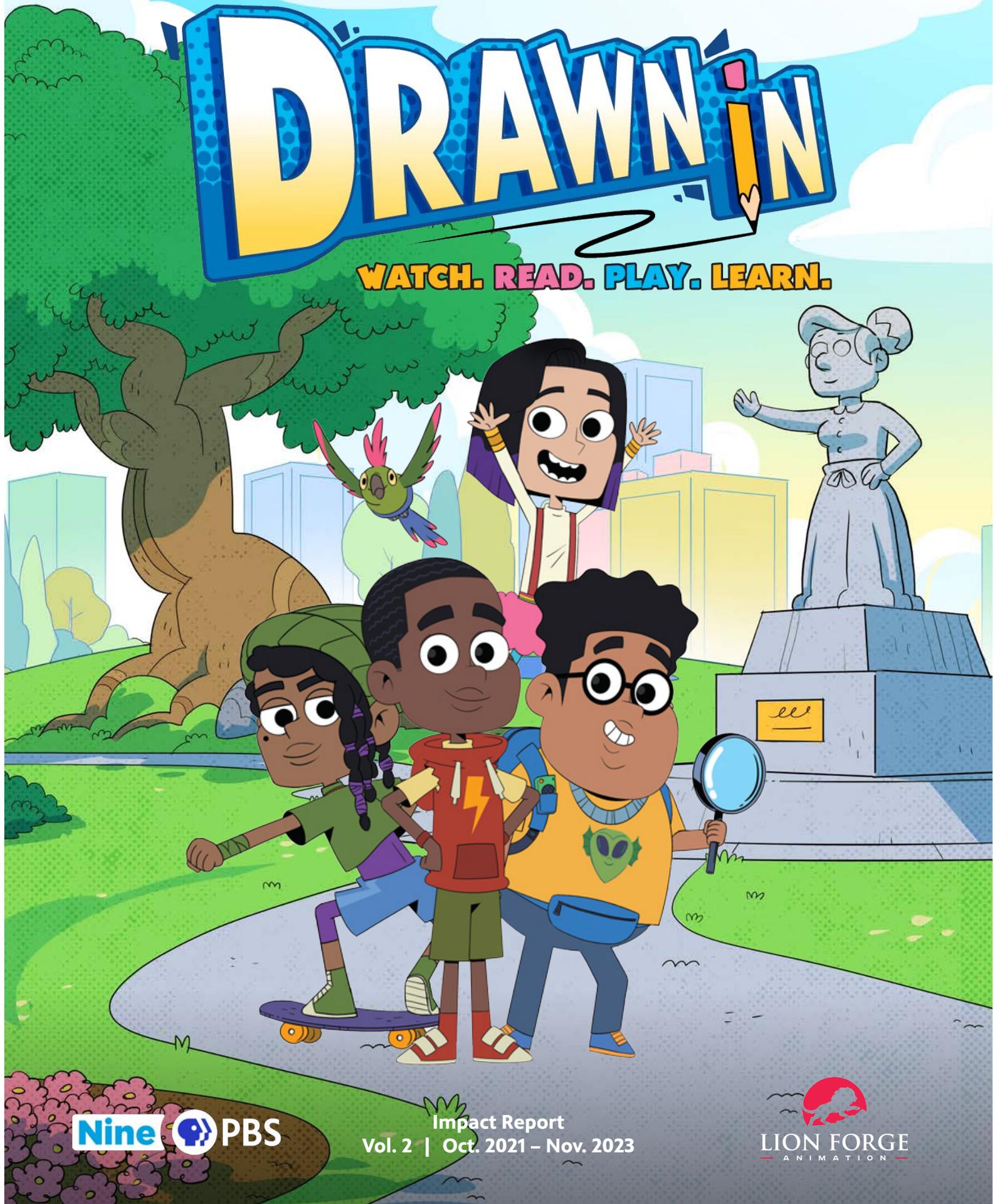


# DRAWN IN

WATCH. READ. PLAY. LEARN.



# This is DRAWN iN!

We did this because every child deserves to be drawn into a story.

**Learning to read leads to reading to learn** – a needed, necessary skill for life. *Drawn In* takes kids on journeys where words are tools that help them interpret, decode, and understand texts, as well as the world around them. Literacy curriculum is woven into the stories and empowers young viewers and readers to explore multimedia content in new, exciting ways – and introduces them to the relatable genre of comic books and graphic novels.

