Date: April 19, 2021

To: Cole Williams and Joel Van Kuiken, The Delta Project

From: Maia Coker, CAP 321-01 Student

Re: The Delta Project Media Kit

This memo explains the strategies behind the included components of the media kit I created for The Delta Project. I set the release dates on all materials for May 31, 2021, so that there is ample time to gather additional resources and to revise specific items (change dates, multimedia links) as needed for release.

**2 – Media Contact List**

The media contact list consists of 14 contacts, each from different outlets. There are four different categories: print, radio, TV, and online. The majority of contacts are based in the Grand Rapids area but there are a few from the Detroit area. It’s important to include Detroit because there are hundreds of families that may feel personal connections with The Delta Project after hearing your story of creating the organization and the stories of students that are featured on the website. The contact list includes specific names, contact information, bios and rationale as to why they are good choices.

**3 – News Release**

For the news release, I decided that focusing on what The Delta Project is all about was the most critical information and should be heavily detailed within the article. It’s a story that carries weight for millions of people. I emphasized how The Delta Project started and what it’s working towards now. It’s important that the audiences are able to see what you do and what the motivation is.

**4 – Pitch Letter**

The pitch letter offers a singular reporter to visit the Kent County Juvenile Detention Center to meet and interview one of The Delta Project’s students. It’s a simple email in which I wrote to a reporter from MLive that specifically writes on education. He is included on the media contact list. MLive is a popular print media outlet that reaches millions of readers throughout Michigan. This would be a great way to increase the awareness of The Delta Project due to its huge audience. This is also a way to inform people about what The Delta Project is doing and how they are collaborating with Gorilla to produce one-on-one conversations. The mentorship program and the Delta Project student being interviewed could be a great way of discussing how education is changing lives.

**5 – Audio News Release**

There are two audio news releases, one is 60 seconds and the other is 15 seconds. I think it’s important to reiterate that The Delta Project is doing a lot of work to be mentors to these young men and that is being known in the audio news release. I addressed it to WUOM-FM radio (Michigan Radio), which is located in Ann Arbor, Michigan. This station receives hundreds of thousands of listeners and is a great way to get the message out there.

**6 – Video News Release**

For the video news release, I chose to emphasize what exactly these kids have struggled with before ending up in the criminal justice system. It’s important that people understand that it’s not because they’ve committed a crime. Rather, they’ve experienced some sort of trauma. This would be useful when pitching to TV outlets as well as creating an emotional stir.

        

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News Release

May 31, 2021: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Cole Williams, The Delta Project Co-Founder, cole@thedeltaproject.co

ATTN: Specific beat editor

# How Do I Become Something I Don’t See?

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich.—There’s a distinct gap between young men of color and young men who are white who are currently in the criminal justice system. There’s a cycle of incarceration that leaves generations of people without mentorship. This includes fathers, brothers, and cousins who have been in the same shoes.

The Delta Project aims to help young men reach their full potential and see what they can become. There are millions of talented and intelligent youths in the criminal justice system who are often limited by a lack of resources that more affluent communities take for granted.

“This is about entering as sons themselves and then reentering as fathers,” said Cole Williams, Co-Founder of The Delta Project. “It’s also about their journey into returning back into their communities as young dads.”

Williams is no stranger to helping others. He’s the CEO and Founder of “Son To A Father” and “Cole Speaks,” which are two programs that work to restore relationships between boys and men of color. He was particularly motivated by his own journey of life and mental health. In 2017, he was posed the question, “How do I become something I don’t see?” There’s no easy answer, but it’s importance cannot be understated. It set in motion what The Delta Project is now.

With a team of six people, along with the Kent County Juvenile Detention Center Staff, The Delta Project has partnered with Gorilla, a film media company, to tell the stories of young men who are currently incarcerated.

-more-

“Kids are being recycled through different systems,” said Williams. “Giving them a voice wasn’t enough. I want to educate in a safe space.”

**About The Delta Project**

The Delta Project was started in early 2017, after one single question was asked. Millions of young men have been put into a perpetual cycle of incarceration. Based on stories of empowerment, cultural subversion, and human understanding, The Delta Project believes they can positively alter the lives of young men who are ready to become something they don’t see.

