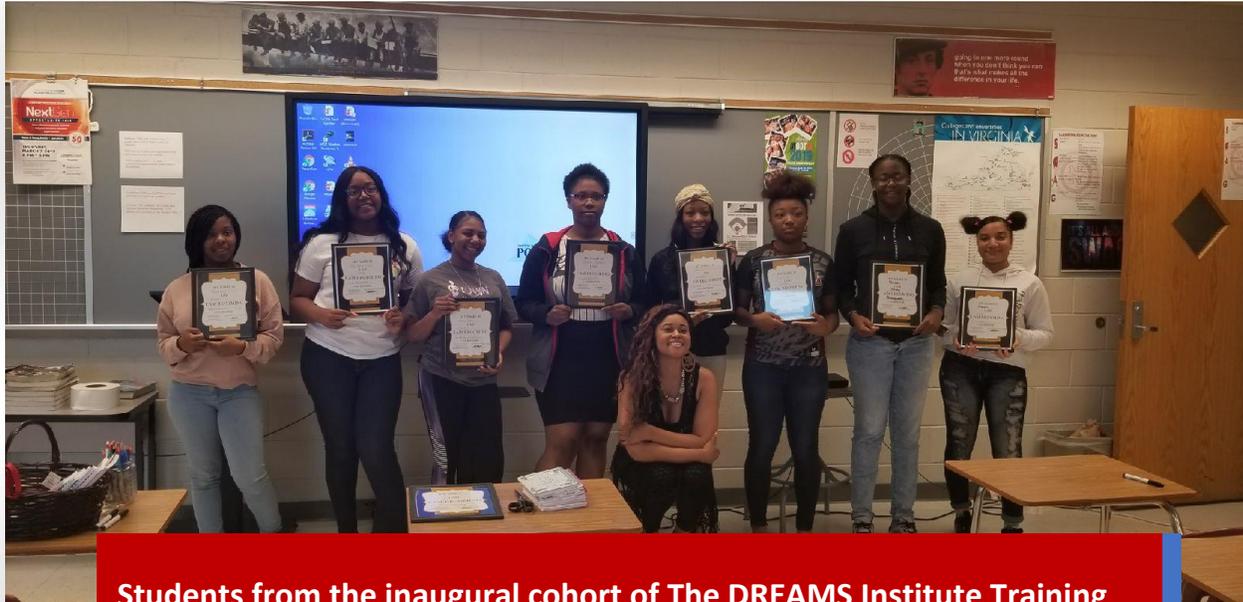


# LIVING THE DREAM



Students from the inaugural cohort of The DREAMS Institute Training Workshop for girls at I.C. Norcom High School (May 2019).

The [www.drmelodywilliams.org](http://www.drmelodywilliams.org)  
**DREAMS** Institute 

August 2019

Mid-year Report

# Letter from the Founder

*Since our very humble beginnings last year, I am in awe at what The DREAMS Institute has accomplished. When I first assembled my nonprofit board, I shared with them that more than anything, I wanted our organization to be known for helping others overcome their current circumstances.*

*“My calling has always been to facilitate people in reaching their goals,” I told them, “and we can help students and women rise above obstacles so they do not abandon their dreams.”*

*To initiate our efforts, in the first half of 2019, TDI began to work with young ladies at I.C. Norcom High School in Portsmouth, VA. We held our first professional development training workshop sessions onsite, and it was truly a wonderful feeling to see the smiles on the faces of these students as they talked about the careers, lifestyles, and accomplishments they hope to achieve.*

*During the sessions, many of the young women indicated that they are facing serious challenges in their home life, experiencing low self-esteem, and navigating systemic issues of poverty and food insecurity. It was clear that the work we were doing was needed and critically important.*

*We provided them with a quality meal, shared valuable knowledge and tools to help combat their socioeconomic challenges, and nurtured the desires in their heart.*

*As we continue through the second half of this year, we hope to offer our mentorship program at 1-2 additional schools. I am more convinced than ever that TDI exists to change the lives of young women of color in Hampton Roads, and we are excited to keep our momentum going!*

--Dr. Melody S. Williams



## MISSION STATEMENT

To provide low-cost education, training, and mentoring to students, women of color, and their families, for the fulfillment of individual dreams and the collective betterment of local communities.