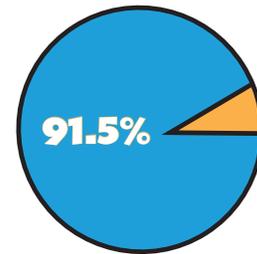
All children in our region and across the country should be represented and celebrated in the media they consume. In doing so, we remove one more possible distraction and barrier to learning. We model success and grit among characters that look and sound like our community members. We model neighborhoods that look and feel like home.





# Improving Literacy Skills

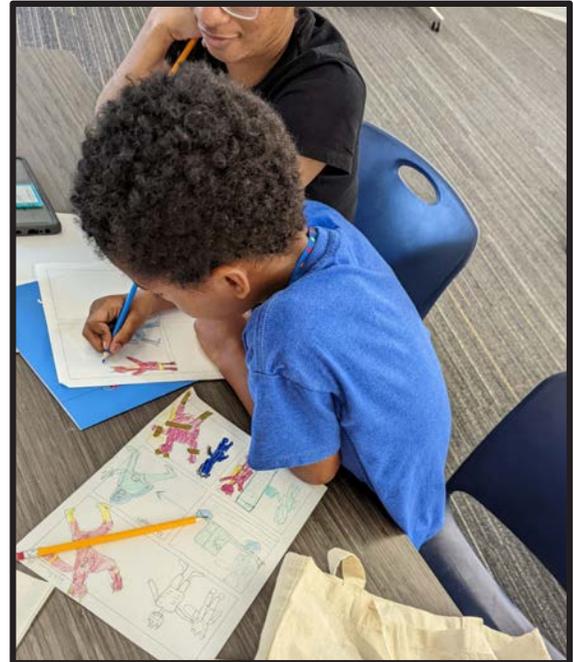
In our most under-resourced school districts, 91.5% of third-grade students are not reading on grade level (MO DESE & IAR, 2021).



## Get Drawn In

*Drawn In* is a series of epic adventures that follow the exploits of four comic book-loving kids—Tyler, Jady, Grace, and Nevaeh—whose real world collides with their comic world in every story. When characters escape from the comic pages and cause mayhem, it takes keen vocabulary, problem solving, and teamwork to set the world right again!

This multimedia literacy initiative from Nine PBS and Lion Forge Animation is designed to encourage emerging readers with an emphasis on ages 6-8. Stories are shared via comic books and animated shorts. Learning is reinforced through an interactive website with games and includes resources for grown-ups to support literacy skill-building at home and in the classroom.



Nine PBS developed our Public Media Model for Engagement after decades of work in the community. We employ the following cycle of activities with community co-creators in a way that is crucial to understanding community needs and monitoring progress:

- Understand community priorities through convening and listening
- Develop programming and curriculum tied to priorities that emerge
- Impact awareness, understanding, and confidence in competencies tied to those priorities
- Measure impact to inform future content, engagement, and dialogue

## INITIATIVE GOALS

*Drawn In* is anchored to the community by regularly convening more than 40 trusted partners in early education as part of the Nine PBS Model for Engagement. Two clear purposes are at the core of the work:

1. Support the improvement of children's literacy skills relative to grade-level expectations
2. Celebrate representation for black and brown kids

# Meet the Comic Crew

Black, Latinx, and Asian early learners will see themselves represented in every aspect of *Drawn In*. It is imperative to tell our communities' authentic stories by reflecting on all the wonderful things that make up our identities. All children in the St. Louis region and across the country benefit when exposed to authentic and non-stereotypical characters who may be different from the viewer's own identity. We build empathy and foster a more connected society when we share experiences.

## Tyler Agbani



**Age:** 10  
**Favorite comic genre**  
Action and adventure  
**Best qualities**  
Infectious enthusiasm to discover new adventures  
**Best known for**  
Leading the charge

## Grace (Yeong-ja) Park



**Age:** 9  
**Favorite comic genre**  
Superhero  
**Best qualities**  
Artistic, colorful style  
**Best known for**  
Quick action for every situation the crew's in

## Nevaeh Campbell

**Age:** 11  
**Favorite comic genre**  
Manga  
**Best qualities**  
Cool and confident  
**Best known for**  
Mapping out a plan while on her longboard



## Jadyn Harris

**Age:** 9  
**Favorite comic genre**  
Science fiction  
**Best qualities**  
Loyal; highly advanced reading and memory  
**Best known for**  
his trusty backpack