For more information about The Delta Project see <https://thedeltaproject.co/>

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*Sources*

*Cole Williams, The Delta Project Co-Founder, cole@thedeltaproject.co*

To: Brian McVicar, Education Reporter for MLive

From: Cole Williams, Co-Founder of The Delta Project

Subject: Mentoring Our Youth for a Better Tomorrow

Brian—

I thought you might be interested in a story about a couple of young men of color who are currently incarcerated in the Kent County Juvenile Detention Center because of your background with education reporting. Many of these young men were not allowed to reach their full potential due to a lack of resources that affluent communities—also in the Grand Rapids area—have and may take for granted.

The Delta Project was co-founded in 2017 by myself and Joel Van Kuiken. It started with one question: “How do I become something I don’t see?” That question carries weight, even if I didn’t have an easy answer right away. Since the start of the organization, and even before then, I’ve worked with some of the most talented and intelligent young men I’ve ever met. They just hadn’t been able to reach their full potential because of that lack of resources.

There is a perpetual cycle of incarceration that unfortunately leads to many young men of color continuously leaving and returning to the criminal justice system. With The Delta Project, my team and I have been working towards helping these young men maximize their potential. We’ve partnered with Gorilla—a creative studio—to create a series of videos that emphasize the importance of helping these kids.

I can arrange for you to meet and interview one Delta Project student on May 17. You would have from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (operating hours) on that Monday. I can also arrange for Stacy McGinnis, the Superintendent of the Kent County Juvenile Detention Center, to give you a tour through the facility.

If there is anything else you think you need in order to do this story, please let me know. I will call to follow up before May 14.

Thank you for considering this idea.

Cole Williams, The Delta Project Co-Founder

cole@thedeltaproject.co

To: Dustin Dwyer, WUOM-FM Radio (Michigan Radio)

Subject: Audio News Release: The Mentorship That’s Changing Lives

May 31, 2021: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Growing up, Mentorship, and Incarceration: What’s the Connection?

(:60)

ANN ARBOR, Mich. May 31, 2021—What started with one single question in 2017, turned into an organization that aims to help young men of color, who are in the criminal justice system, reach their maximum potential. These young men, and so many others, are limited due to a lack of resources.

The Delta Project, started in 2017, has worked tirelessly to become mentors to incarcerated young men, working alongside their partners, Gorilla and the Kent County Juvenile Detention Center.

Co-founder Cole Williams was motivated after his son had been in the center. His main goal was to find a way to educate people in a safe space.

(Actuality: Cole Williams, Co-Founder of The Delta Project, (:10) “This is about entering as sons themselves and then reentering as fathers. It’s also about their journey into returning back into their communities as young dads afterwards.” (Actuality available as MP3 at https://thedeltaproject.co)

Williams has met talented youths in the criminal justice system. There is a video series available to view on The Delta Project website, created with Gorilla, that creates one-on-one conversation between mentors and young men.

(Actuality: Cole Williams, Co-Founder of The Delta Project, (:06) “A lot of these young men are in the center for probation violations, another crime, or being removed from home due to family disruptions.” (Actuality available as MP3 at https://thedeltaproject.co)

-end-

Contact: Cole Williams, The Delta Project Co-Founder, cole@thedeltaproject.co

To: Dustin Dwyer, WUOM-FM Radio (Michigan Radio)

Subject: Audio News Release: The Mentorship That’s Changing Lives

May 31, 2021: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Growing up, Mentorship, and Incarceration: What’s the Connection?

(:15)

ANN ARBOR, Mich. May 31, 2021— What started with one single question in 2017, turned into an organization that aims to help young men of color, who are in the criminal justice system, reach their maximum potential. The Delta Project, started in 2017, has worked tirelessly to become mentors to incarcerated young men.

(Actuality: Cole Williams, Co-Founder of The Delta Project, (:10) “This is about entering as sons themselves and then reentering as fathers. It’s also about their journey into returning back into their communities as young dads afterwards.” (Actuality available as MP3 at https://thedeltaproject.co)

Williams has met talented youths in the criminal justice system. There is a video series available to view on The Delta Project website, created with Gorilla, that creates one-on-one conversation between mentors and young men.

-end-

Contact: Cole Williams, The Delta Project Co-Founder, cole@thedeltaproject.co



*Media Advisory*

Satellite News Feed

Monday, May 31, 2021

11:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. ET

Why Reaching Your Full Potential Isn’t Always Easy

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich.— There’s a distinct gap between young men of color and young men who are white who are currently in the criminal justice system. There’s a cycle of incarceration that leaves generations of people without mentorship. This includes fathers, brothers, and cousins who have been in the same shoes.

