WINTER 2025

DBG
EST. DETROIT 2007

HERE'S A GLIMPSE OF THE IMPACT BEING MADE AT DBG DETROIT!

IN THE NEWS

Holly Campbell, Lions Rally Around DBG

Holly Campbell, wife of Lions head coach Dan Campbell, is rallying others to invest in our program and students. Holly joined Lions players for a coat drive at DBG and was inspired by our holistic approach and lasting impact. "We are committed to doing everything we can to bring awareness and critical funding to the mission," she said. Holly also included DBG in a surprise Starbucks promotion and she, along with Kathy Agnew, donated prime NFL tickets, which were auctioned to support our program.

READ THE FULL STORY

DBG INVESTS $6,000 IN STUDENT-DRIVEN IDEAS

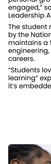
A DBG mascot, video game development, and hair braiding classes are three innovative student-driven ideas that were pitched and selected during our Theory of Change event on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. The annual event gives students an opportunity to research, collaborate, and have a direct impact on programming decisions. DBG invests a total of $6,000 to make student ideas, selected by a panel of judges, a reality.

This year's judges included Sati Smith, CEO of Diversified Members Credit Union, Shobi Mathew, a soon-to-be doctor and longtime DBG volunteer, donor Pat Fallie, and DBG leadership team members.

"I'm really happy beyond compare," said Michael about his video game development pitch being selected. "A lot of people think video games are a waste of time, but it's never a waste of time to make your imagination stronger. I think [this class] will help kids learn and have more chances for careers."

HEAR THE WINNING PITCHES

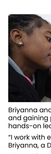
UPCOMING AT DBG



Senior Celebration
June 7, 2025, 1-3pm

DBG Detroit, 6445 E. Vernor Hwy, Detroit, MI 48207

Join us as we celebrate the accomplishments of the DBG Detroit Senior Class of 2025! This special afternoon honors their dedication, growth, and success. Guests will enjoy a catered lunch, music, and interactive activities.



Partner Appreciation Event

SAVE THE DATE Sept 26, 2025, 7-10pm

Lumen Detroit, 1803 Grand River Ave, Detroit, MI 48226

We couldn't do it without you. Join us for an evening of gratitude as we celebrate our valued partners who make our mission possible. Enjoy great food, live entertainment, and good company as we reflect on shared impact and look ahead to what's next.

VISIT OUR EVENTS PAGE

WORKFORCE READINESS

Student Researchers Shine

Four DBG student researchers (Keenan, Garrett, Jamarion, and Messiah) presented at the Great Lakes Regional Counseling Psychology Conference at Wayne State University, showcasing their groundbreaking data collection and highlighting how student voice informs our work and how meaningful data drives our mission.

"When a scholar has agency and voice in their personal growth, they are likely to be more engaged," said Messiah, a junior at Jalen Rose Leadership Academy.

The student researchers are participating in a multi-year study funded by the National Science Foundation, investigating how DBG consistently maintains a 98% opt-in rate for our voluntary STEAM Lab (science, technology, engineering, art, and math). 90% of DBG students go on to pursue STEAM careers.

"Students love the STEAM Lab because it promotes hands-on, collaborative learning" explained Garrett, an 11th grader at U of D Jesuit High School. "And it's embedded at DBG, a familiar environment."

READ MORE

New Internships Provide Real-World Training

Our first official student internship program is in full swing at DBG. High school students are getting real-world experience during daily programming and learning about areas of future career interest from marketing to data, operations, and even culinary arts.

Briyanna and Harmonie are two of the student interns building critical skills, and gaining professional development, networking opportunities, and hands-on learning directly with the DBG team.

"I work with elementary students and I'm trying to improve their reading skills," says Briyanna, a DBG senior who plans to pursue neuroscience.

"I help with social media, communications strategy, and more," adds Harmonie, who plans to study marketing or public relations. "This experience is setting me up for future success."

As the program evolves, we aim to connect students with external opportunities that align with their growth and aspirations.

TUNE IN TO THE SHARED POWER PODCAST

Want to see and hear what truly happens inside DBG, straight from our students themselves? Our up-and-coming content creators have launched their very own Shared Powered Podcast, which is now live online - featuring our kids as hosts, camera operators, producers, interviewers, creative directors, and more.

Meeting three times a week, our podcast class consists of passionate students who rotate through various roles. Their classroom has been transformed into a fully equipped studio, complete with professional microphones, tripods, cameras, and a podcast mixer, giving them a true-to-life broadcasting experience that can translate into future career opportunities.

The idea for this class was pitched by our students and selected by judges during a previous Theory of Change event. We are so proud of our students' hard work to bring the podcast to life.

LISTEN TO THE FIRST EPISODE

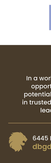
DBG ALUMNI WINS

DBG Alum Vannel Johnson is Driving Toward a Bright Future

He was the youngest person ever to drive a Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT) bus, and that was just the beginning of a career that continues to move forward for DBG alum Vannel Johnson.

Vannel first joined the DBG - Detroit family as an elementary student in 2008, just a year after our program started. In 2016, he graduated from Martin Luther King, Jr. High School and took on the significant responsibility of helping Detroiters get where they need to go - safely, and on time - as a bus driver for DDOT. He held that role for three years, but left during COVID. Vannel continues to use his commercial driving experience today.

"DBG helped me become the man I am today," he says. "They're so supportive. They helped me structure the foundation of my life."



These days, Vannel drives for GFL Environmental, Inc. a Canadian waste management company that employs more than 20,000 people. He plans to pursue a scholarship through the company to further his education and earn a degree in environmental science. He says a senior class trip to Denver with DBG that included hiking, rock climbing, and staying in cabins, helped foster his love of nature. It's an experience he says he'll never forget.

"The environment is important to me," he says. "We need clear air, clean water, and a clean Earth. I want to be part of the solution and help make a positive difference."

"DBG helped me become the man I am today. They helped me structure the foundation of my life."

- VANNEL JOHNSON, DBG ALUM

LONG-TERM DATA FOR LASTING IMPACT

At DBG we aren't measuring just academic performance but more importantly 'extra-academic' factors in social-emotional control. Measuring social-emotional growth isn't just about collecting data - it's about understanding the journey over time.

By tracking these crucial indicators year-over-year, we can:

1. Identify patterns of growth and challenge
   - See how students develop resilience over time
   - Understand which interventions have lasting impact
   - Recognize external factors affecting student progress
2. Make data-driven program adjustments
   - Respond quickly when students need additional support
   - Scale successful approaches across our programs
   - Allocate resources where they'll have maximum impact

This systematic and collaborative approach to measurement allows us to move beyond simple before-and-after snapshots to truly understand the transformative journey our students experience. When we see fluctuations in the data, we can respond with targeted interventions, program supports and specific focus areas of discussion that address both immediate needs and long-term growth.

CONTRIBUTE TO THE LASTING IMPACT OF DBG!

WHATEVER IT TAKES

In a world that has failed too many young people, we create personalized opportunities where they can set down their burdens and pick up their potential - in spaces to be curious, to grow, to connect, and to lead. Rooted in trusted relationships, we champion shared power, owning your voice, and leading lasting change. Whatever it takes, for as long as it takes.

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