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WNET to Mentor Two Winners of the National Black Programming Consortium's NBPC 360 Program Fund

*Producers of 'POPS' and 'Pixie Dust,' two New York City Web-based projects,
recipients of mentorship*

NEW YORK, May 14, 2015 — WNET, PBS's flagship public media provider, and the parent company of THIRTEEN and WLIW21 and operator of NJTV, is providing workspace and mentorship as needed to the producers of Web-based projects *POPS* (Garland McLaurin) and *Pixie Dust* (Damon Colquhoun). The two projects are winners of the Harlem-based National Black Programming Consortium (NBPC)'s inaugural NBPC 360 program fund and incubator for TV, Web and transmedia series.

Launched in October 2014, NBPC 360 is designed to develop content about the Black experience and help position the projects closer to market, while also developing the nation's Black producers and giving them the skills and know-how to provide the type of content desired by public media audiences. Last fall, WNET served as the lead partner station for NBPC 360, agreeing to provide publicity, social media and help with project selection. In the event that a New York-based project won, WNET agreed to offer in-kind support.

"WNET is committed to supporting diverse voices and telling those stories not often addressed in the media," said WNET's Vice President of Programming Stephen Segaller. "We believe the NBPC 360 program fund and incubator are important to the future of public media. We're pleased to be able to invest time, energy and resources into two very promising projects."

As part of WNET's partnership with NBPC, the station will provide a workspace for four to six months while the producers develop their pilots. They will have access to WNET's senior editorial staff for feedback and guidance as the pilots develop. Once the pilot is completed, the producers will use their pilots to fundraise for their respective series.

"We are excited that WNET wants to extend the NBPC 360 partnership," said NBPC Executive Director Leslie Fields-Cruz. "Inviting Garland and Damon into the station during the development of their pilots demonstrates a sincere desire to support NBPC's efforts to bring new talent and new content to public media."

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Web based project winners and recipients of mentorship:

- *POPS*, produced by Garland McLaurin and Jason Samuels, is a humorous, enlightening and engaging exploration of fatherhood as experienced by three African-American men facing the toughest challenge of their lives: becoming good fathers. The project was awarded \$60,000 under NBPC 360.
- *Pixie Dust*, produced by Damon Colquhoun and Shertease Wheeler, is a scripted series that follows a teenage girl whose mother battles mental illness. The girl has fantastical powers both to see the psychological beast that lies within her mother and to quell that beast. *Pixie Dust* won \$50,000.

The program also chose two winning broadcast projects, both of which were awarded \$100,000 under NBPC 360:

- *My Africa Is*, produced by Nosa Garrick and Hassatou Diallo, is a public affairs series about young innovators in Africa who are creating change in their communities through arts, culture, science and technology.
- *Street Cred*, produced by Sultan Sherrief and Oren Goldberg, is a reality show set in Detroit where high school students learn to transfer street skills into production skills on a movie set while vying for a dream job.

NBPC 360 launched in October 2014 with an open call which saw 163 applications to the program in January. Eight projects were chosen for the incubator and vied for funding at the Pitch Black pitching session last month. The session was attended by a Who's Who of public television, including CPB, PBS, American Public Television, WORLD Channel, ITVS, POV and WNET, as well as attendees from HBO, A&E, Fox, BET, Tribeca All Access and Third World Newsreel.

The four projects were selected for funding to help produce the pilots over the next six months. Once pilots have been completed, the winning producing teams — with the support of NBPC — will then pursue distribution for the programs.

NBPC 360 partners include WNET (lead station), WTTW, WYES, KQED, WGBH/World, American Public Television, National Minority Consortia, SCETV, BritDoc, POV, ITVS, IFP Made in New York, Tribeca Film Institute, NYC Media, Silicon Harlem and PGA Diversity. The program is made possible by funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

For more information on WNET, visit <http://www.wnet.org/> or follow it on Twitter <https://twitter.com/thirteenny> or Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/wnet-thirteen>.

For more information on NBPC or NBPC 360, visit www.blackpublicmedia.org or follow the organization on Twitter (@BLKPublicMedia) or Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/BlackPublicMedia>).

About WNET

As New York's flagship public media provider and the parent company of [THIRTEEN](#) and [WLIW21](#) and operator of [NJTV](#), WNET brings quality arts, education and public affairs programming to more than 5 million viewers each week. WNET produces and presents such acclaimed PBS series as [Nature](#), [Great Performances](#), [American Masters](#), [PBS NewsHour Weekend](#), [Charlie Rose](#) and a range of documentaries, children's programs, and local news and cultural offerings available on air and online. A pioneer in educational programming, WNET has created such groundbreaking series as [Get the Math](#), [Oh Noah!](#) and [Cyberchase](#) and provides tools for educators that bring compelling content to life in the classroom and at home. WNET highlights the tri-state's unique culture and diverse communities through [NYC-ARTS](#), [Reel 13](#), [NJTV News with Mary Alice Williams](#) and [MetroFocus](#), the multi-platform news magazine focusing on the New York region. WNET is also a leader in connecting with viewers on emerging platforms, including the [THIRTEEN Explore App](#) where users can stream PBS content for free.

About NBPC

The National Black Programming Consortium (NBPC) is committed to enriching our democracy by educating, enlightening, empowering and engaging the American public. We support diverse voices by developing, producing and distributing innovative media about the Black experience and by investing in visionary content makers. NBPC provides quality content for public media outlets, including, among others, PBS and PBS.org and BlackPublicMedia.org, as well as other platforms, while training and mentoring the next generation of Black filmmakers. Founded in 1979, NBPC produces the [AfroPop: The Ultimate Cultural Exchange](#) documentary series and Peabody Award-winning [180 Days](#) series. The organization also manages NBPC 360, a funding and training initiative designed to accelerate the production of important Black serial and interactive content.

For interview and media inquiries, contact:

FOR WNET:

Donna Williams
WNET
Williamsd@wnet.org
212-560-8030

FOR NBPC:

Cheryl L. Duncan
Cheryl Duncan & Company Inc.
cheryl@cherylduncanpr.com
201-552-9239 (O)