The Delta Project aims to help young men reach their full potential and see what they can become. There are millions of talented and intelligent youths in the criminal justice system who are often limited by a lack of resources that more affluent communities take for granted.

**What we have**: b-roll of the interior of the Kent County Juvenile Detention Center, cars driving by the center, students sitting down in front of the camera for episodes, SOT with Co-Founders Cole Williams and Joel Van Kuiken, students walking, aerial footage of Kent County Juvenile Detention Center

**How to localize**: Interview Delta Project students about how The Delta Project has been helpful, interview families of young men who are in the criminal justice system

Receive via Satellite: C-Band

Tuesday, March 2, 11:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. ET.

Telestar X, Transponder X, D/L Freq. XXX(x)

For more information: Cole Williams, The Delta Project Co-Founder

cole@thedeltaproject.co

Why Reaching Your Full Potential Isn’t Always Easy

*VNR Script: (:90)*

Suggested anchor intro: The Delta Project has been helping young men in the criminal justice system educate themselves through a mentorship program. Here is Leona Dunn with the story:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AUDIO: | VISUALS: |
| VO: There’s a distinct gap between young men of color and young men who are white who are currently in the criminal justice system. It’s a cycle of incarceration that leaves generations of people without mentorship. | Interior footage of the Kent County Juvenile Detention Center. Delta Project students sitting down for lunch. |
| VO: The Delta Project aims to help young men reach their full potential through a mentorship program, with a collaboration with Gorilla, a creative studio, and the Kent County Juvenile Detention Center. | Montage of Delta Project students sitting down in front of cameras for their one-on-one conversation. |
| SOT: (Joel Van Kuiken, VP, Co-Founder, The Delta Project, :15)“Kids are being recycled through different systems. We recognize that there are deeper-rooted issues in their behavior.” | Joel Van KuikenCo-Founder, The Delta Project |
| VO: Millions of talented and intelligent youths in the criminal justice system are often limited by a lack of resources. | Cars driving by the center, pedestrians walking on the sidewalk. |
| VO: The team of six people, along with their collaborative partners, have been working since 2017 to mentor young men of color who are currently incarcerated. | Aerial footage of the Kent County Juvenile Detention Center. |
| SOT: (Cole Williams, Co-Founder, The Delta Project, :20) “It’s things like food insecurity, lack of access to health insurance, substance abuse, chronic family issues, or disruption of families. This is about entering as sons themselves and then reentering as fathers. It’s also about their journey into returning back into their communities as young dads.” | Cole WilliamsCo-Founder, The Delta Project |
| VO: The Delta Project is shifting the stereotypes that have been on young people of color. Through their mentorship and education, they are focused on telling the stories of these young people through one-on-one conversations | Delta Project students walking through the hallways. |

Suggested anchor close: The Delta Project is currently working on creating more videos of these one-on-one conversations to create human connection and empowerment. Williams, a motivational speaker will be appearing tonight at 8 p.m. Eastern. If you’re interested in learning more, we have a link on our station’s website, (<https://thedeltaproject.co/>).

CAP 321: Media Relations Writing

Professor Jason Manshum, M.S.

# Client Feedback Form

#### Please return this form to Professor Jason Manshum:

#### manshuja@gvsu.edu

The Grand Valley State University student named below completed a media relations project for your business or organization as an assignment for a course in media relations writing. This form will be used as part of their assessment in this course and assessment of the GVSU PR program’s service learning. Please take a moment to fill it out and email to Professor Jason Manshum at the address above. Thank you for your participation in this course.

**(Students fill out top half; clients fill out bottom portion)**

### Student Name: Maia Coker

Client’s Name/Organization: The Delta Project

*Please rate the following on a* ***scale of 1-5****, with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree:*

\_\_The student demonstrated an effort to understand my business, organization.

\_\_I am satisfied with the quality of the media relations project.

\_\_The student presented the finished project to me by the agreed upon deadline.

\_\_The media relations project turned in was original writing by the student.

\_\_I plan to use some or all of the work the student provided.

Add any comments you would like to make (these will be shared with each student):