## 2019 Goals

1. Student participation in the TDI workshops at our current school site of I.C. Norcom.
2. Progress towards the addition of a new site at the high school or middle school level.
3. Partnership with two existing nonprofits on events that serve underprivileged families.
4. Second Annual Christmas Cohort event for 8 female college students.
5. Fundraising for current and following fiscal year.



## Outcome Measurement

Measure of the success of our organization to complete its mission and reach its goals will be determined by:

1. High student attendance at I.C. Norcom with positive faculty and staff feedback on student performance, and positive student survey results.
2. Interest meetings with staff and administrators at Hampton Roads secondary schools to bring TDI into their site location.
3. Service of TDI board members at two local events organized by area nonprofits.
4. Successful completion of the Annual Christmas Cohort event in December.
5. \$5000 fundraising goal met or exceeded.

# What Happens at TDI Training Workshops?

## Student Attendance

Our nonprofit partner inside the school site, Communities in Schools (CIS), selects the twenty-four high school female students in grades 9-12 that will benefit from attending a 50-minute TDI session offered during the school day.

## Fellowship

Students get the opportunity to have a catered meal during their lunch block while they complete an interactive lesson in a supportive classroom environment where they can freely share their personal thoughts, daily stressors—and of course, their future hopes and dreams.

## Professional Development

An engaging curriculum designed by Dr. Williams ensures female students will be taught the following:

- Identifying personal actions that foster professional growth and supplement their school education
- Maximizing talents, skills, and opportunities through self-study
- Visualizing personal success and reviewing positive lifestyle practices

Lesson topics rotate with each session and cover:

- Self Esteem and Positivity: Self-care and Leadership Development
- Purpose: Determining Needs, Wants, Goals, and Dreams
- Overcoming Adversity: Perseverance and Good Decision-Making



## Results to Date

Attendance was consistently high during our three workshops from March-May of 2019, with more than half the ladies returning after the initial session. We had an awesome learning environment doing our workshops.

Participation is completely voluntary, and the students choose to forego eating with their peers to come and be engaged and empowered during their lunch hour.



*"I think everything has been good and helpful...we took a lot from it."*

- Student Survey Respondent



Of the young ladies that completed our online survey after the last session, when asked "Would you like to continue attending the workshop training?"

**100% answered Yes!**

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Many thanks to the organizations and individuals that work alongside and support The DREAMS Institute. With your help, we will impact Hampton Roads!



## Community Partners

Communities in Schools of Hampton Roads

[www.cisofhamptonroads.org](http://www.cisofhamptonroads.org)

TribeNation Basketball Academy

[www.coachstretch.com](http://www.coachstretch.com)

Subculture, Inc.

[www.subcultureinc.org](http://www.subcultureinc.org)

## Donors

Up to \$500

*Melody Williams*

*Sebrina Brown*

## Sponsor

K.W. Brown Ministries

[www.themountleads.org](http://www.themountleads.org)

## School Site

I.C. Norcom High School



Dr. Williams presenting a token of appreciation to Communities in Schools staff member Shakiya Stewart

# The DREAMS Institute Board Members

Our amazing board is committed to the mission of TDI to offer tangible support and mentorship.



(left to right) Board members Dr. Kirby, Dr. Williams, and Min. Patterson with Dr. Laguna Foster (I.C. Norcom Principal).

## Dr. Morgan Kirby



Dr. Kirby, an alumna of Hampton University, is an assistant professor of mass communications at Norfolk State University. Her areas of expertise include public relations, advertising, and copy editing. She is passionate about supporting and mentoring undergraduate and graduate students.

