

OP-ED FEBRUARY 18, 2016 6:21 PM

We inspire marginalized young women to express black girlhood



BY THEMA CAMPBELL
girlpowerrocks.org

I am always amazed at the tenacity and resilience of young girls. I am even more amazed by the fighting spirit of young girls in our inner cities. Inspired by this spirit, I founded Girl Power in 2000 to lift up and support this population. Now I am fortunate to get to watch them develop every day, as they burst into Girl Power full of energy, hope, dreams and visions of fame — while, at the same time, they balance the depression and shame that accompany adolescence.

With the aim of “Improving Our World, One Girl at a Time” as our motto states, we slowly, steadfastly work with each girl, building trust and breaking through a thick exterior of self-protection that they’ve developed during their short lives in crisis. Beneath the tough exterior of social-media bullying, sexual-identity navigation and mean-girl sparring lives a girl who — like anyone else — just wants to have a voice and be loved unconditionally.

Providing that space for voice and love is what we do at Girl Power.

It’s highly challenging for most women, and girls of any age, to embrace their own power. Many girls are born into circumstances that nurture and protect their dreams. That is not what I see in the girls I work with from the county’s inner cities. Spirits have broken far too soon. Our society, whether purposely or by honest omission, has failed to embrace the true nature and value of women and girls — especially women and girls of color.

At Girl Power, we are acutely aware that those of us endowed with the care of young girls must make it impossible for anyone or anything, whether friend, family or foe, to interfere with the natural progression of the female spirit to come into its power.

Because we center our work on giving voice to a marginalized and underprivileged community, we are particularly thrilled to be partnering with Miami Dade College’s MDC Live Arts this week to give voice to the experience of black girlhood.

Through a meaningful interaction with MDC Live Arts guest artists, Camille A. Brown & Dancers, girls from Girl Power will explore ideas represented in the company’s performance of *Black Girl: Linguistic Play*.

Our girls will have the opportunity to stand and learn on the campus of “democracy’s college.” At MDC, they will engage in Camille A. Brown & Dancers’ Black Girl Spectrum workshop, exploring their experiences and empowering their voices and the full spectrum of black girlhood beyond media portrayals of a singular idea of what it means to be black and female.

Not only will our girls have the chance to be heard, they will also see the performance of *Black Girl: Linguistic Play* at the Miami-Dade County Auditorium Saturday night. They will see themselves reflected on stage. This is an important and wonderful opportunity, seeing themselves soaring and leading is definitely something they can use a whole lot more of.

THEMA CAMPBELL IS THE FOUNDER AND CEO OF GIRL POWER ROCKS.



MORE OP-ED

COMMENTS

0 Comments

Sort by **Oldest**



Add a comment...

 Facebook Comments Plugin



**FBI Searches
San Bernardino
Attackers
Family Homes**

**SPONSORED
CONTENT**



SPONSORED CONTENT

**These Two Guys are Crying About
the Razors They Make. The Reason**

Why Could  Make You Shed a Tear

Where do Gillette razors come from?

By Gillette