## Lady Magnitude (aka Lady M)

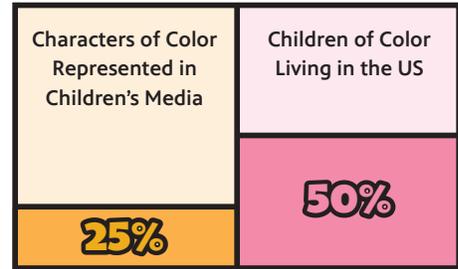
**Age:** 60  
**Favorite comic genre**  
All of them!  
**Best qualities**  
Cool, hip, kind smart and patient  
**Best known for**  
Owning the coolest comic book shop in town and teaching the kids about new words and concepts



# Our kids are WATCHing!

People of color represent only **25%** of the human characters in children's television\* yet children of color are nearly **50%** of the U.S. population of children under the age of 15\*\*.

*Drawn In* is a key step in closing the content gap for diverse character representation in children's programming through the diverse ethnicities of the characters and their life experiences.



— Literacy Power Hour participants

**16 animated video shorts** distributed on-demand via social and digital platforms.

**Four broadcast specials** featuring the animated shorts enhanced with live-action segments to reinforce the featured vocabulary words.



**13.7 million+**

**total impressions** (includes earned media from local and national press, on-air promotion, online promotion, and email)

**351,000+**

**views of video shorts and broadcast specials** across all platforms: Nine PBS Broadcast, YouTube, Facebook, and at drawnin.org.

(Nielsen, YouTube, Meta, Google Analytics 4)

**32%**

of Broadcast Impressions were among **BIPOC Persons 2+**

(Nielsen/TRAC Media Services – Dec 2022 - Dec 2023)

**67%**

of video views were **from digital sources** (YouTube, Drawnin.org, Facebook)

**60%**

of Broadcast Impressions were among **Persons 2+ with no college**

(Nielsen/TRAC Media Services – Dec 2022 - Dec 2023)

**4,000+**

on-air promotions and interstitials to build awareness about *Drawn In* to our entire broadcast audience

(Protrack TV)

\*Common Sense Media Representation Fact Sheet 2021

\*\* 2020 U.S. Census Data

# Our kids are READING!

Researchers have found students' reading comprehension significantly improves when reading **culturally relevant books** whose characters, places, and events align well with their own cultural and experiential backgrounds (Christ, 2018). And, all children benefit when exposed to authentic and non-stereotypical characters who may be different from the viewer's own identity. *Drawn In* invites viewers to become readers and explorers of their own!

"MY SON LOVES DRAWN IN! HE LOVES COMIC BOOKS, AND THEY HAVE REALLY HELPED HIM GET INTO READING AND HE LOVES SEEING CHARACTERS WHO LOOK LIKE HIM."

"(HE WAS) EXCITED TO SEE A BLACK BOY NAMED JADYN BECAUSE THAT IS ALSO HIS NAME!"

"MY 6-YEAR-OLD LOVES THE COMIC BOOK STYLE. MY 11-YEAR-OLD MADE HER OWN COMIC!"

— *Drawn In* Community Survey Responses



**Eight comic book issues** are available at [drawnin.org](http://drawnin.org) and were distributed widely across the community via community partners.

**Two magnificent words** featured in each comic story. Kids who learn these words and concepts are more likely to understand situations and literary texts on a deeper level.

68+

**community partnerships** distributing comics via the *St. Louis American* newspaper, St. Louis Public Schools, Public Libraries, local bookstores, and comic shops.

