

*Elevating courageous voices.
Building courageous people.
Celebrating courageous leaders.*

inclusive.
communities



DECEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER



[1.29.2025 - Omaha Table Talk | An Honest Conversation About the Sex Offender Registry](#)

[2.19.2025 - Omaha Table Talk | Open Paths: The Roads to Reproductive Justice](#)

[3.19.2025 - QTT El Corazón de la Familia: Analizando la Intersección de las Vidas LGBTQ+ y las Familias Latinas \(Heart of the Family: Discussing the Intersection of LGBTQ+ Lives and Latine Families\)](#)

Navigating Change with Gratitude: A Message to Our Community



It is with a heavy heart that we share some difficult news. As we navigate a challenging landscape for nonprofit organizations, we have had to make the incredibly hard decision to lay off three valued members of our team: Katie, Jennifer, and Madi. This was not a

decision made lightly, and it comes after careful consideration of the current realities we face.

Katie, Jennifer, and Madi have been more than just colleagues; they have been dedicated changemakers, advocates, and leaders in advancing our vision for a more just society. Their contributions to this organization and to the community have been significant, and we honor their hard work, passion, and the time they have given to Inclusive Communities. While this transition is painful, their impact will remain a cornerstone of the work we continue to do.

Nonprofits across the country, especially those committed to equity and justice, are grappling with funding decreases and a shifting political landscape. Organizations like Inclusive Communities, which amplify community voices and build leaders who believe in equity-driven culture change, are especially affected by these challenges. While our work is not direct service, it is community responsive. We invest in people, in dialogue, and in building the next generation of leaders committed to dismantling systemic inequities. The ripple effects of our programs are not always immediate, but they are transformative and essential.

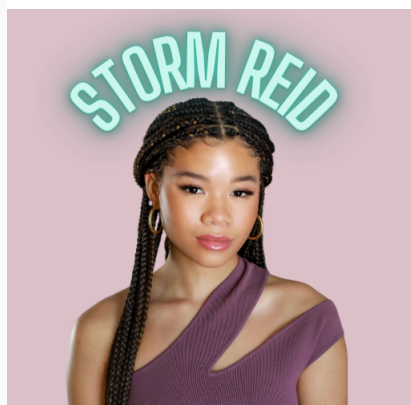
In times like these, adaptability is vital. To ensure that our work is sustainable and impactful for the future, we are going back to our roots, reflecting deeply on our mission, and adjusting to the changes happening within and around us. Transitions like this are never easy, but they offer an opportunity to realign, reflect, and move forward with intention. This includes understanding the people who depend on us most—from our dedicated staff and faculty to the volunteers who power our programs and the youth we serve through our IncluCity camp.

We remain committed to transparency and active community involvement as we lay out our next steps as an organization. In the coming months, we will be engaging in intentional in-house planning, followed by hosting community listening sessions to ensure that we are meeting the evolving needs of those we serve. Your voices are critical to helping us shape the future of Inclusive Communities.

To our community, we thank you for your continued trust and support. To our team members who are leaving, we thank you for everything you have given to this work and to this mission. While we grieve this moment, we also carry forward a shared commitment to creating a just society for all.

With gratitude,

Cammy
Executive Director



Jane H. & Rabbi Sidney H. Brooks

**CONVERSATIONS
FOR CHANGE**

SERIES

**A Conversation with Storm Reid, hosted by Inclusive Communities
March 25, 2025, 10:30 - 11:30 AM
Holland Performing Arts Center**

SAVE THE DATE for the third installment of the **Jane H. & Rabbi Sidney H. Brooks Conversations for Change**, featuring Emmy Award-winning

actress and producer Storm Reid, best known for her roles in *Euphoria*, *A Wrinkle in Time*, *The Last of Us*, and *Missing*.

The Jane H. & Rabbi Sidney H. Brooks Conversations for Change Series brings thought leaders from around the world to Omaha to share their experiences around confronting prejudice, bigotry, and discrimination to build and strengthen the bridges between differing communities.

Jane H. and Rabbi Sidney H. Brooks dedicated their lives to advocacy and service, significantly impacting the Jewish and Omaha communities through their commitment to social justice, interfaith dialogue, and civil rights. Jane championed mental health, housing, education, and civil rights, while Rabbi Sidney, as Temple Israel's leader for 33 years, promoted interfaith understanding and was honored for his contributions to diversity and inclusion.

[Click to learn more about Conversations for Change and our sponsorship opportunities!](#)

Omaha Table Talk

An Honest Conversation about the Sex Offender Registry

Wednesday, January 29, 2025

6:00 - 7:30 P.M.

Metropolitan Community College |
South Omaha Campus | Center for
Advanced Manufacturing Building

*Due to the sensitive nature of this
conversation, we have restricted the
age of attendance to 19+.*



[REGISTER HERE](#)

January 21

National

Day of

Racial

Healing

dayofracialhealing.org

The National Day of Racial Healing is a time to contemplate our shared values and create the blueprint together for #HowWeHeal from the effects of racism. Launched in 2017, it is an opportunity to bring ALL people together and inspire collective action to build common ground for a more just and equitable world.

inclu*think*****

Choosing Joy and Appreciating Our Elders

by Brittany Wright

I'm going to be real with y'all—I've been feeling very discouraged and unmotivated lately. Waking up on November 6th and seeing how this country views Black women was... disheartening, to say the least. The future sometimes feels so uncertain and, if I'm honest, a bit terrifying. The cultural shifts we're

experiencing right now make the social justice movement of 2020—and the progress we've fought for since—feel like they happened decades ago.

To cope, I've been doing what I can to fill my cup and take care of myself. One way I do that is by connecting with the people I love. A few weeks ago, on a Friday afternoon, I decided to call my favorite person in the world: my Nana. Our biweekly check-ins are a ritual I look forward to, and that day, her words were exactly what I needed to hear.

