



**BUILDING ON DETROIT'S  
PROUD HISTORY OF CIVIC ACTION.**

---

**2018  
ANNUAL REPORT**

---

# REFLECTIONS ON 2018

I am pleased to present to you CitizenDetroit's first annual report as an independent organization. This FY2018 Annual Report is a symbol of our progress as an organization, stepping out on our own and continuing to grow.



**SHEILA COCKREL**  
CEO

Since our inception in 2012, we have believed that civic engagement is the bedrock of democracy; and people who are informed with factual, unbiased information are best prepared to be civically engaged and therefore have a positive impact on our democracy.

This past year, the retirement of our co-founder, Dr. Irvin Reid, and discontinuance of his Forum on Contemporary Issues in Society (FOCIS) initiative, of which CitizenDetroit was a part, led to our decision to become an independent 501c3 organization. Separating from Wayne State University — and the support of its organizational capacity and resources — has been challenging, yet we have managed to grow and prosper. We had to establish financial support, grow our infrastructure, begin to establish our own policies and procedures, all while continuing to provide high quality educational events and materials.

Our newly formed Board of Directors provided critical support and guidance in our first year and we could not have made such progress without them. We have been able to establish a board of talented, experienced individuals with diverse backgrounds that support the organization in areas of research and evaluation, fund development, organizational leadership, communications and marketing, organizational finance and so much more.

In addition to establishing a board in 2018 we:

- Acquired 501c3 Tax Exempt Status.
- Grew event attendance to numbers that required a change in venue.
- Increased digital engagement through social media, as well as saw growth in viewership of candidate videos 1.5x the number of views in the previous year, with nearly 76,000 views.
- Launched projects that targeted new groups of people for CitizenDetroit: high school students and young adults.

We know what we do well. We conduct excellent research; we develop thoughtful educational materials; and we offer rich opportunities to engage in the political process. We are pushing to do more; to try new things that will engage a more broad Detroit population; and as with all new things, we are learning useful lessons when we miss our mark. Initiating work with a younger population and building our digital following are areas in which we have started good work and in which we will improve in 2019.

In 2019, we also will continue to grow our organizational infrastructure by beginning strategic planning, participating in additional training, and cultivating more resources to support our work. The coming years will have critical elections locally and at the state and national level. We plan to continue to grow and deepen our commitment to provide trustworthy, factual, accountable information to residents that will empower them to engage.

Thank you for your support and partnership in this critical first year. We look forward to counting on you in the future so that we can continue to be a consistent and reliable resource for Detroiters.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sheila Cockrel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

# SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR CO-FOUNDER

We salute and thank Dr. Irvin D. Reid for his vision and support which led to the growth CitizenDetroit has experienced, and we take the time to acknowledge Dr. Reid's seminal leadership at Wayne State University, in Midtown, and with CitizenDetroit.

Irvin D. Reid is President Emeritus of Wayne State University. During his 11 years of distinguished service (1997-2008), he accomplished several initiatives that he believed would lead Wayne State University into "a new era of greatness." These initiatives stressed the university's commitment to student success, research, the urban environment, diversity and innovative technology, and have since formed the core principles of Wayne State's strategic planning. Under Dr. Reid's leadership, Wayne State completed hundreds of millions of dollars in new construction, including the creation of the business incubator, TechTown. In 2008, with support from Dr. Reid, Wayne State University founded the the Irvin D. Reid Honors College—now home to roughly 2,000 students-- which provides Wayne State's highest-achieving undergraduates with a program that is both academically rigorous and culturally engaged.



**DR. IRVIN D. REID**  
**WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**PRESIDENT EMERITUS**

Dr. Reid left the presidency of Wayne State to become inaugural holder of the Eugene Applebaum Chair in Community Engagement and Director of the Forum on Contemporary Issues in Society (FOCIS). Under his leadership, FOCIS involved coordinated public programs, research opportunities, and on-going community dialogue addressing specific issues that confront the citizens of Detroit, the United States, and the world. Each FOCIS lecture brought together members of the university, the greater Detroit community, and prominent speakers from around the world. Presentations through FOCIS have covered diverse subjects such as women in society, led by feminist and social activist Gloria Steinem and terrorism at home and abroad led by General (Ret.) David Petraeus. As a part of FOCIS, Dr. Reid also directed the African Democracy Project (ADP) at Wayne State, which examines the unfolding of democracy on the continent. As part of ADP, he has taken groups of students to many African countries to observe and learn about democracy during their elections. Since its inception, ADP has drawn upon multidisciplinary teams of faculty and students to develop a model for examining the development of democracy.

In 2011, Dr. Irvin Reid was approached by Sheila Cockrel about a critical gap in average Detroiters' understanding of the then impending municipal bankruptcy. Dr. Reid and the former Councilwoman discussed the need for Detroiters to have access to factual, reliable information so that residents could engage in shaping possible futures for the city's finances and services for residents and visitors alike. CitizenDetroit was born out of a shared vision by its founders, that informed and engaged citizens are vital for a vibrant local democracy. With the support of Dr. Reid, CitizenDetroit got its start as part of FOCIS.

