

# CALL FOR *HISTORIC* NORTH END STORYTELLERS

➔ **Vanguard Community Development Corporation** is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization formed in 1994 to provide housing, economic development and community engagement programs for the Historic North End neighborhood. In 2020, Vanguard received funding from the Knight Foundation to make streetscape improvements to East Grand Boulevard, between Woodward and I-75 in the Historic North End Detroit neighborhood. This portion of East Grand Boulevard also received a Michigan Main Street designation in 2020.



The **East Grand Boulevard Transformation project** will develop, with community insight and expertise, a vision and vibe for the boulevard. The community engagement planning process was completed in September 2021, which has resulted in a design that includes the location and type of plantings, streetscape furniture, and signage on the boulevard.

Vanguard, in partnership with Know Allegiance Nation, is enlisting the collaboration of up to **6-Storytellers to highlight the true history and preserve the culture of the North End in written and oral form.** Storytellers can be elders, current residents, legacy residents, and/or historians. Priority will be given to North End legacy residents.

**Know Allegiance Nation (KAN)** is a village building enterprise that seeks to build a nation of knowledge seekers through consciousness raising and literacy attainment. KAN was formed in 2005, in Detroit's North End. KAN operates several literacy initiatives including KAN Books, Illuminate: Literacy Entrepreneurs, Operation Rebel Community Radio, the Bikes, Barrels & Books Fair and the Writers on Wheels Bike Ride.

## WHAT IS A STORYTELLER?

**In the African tradition, a Djeli, Griot or Storyteller holds the journeys of the children in their memory.** Those memories are shared with the next generation, adding to the collective scroll that is held by the community, as those children move to adulthood and emerge as elders. Our storytellers, many who show themselves as elders, are our walking libraries inheriting the stories of past



generations as they create their own. **A living intention to not forget those that came before us,** and those that are with us for those that will be is the oath of a Djeli.

A story includes the beginning, middle and/or end of the people, places and things that make up an era. A storyteller narrates these stories. We are seeking storytellers and their stories in written and oral form to archive and share the history of the North End neighborhood.

## WHAT IS A LEGACY RESIDENT?

A legacy resident is someone who lives or has lived in the neighborhood, and whose parent or other family member has also lived or lives in the North End neighborhood. Documentation of residency is required if you are seeking the North End Legacy residency priority consideration.

## BENEFITS:

Each Storyteller will be **compensated with \$500 and given an opportunity to document the rich, cultural history of the North End.** Storytellers will work in partnership with Know Allegiance Nation and Vanguard to complete their story submissions.

The stories (written and oral) crafted as part of this process will be displayed on semi-permanent signage along E. Grand Boulevard as part of the East Grand Boulevard Streetscape Transformation Project.



## Become a Storyteller!

### NOMINATE YOURSELF:

- **Tell us about yourself** and why you value story telling. Why are you interested in participating in this project?
- **Submit an example of a story** you would tell about the history of the North End (people, history and/or culture).
- **Submit a paragraph of your involvement** in or connection to the North End (past and present).



## Find a Storyteller!

### NOMINATE A NEIGHBOR:

- **Tell us about your neighbor/family member/ friend** and why they would be a good storyteller for this project.
- **Confirm that the neighbor being nominated has agreed to the nomination** and provide contact information for the neighbor.
- **Submit an example of a story** they shared with you about their experience in or about the history and culture of the North End.
- **Send us a paragraph about their involvement** in or connection to the North End (past, present and not already told above).



## ➡ IMPORTANT PROJECT DATES TO REMEMBER ⬅

### SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

*January 14, 2022 by 5pm*

Evaluation of submissions:  
*January 26, 2022*

Announcement of selected storytellers:  
*January 28, 2022*



*Apply here:*

<https://bit.ly/3yoT3yn>

Questions about the application or process?  
Email Monica Edmonds at [medmonds@vanguardcdc.org](mailto:medmonds@vanguardcdc.org)

### Pre-Submission Project Overview and Q&A meeting on Zoom:

*December 17, 12:00 PM*

*Join here:*

<https://bit.ly/30mAazs>

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