

Take the initiative!: Students take the reins at Blackstone Academy Charter

The students Blackstone Academy Charter School reacted to the media spotlight on the plight of brown-skinned people by saying they've had enough. They took the initiative to create real change — starting in the classroom and reaching the entire school. They created a safe space where people with brown skin are no longer at the mercy of the media. A space where they create a future for themselves, not asking society for help but showing society what they can do on their own. They created marches, opportunities, crafted conversations and continue to take the initiative!

The Black Youth Initiative is a collective of young Black voices coming together, regardless of individual beliefs, religion and sexuality, unified under one cause. The rest of us can learn from these students to reinvest in our own community, spark hard conversations that create lasting change and unite in more than just hard times, but at all times. They write, dream and bleed the America dream and demand the right to live a happy and free life without seeing someone like themselves dying to just to live, and I commend the teachers who have made a difference in these students' lives.

Let us recall the great words of Langston Hughes. "We younger Negro artists who create now intend to express our individual dark-skinned selves without fear or shame. If white people are pleased, we are glad. If they are not, it doesn't matter. We know we are beautiful."