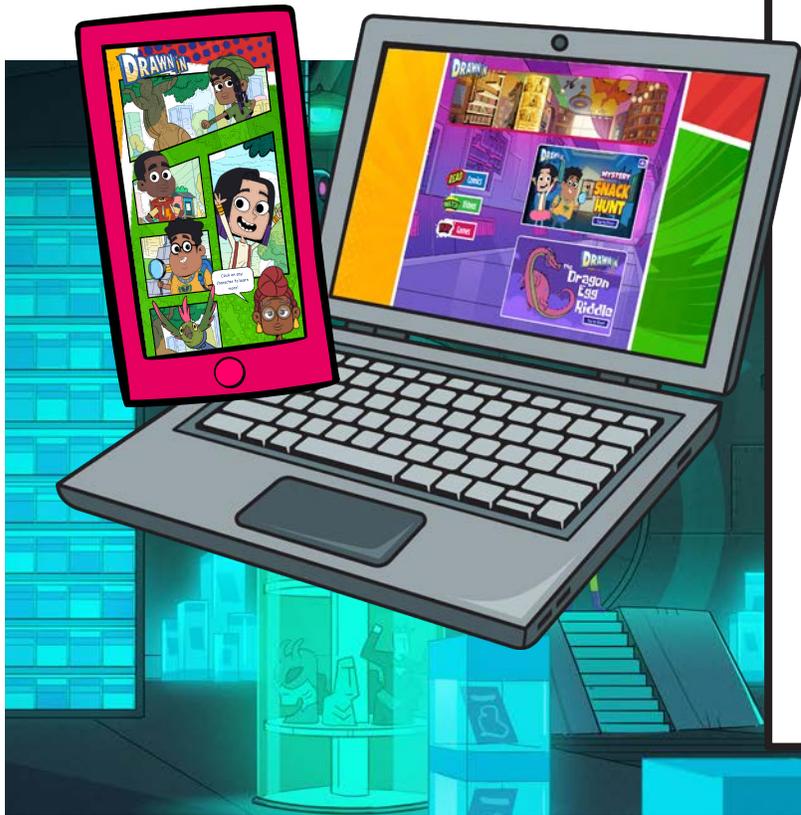
233,000+

**print comic books distributed** across the St. Louis region to help build at-home libraries.



# Our kids are PLAYing!

Research over the last few decades has repeatedly shown that learning is optimized when adults structure an environment towards a learning goal, but the learning environment encourages fun, child-led exploration and discovery. Learning to read can and should be FUN! Playful learning is at the heart of *Drawn In*.



**An interactive website** designed to be responsive on both high- and low-end devices with minimal bandwidth. Here kids can watch, read, play, and learn.

Keep the fun and learning going at home! Our **grown-ups page** houses resources for caregivers to accompany the comic issues and video shorts. Tools include, comic activities, coloring sheets, and more.

**Two literacy focused online games** designed to engage independent readers or emerging readers to play with help from grown-ups.

- Mystery Snack Hunt with riddles written by local high schoolers at Confluence Academy
- The Dragon Egg Riddle

**116,000+**

website visits to  
drawnin.org

(Google Analytics 4)

engagement rate per  
impression across social  
media channels

(Meta Analytics)

**18%**



# Our kids are LEARNing!

We learn better when we can see ourselves in the story. To help bridge the literacy gap, *Drawn In* utilizes research-based best practices, including English Language Arts (ELA) and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) fundamentals. Live learning events like Storytime in the Commons and events with community partners allow us to be in the community and encourage multigenerational interaction.

Comics and graphic novels are now widely praised as a gateway to reading. According to the Harvard Graduate School of Education, motivating students with texts that resonate with their personal interests and identities will increase their investment, leading to greater exposure to words, greater vocabulary acquisition, and more frequent use of reading strategies — three cornerstones of comprehension.



Drawn In is a full literacy initiative.

**Early learning lesson plans and playful learning activities** support the videos, comic books, and website content, all available online at [drawnin.org](http://drawnin.org).

**Literacy Power Hours** include comic story writing workshop sessions to build literacy activities into the everyday lives of early learners and their families.

**Resources for grown-ups** integrate literacy into everyday activities.

**Resources for teachers and workshop leaders** include a comprehensive facilitator guide — part of a foundation to train educators on how to best use *Drawn In* as a resource in the classroom.



"MY STUDENTS 'GOT' IT! THEY WERE SO EAGER TO WORK ON THEIR PROJECTS! AND THEY DEFINITELY BUILT STAMINA IN STAYING FOCUSED ON WHAT THEY WERE DOING DURING EACH SESSION."

— 2nd Grade Teacher response to independent evaluation survey



100% of responding parents/caregivers agreed their children **looked forward to *Drawn In* Literacy Power Hours.**



96% agreed that *Drawn In* Literacy Power Hours allowed them to **increase engagement with their children.**



96% also agreed that *Drawn In* materials and Literacy Power Hour activities increased [their] **confidence in supporting [their] children's literacy skills at home.**

2023 Literacy Power Hour Caregiver Surveys and LS Associates



**192 Literacy Power Hour Sessions** hosted in school and community settings

**400 Early Learners** completed their own comic book story while attending Literacy Power Hour sessions

**1,900+ participants** attended playful learning Community Engagement events hosted by Nine PBS and trusted community partners. Inviting the community in is one of the very unique aspects of the *Drawn In* initiative.

