



SAEDI
COLLECTIVE

**Solidarity Arts & Education Decolonial initiatives
Collective**

**Mid-Year Report
January - June 2024**



Message from the founder

For years, I have been working off-the-clock to build a network of Black women who support each other in providing resources for our communities. Bolstered by advanced degrees, a comfortable, middle-class upbringing, and the relative power of the US dollar, I am aware of how a handful of early advantages can lead to a lifetime of disparities. My goal has been to tie my fate to that of a network of Black women in Honduras, Senegal, Tanzania, and other countries in ways that leverage my privilege to support our collective survival and well-being. This network reaches deep into US communities even as it extends to other countries.

Over the years, I have worked for nonprofit organizations in program director and executive director roles, building the skills that have prepared me for the founding of this organization, Solidarity Arts & Education Decolonial initiatives (SAEDi) Collective. SAEDi is ideas spelled backwards; it pushes forward unconventional ways of relating to one another and imagines other worlds. In mathematics, the number i is the first imaginary number students learn. Trained in mathematics (BA), computer science (MS), international communication (MA), and international relations (PhD), this organization leverages all of my training to support popular education, community-based research, and interactive arts experiences that advance Black reparations, food sovereignty, and prison abolition movements.

We have grown quickly in these first six months, and are grateful to have five-year commitments from our founding Board of Directors. In this first mid-year report, we introduce you to our team. This early history is shared in the spirit of building a transparent relationship of accountability with community supporters and donors. If you are not already among our monthly donors, we hope that you will sign on to becoming a monthly contributor at <https://saedicollective.org/donations/donation-form/>.

Join us in advancing contemporary freedom work through arts experiences, popular education, and community-based research!

K. Melchor Quick Hall



Introducing the Board of Directors

*"What contribution do you want to make to SAEDi Collective's early development?
And what part of the programmatic work of the organization most excites you?"*



Takiyah Harper

My contribution to SAEDi Collective's early development is in the form of fifteen years of community development experience in the U.S. and West Africa. I bring a wealth of grassroots organizing and collective building knowledge that translates to implementing SAEDi's vision. I am most excited about the community-based research part of the programmatic work.



Jessica Cunningham Akoto

I want to make sure SAEDi Collective gets the footing it deserves and needs to thrive in its early years. I am most excited to leverage my experience in public education and leadership development to support the team in realizing its vision for the Popular Education program.



A. Zakiyyah Early

My mother always says, "Many hands make light work," and thus my contribution to SAEDi Collective's early development is doing anything that advances the mission, vision, and values of the movement. I am here to help. Arts Experiences is the programmatic area that most excites me. I firmly believe through art we are able to witness the inherent genius of Black people coded in our DNA that otherwise would have gone unrecognized.



Our Team

"How do the values, mission, or vision of SAEDi Collective support you in creating the future you want to co-construct?"



Cheryl Jefferson Page

In alignment with SAEDi Collective's vision to build a future with reparations for Black people, my personal goal is to gain a level of mastery in the application of community based participatory research (CBPR). The employment of CBPR provides an equitable approach to research, collaboration, and engagement with the people we hope to uplift at the local level. My hope for conducting CBPR is that it will increase our collective body of knowledge and also increase awareness of Black people living in marginalized communities who are worthy of reparations.



Teniqua Pope

What resonates most with me is SAEDi Collective's vision of liberation and self-determination for Black people. This shared vision is the foundation for my consulting work in revitalizing and reimagining historically Black towns and settlements in the US and abroad. With SAEDi's guidance and collaboration, we are co-constructing communities that are self-sustaining, grassroots driven, and less impacted by systemic barriers.



Judith Atamba

In Africa, women are the ones who work in the garden and make food for the family. We sell the food, so that we do not have to be dependent on men. There must be education for the girls so they can be aware of the challenges for married women. When a girl is educated, she will not be vulnerable to early marriage. The girls who are staying with me would have been subjected to genital mutilation if they were not here. When you educate a woman, you educate a nation.



Abigail Cumberbatch

What excites me about SAEDi Collective is the opportunity it gives Black women to collectively imagine their futures. In the future I wish to co-construct, I want to employ my imagination as a tool for Black women's liberation. I am confident that being a part of the SAEDi Collective family will bring me one step closer to materializing my dreams of community, sisterhood and freedom.



Dara Jackson

SAEDi keeps me connected. I see myself as a conduit for supporting women and this gives me the opportunity to do so. Although I'll be doing the social media, I'm hoping that I can support the team with visibility so we can reach the people who need SAEDi and want to support those who need SAEDi.



Julivic Marquez

I can trust that SAEDi Collective will honor its values not just in its programming but how it organizes, structures its role and treats its members. I came into this organization because I was looking into a collective that did multidisciplinary decolonial transnational work through the lens of Black feminism in which I could be in a restorative collaborative connection with its team members, programming and audience.



Samantha Jeune

I believe in a future where all of us are not just surviving but we're thriving on our own terms. SAEDi Collective's mission and vision support this in working towards a future where we are truly free.



Timeline: 1/2024 - 6/2024



1

Massachusetts nonprofit status granted



Awarded **Vital Village Networks Community Food Systems Fellowship** to support Pool Garden Classroom food sovereignty project

1



COLLEGE of CHARLESTON
AVERY RESEARCH CENTER FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

2

Grant from reparations funder **Liberation Ventures** confirmed; "Aiming for Freedom" traveling exhibition launched at **Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture** (College of Charleston) featuring "tea & cake" event with **AltarCakes** by Zien-Celeste, supported by a **New America (Lumina Foundation) Us@250 Fellowship** and **Humanity in Action racial equity grant** (for commissioned art)



Retroactively granted 501(c)(3) nonprofit status, effective January 2024

3





Signed mutual aid memorandum of understanding with strategic reparations partner **The Brownsville Project**



Received large individual donation; K. Melchor Quick Hall awarded **Mass Cultural Council "Grant for Creative Individuals"** in support of poetry accompanying "Aiming for Freedom" traveling exhibition

4

4



Notified that SAEDi Collective was finalist for state humanities grant; SAEDi Collective team members K. Melchor Quick Hall, Abigail Cumberbatch, Dara Jackson, and Julivic Marquez presented at "Caring Futures" conference at The American University of Paris



5

SAEDi Collective research team visited Frostburg, MD to meet with descendants of the historic African American Brownsville community at unveiling of commissioned art mosaic

5



6

"Aiming for Freedom" exhibition had Juneteenth premier at **Noir Collective AVL**