## Minister Myra Patterson, Secretary



Minister Patterson enjoyed a stellar, thirty-five-year career working in higher education at Norfolk State University. Currently, as an active retiree, she is now completing her degree at NSU while serving in ministry at New Covenant Fellowship Church in Chesapeake, VA.

## Helen House, Treasurer



Mrs. House is an alumna of Norfolk State University and has had a longstanding career in the insurance industry. A devoted mother to two sons, her community interests include helping students navigate their transition from high school to college or a professional trade.

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## Dr. Melody Williams (Director)



Dr. Melody Shelton Williams earned her Ph.D. in English from Old Dominion University (ODU) in 2014. She also obtained her M.A. in English from (ODU) (2009), and her B.A. in English from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) (2005). She will complete her second doctorate, a Doctor of Ministry, from the Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University in the Spring of 2021.

Dr. Mel has taught collegiately at multiple universities in the Tidewater region of Virginia for the last ten years and has also worked as a certified Army DOD Sr. Instructional Developer.

In the fall of 2016, she joined the faculty of Norfolk State University as an assistant professor in the English Department. Her research specialties are African American Rhetoric and Cinema, the preaching tradition of the Black Church, and Literature.

Her honors have included being awarded as a doctoral fellow from 2009-2014 by ODU, receiving the 2006 Black History in the Making Award from VCU, and serving as the guest speaker for the Batten Legacy Society, the Chesapeake Bay Wine Classic Foundation, U.S. Customs & Border Protection during the Obama administration, Richmond City Public Schools, and the Access College Foundation.

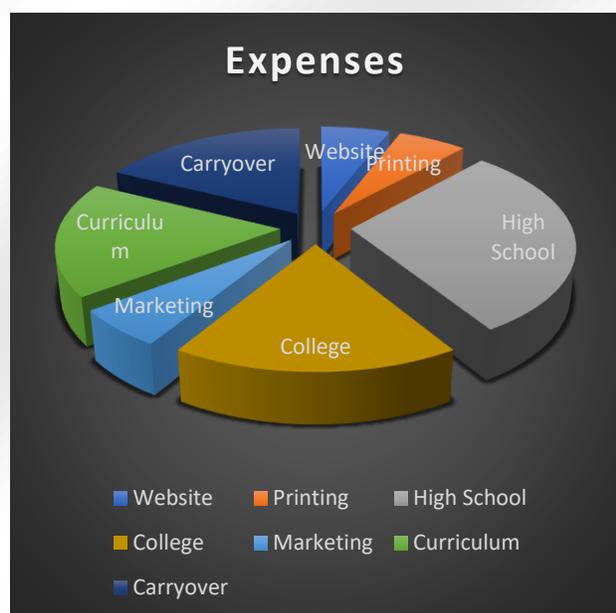
Dr. Mel's community endeavors include serving at Mount Lebanon Baptist Church (Chesapeake, VA), serving as a member of the board of directors for the nonprofit Subculture Inc., and completing leadership training with the Regent University T.D. Jakes School of Leadership, the Dr. I.V. Hilliard Unlimited Potential Initiative, and the ODU Women in Leadership Development Institute.

Dr. Mel has one fearless and talented daughter, Hope!

## WE NEED YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!

We have an ambitious goal to raise **\$5,000** in donations and recurring gifts to cover expenses **for training workshops** during the fall semester and to position The DREAMS Institute to continue workshops in the new year without interruption. We are determined to serve students and families in our community.

### FY 2019 Budget



		Projected End of Year (4 months/Sep-Dec)
Website/Tech	2%	100
Printing/Copying	2%	100
High School Workshops	10%	500
College Workshops	6%	300
Marketing Materials	4%	200
Curriculum	6%	300
<b>Subtotal 2019 Cash Expenses</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>\$1,500</b>
<b>Balance/Carryover to 2020 workshops</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>\$3,000</b>

The [www.drmelodywilliams.org](http://www.drmelodywilliams.org)  
**DREAMS** Institute 



@DrMelodeee

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