A little backstory on Nana: she was born in 1940, in a small town outside Little Rock, to parents of Black, White, and Indigenous backgrounds. Needless to say, she's seen and experienced more than I can imagine. She's one of the strongest, wisest people I know and deserves so much credit for shaping the woman I am today (shoutout to Mom and Dad too!). When Nana speaks, I listen.

As I shared my feelings with her, I left that conversation feeling so loved, seen, heard, and cared for. Whew—when I say I hit the jackpot with my Nana, I mean it! She told me something that's been ringing in my head ever since:

"Brittany, remember who you are. Things are hard, and life will always have hardships, but finding joy is a decision you have to make. No matter what is going on in the world, you are in control of your life, your emotions—all of it. You give no man control over your life; you are on this earth for a reason and have a purpose, so get to doing it."

Her words made me think a lot about how much influence we allow the external world to have over us—our thoughts, decisions, and even our sense of self. In a world filled with conflicts and hardships, it's easy to feel overwhelmed and let external pressures dictate our priorities. Acknowledging these struggles is important—they're real and significant. But I've also realized how essential it is to reclaim our inner clarity and agency.

This reflection also led me to think about joy. Choosing joy, especially in hard times, is a radical act. It's not about denying reality; it's about embracing the full spectrum of our experiences. It takes courage to seek joy when grief feels all-consuming or challenges seem insurmountable. But by doing so, we honor our resilience and capacity to keep moving forward.

Here are a few simple ways I've been choosing joy:

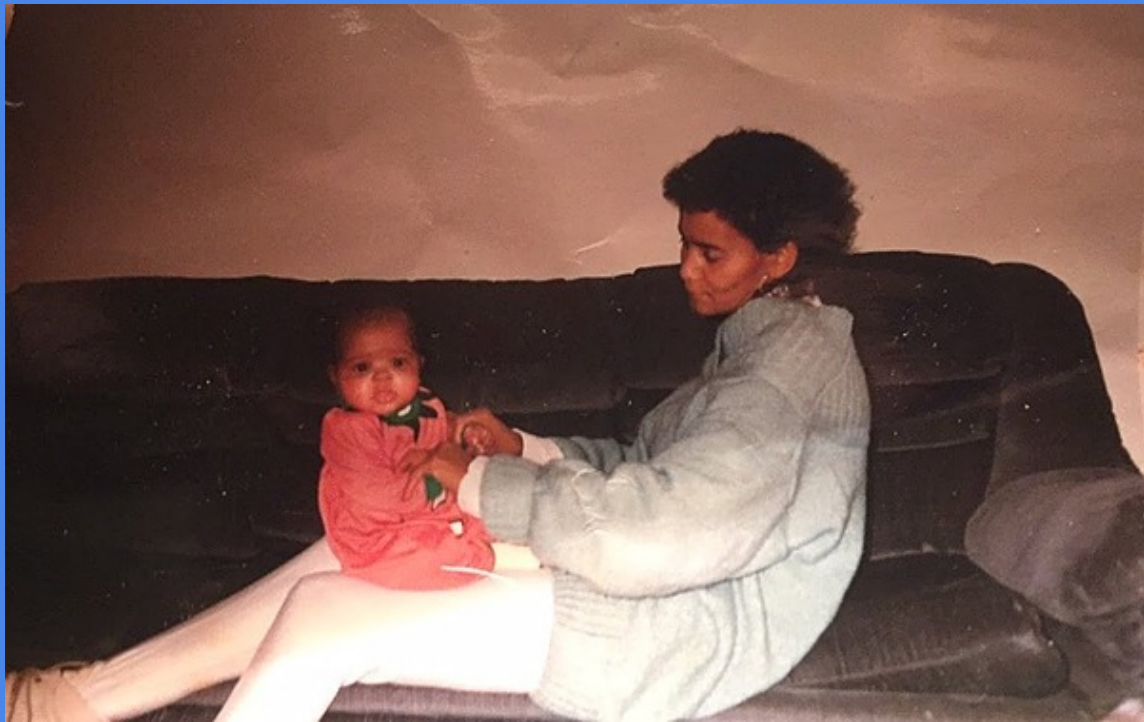
1. **Daily Gratitude Practice:** I've started my mornings by listing three things I'm grateful for. Keeping a gratitude journal—celebrating both the big and small—helps shift my focus from what's wrong to what's right.
2. **Seeking Connection:** I find so much joy in spending time with my people. A heartfelt conversation or shared laugh can do wonders for my mindset and attitude.
3. **Engaging in Activities I Love:** Whether it's reading a wild fiction book, working on a puzzle, or dancing around my apartment, doing something that brings me peace can be a powerful antidote to despair.

4. **Being Present:** I have a tendency to think too far ahead, planning for things to go wrong and worrying about the future. I've found that mindfulness activities help me slow down and fully experience the moment I'm in. Quick breathing exercises or a three-minute guided meditation can ground me and bring me back to the now.

As I thought about writing this blog post, I'll admit I struggled. Most of what I had to say felt like doom and gloom. But I'm forever grateful for the loved ones in my life, like my Nana, who help center me and bring much-needed perspective.

So, I hope you make the decision to choose joy—not as a denial of your struggles, but as an act of defiance against despair. In moments like these, joy can become our most powerful tool for resilience and healing.

I'll leave you with these final thoughts. A few years ago, I heard an African proverb that stuck with me: *"When an Elder dies, a library burns to the ground."* So, while you are choosing joy, take some time to enjoy and appreciate the wisdom of the libraries of those who have come before you.



*photo of Baby Brittany and Nana

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