Dr. Reid's commitment to the growth of Detroit, the exploration and building of Democracy, and the engagement of the citizenry is evident in his legacy of work; and CitizenDetroit's ability to launch into the future is made possible by the foundation he helped to create.

# WHO WE ARE

## MISSION

**We envision Detroit as the most informed and engaged city in the nation. We:**

- Educate residents to be fully engaged in the democratic life in the city;
- Provide residents with reputable information to make informed policy/political decisions;
- Encourage resident participation in the renaissance of neighborhoods.

## OUR HISTORY

As bankruptcy and state financial oversight loomed in Detroit's future, it was apparent that information about the issue from media coverage, meetings of elected leadership and academic reviews was not targeted for the understanding of, or input from Detroit residents. Thus, from a meeting between Dr. Irvin Reid, President Emeritus and founder of Wayne State University's Forum on Contemporary Issues in Society, and former Councilwoman Sheila Cockrel, the programming that would create CitizenDetroit was born.

Programming officially began in 2012 with a focus on the city's financial situation and provided information about the policy decisions that lead to the city's bankruptcy. Programming was designed to help residents understand and evaluate possible solutions, with the assumption that informed citizens make informed decisions.

After four years spent providing information and critical thinking exercises about budgeting, finance, bankruptcy, public safety and public schools issues, CitizenDetroit evolved its programming to provide individuals with opportunities to strengthen their engagement in the electoral process, including the evaluation of candidates based upon their proposed policies, scrutiny of political speech, and town hall forums where candidates engaged face-to-face with community members. That work continues today.

CitizenDetroit works to prepare citizens to take a seat in the forefront of public policy debate, discussion and decision-making.

"[CitizenDetroit] is an important place for everyone to understand their civic responsibility."

**-2012 Resident Participant**

**2012**

CitizenDetroit established with Wayne State University

**2017**

CitizenDetroit separates from Wayne State University

**2018**

CitizenDetroit becomes an independent non-profit organization



“CitizenDetroit encourages and facilitates critical thinking and thoughtful analysis with respect to local policy and local representatives.”  
**-Resident Participant**

“CitizenDetroit events allow me to voice my opinion and listen to both sides and try and come to some sort of common ground or create solutions to help with issues that Detroiters may have.”

**-Resident Participant**



“CitizenDetroit seeks representation from all the neighborhoods in the city. That is the reason why I continue to keep coming back.”  
**-Resident Participant**

# INFORM. ENGAGE. ACT.

Connecting with citizens and facilitating their informed civic engagement.



## 2018 DINNER & DIALOGUE TOPICS

Citizen Assembly

Citizen Celebration

Why Does Car Insurance Cost So Much in Detroit?

Candidate Forum for U.S. House Seat, 13th District

Candidate Forum for Michigan State Senate Candidates

Michigan House of Representatives Candidate Forum

Detroit Public Schools Community District Board Candidate Forum

Ballot Proposal Forum - Prop 1: Marijuana Legalization Initiative

Ballot Proposal Forum - Prop 2: Redistricting Commission & Prop 3: Voting Rights

Citizen Detroit Charter Commission Candidate Forum

# 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

**16**  
Events  
Hosted

**75,912**  
InformDetroit  
Views

**93%**  
Satisfaction  
Rate

**2,190**  
Persons  
Served

**63**  
Facilitators  
Trained

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Launch of Amplify Your Voice initiative

- First young professional happy-hour hosted
- First Amplify Your Vote Rally



**99%**  
overall  
facilitator  
effectiveness

## Launch of Vokebox initiative

- 22 DPSCD Schools serviced
- 726 students engaged across project development and implementation
- 24% rate of students who registered to vote



## PARTNERS



"CitizenDetroit has been able to bring together people across different ideologies and experiences and say 'how do we make our community better?'"

**-Jametta Lilly,  
Executive Director  
Detroit Parent Network**

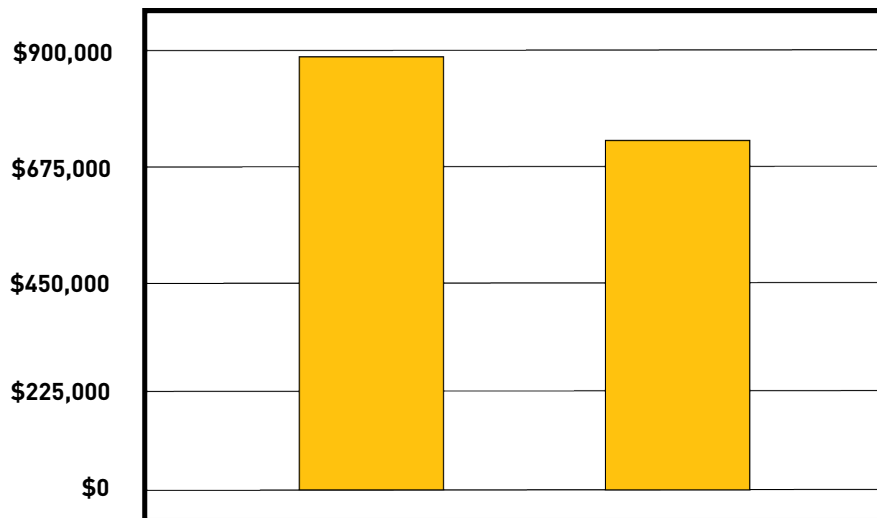


# FINANCIALS

FY 2018 was CitizenDetroit's first year as an independent 501c3 organization and we are proud to report that we received a clean audit report on our first-year financials.