# Our community is DRAWN IN!

25+

earned media pieces. Press and partner interest has been strong with many features across, print, digital, radio, and broadcast television.



**DRAWN IN NINE PBS**

- Follow the adventures of 4 kids
- Drawn In wants to close literacy gap
- Will be able to view later this summer
- Drawnin.org

**STILLIFE ARTS + HOME + TRAVEL**

**DRAWING INTEREST**

New animated show hopes to make 'reading an adventure' for Black and brown St. Louis kids

By [Name] | [Date]

For a few Black and brown St. Louis kids, the morning commute to school is a daily struggle. It's not just the traffic, it's the lack of representation in the books they read. "Drawn In" is a new animated series that aims to change that. The show, which premieres on September 11, is a collaboration between the St. Louis community and PBS, and is designed to provide educational content for all.

**The Big Picture**

Lion Forge and Nine PBS Drawn In brings community and cartoons together.

By [Name] | [Date]

When you think of a child, you don't see many characters who look like they do in your head. But that's not true. The cartoon "Drawn In" is a collaboration between the St. Louis community and PBS, and is designed to provide educational content for all.



# Our community describes the Drawn in initiative as ...

Fun & Engaging

Diverse

Educational



Other words cited: Inclusive, Original, Colorful, Informative, Creative

- Collected via Literacy Power Hours Participant and Community Surveys

"DRAWN IN IS A REAL REPRESENTATION OF THE BRILLIANCE OF CHILDREN OF COLOR. IT IS A MIRROR AND WINDOW INTO THE REALITY THAT ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE, AND ALL CHILDREN ARE CAPABLE PROBLEM SOLVERS."

—Amy Hunter

Vice President of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at Caleres

—Rhonda Carter Adams

Director of Talent and Inclusion at DOT Foods

"AS A DIRECTOR OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION IN MY PROFESSIONAL LIFE, I UNDERSTAND HOW CRITICAL DIVERSITY OF THOUGHT AND LEADERSHIP IS TO A COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE. REPRESENTATION ABSOLUTELY MATTERS! ... IT DOESN'T MATTER YOUR AGE, WHERE YOU LIVE, OR WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE, WE ALL CAN DO GREAT THINGS."

# Thank you!

Hundreds of people were “*Drawn In*” to the creation of this important literacy initiative. Facilitating an ongoing feedback loop ensures that community needs are embedded in every aspect. *Drawn In* Community Advisors include organizational partners and/or individual stakeholders who are specialized advocates of Early Learning, Literacy, Cultural Relevance and Representation, Classroom Success, and Autism.

We’d like to thank all of our community partners and advisory board who devoted hundreds of hours and resources to *Drawn In*.

Join the adventures at

[drawnin.org](http://drawnin.org)

[@drawninofficial](https://twitter.com/drawninofficial)



**Nine PBS, an award-winning and community-owned public media organization,** magnifies and deepens understanding of our community to help our region flourish. Nine PBS tells authentic stories about the St. Louis region, which promote understanding and build empathy. By providing free access to entertainment, kids’ programs, documentaries, the arts, trusted news, and more, the station ensures learning opportunities for everyone.



**Lion Forge Animation is a leading Black-owned, full-service animation studio** based in St. Louis, MO. A recognized leader in bringing authentic content focusing on underrepresented voices and experiences to worldwide audiences, the studio was behind the Academy Award®-winning, culturally resonating short, *Hair Love*. One of the only Black-owned animation studios unmatched in size and scale, it is the only Black-owned animation studio with an Oscar®.

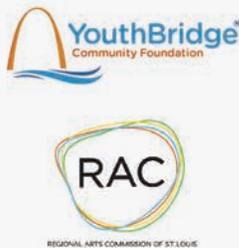


**LS-Associates provides developmental and outcome evaluation services for *Drawn In*.** Dewitt Campbell, MSW specializes in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategies and has 20+ years of experience working with nonprofit organizations and corporations. `quantitative approaches to outcome measurement. Developmental and collaborative evaluation strategies, as well as the utilization of results to make program adjustments in real-time, are included.

Major funding provided by:



Additional funding from:



Associated community engagement is funded in part by:

Joseph and Sandra Lehrer  
in memory of Ted Koplak



Scan to visit  
[drawnin.org](http://drawnin.org)