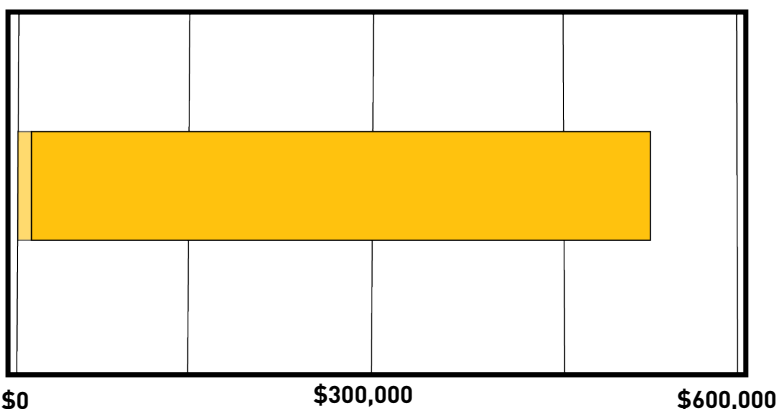
## REVENUE & EXPENSES

<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$897,295.00</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$715,295.00</b>



## ASSETS

<b>Beginning of FY</b>	<b>\$9,957.00</b>
<b>End of FY</b>	<b>\$528,683.00</b>





“CitizenDetroit does an amazing job at helping keep voters informed and offers non-partisan information to help me vote with confidence.”  
**-Resident Participant**

“Democracy is not just something we have, it’s something we do and the best way to do that is to be informed. That is the core of CitizenDetroit.”

**- Hon. Sonya Mays, Esq.  
CitizenDetroit Board Member**

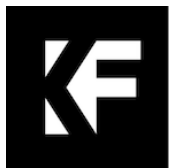


“It’s really important for existing Detroiters and new Detroiters to participate in this idea of citizenship.”  
**- Resident Participant**

# OUR BOARD MEMBERS

**Dennis Archer, Jr., Esq.**, CEO, Ignition Media Group/Founding Principal & President, Archer Corporate Services  
**Ronald Brown**, PhD, Associate Professor of Political Science, Wayne State University  
**Tammy Carnrike**, COO, Detroit Regional Chamber  
**Kathleen (Lisa) Cawley**, Esq., Managing Director - Health and Public Service, Accenture  
**Katy Cockrel**, Vice President - Public Relations, StockX / Co-Founder, Detroit Blows  
**Awenate Cobbina**, Esq., Director of Business Affairs & Associate Counsel, Palace Sports & Entertainment and Detroit Pistons  
**Jehan Crump-Gibson**, Esq., Co-founder & Managing Partner, Great Lakes Legal Group, PLLC  
**Nicole de Beaufort**, President, EarlyWorks, LLC  
**Kathryn B. Harrison**, Partner, Harrison Bryant, LLC  
**Stephen Henderson**, Host of Detroit Today (WDET), American Black Journal (WTVS), Center for Michigan/Bridge Detroit  
**Katie Katz**, Esq., Executive Director of Wealth Advisory, JP Morgan Private Bank  
**Katy Locker**, Consultant  
**Dr. Juan Jose Martinez**, School Leader & Director of Operations, Cesar Chavez Academy  
**Hon. Sonya Mays**, Esq., President & CEO, Develop Detroit, DPSCD Board Treasurer  
**Debra Pospiech**, Esq., Chief Administrative Officer & General Counsel, Detroit Water & Sewerage Department  
**Tony Saunders**, COO, Rock Ventures  
**Shannon Smith**, Middle Market Banker, JP Morgan Chase & Co.  
**Dr. Dale Thomson**, Chair, Department of Social Sciences, Associate Professor of Political Science, University of Michigan - Dearborn  
**Ingrid White**, Ingrid White Consulting  
**Dr. Geneva Williams**, CEO, Dr. Geneva Speaks, CEO & Founder, New Seasons Consultants & Collaborators  
**Special Advisor to the Board and Co-founder, CitizenDetroit**  
**Dr. Irvin D. Reid**, President Emeritus of Wayne State University

## OUR FUNDERS



**KNIGHT  
FOUNDATION**



**THE  
SKILLMAN  
FOUNDATION**

**THE KRESGE FOUNDATION**

**AMERICA IS NO FRAGILE THING.  
But the gains of our long journey to  
freedom are not assured. It falls to each  
of us...to embrace the task we've been  
given to continually try to improve this  
great nation of ours. Because for all our  
outward differences, we all share the  
same proud title:**

**CITIZEN.**

**-PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA**

**Follow Us**



**@citizendetroit**

**[www.citizendetroit.org](http://www.citizendetroit.org)**

CitizenDetroit  
2020 14th Street  
Detroit, MI 48216  
313-334-3131