



Roots of Knowledge
Empowerment Institute
CONNECTING THE DIASPORA

KEEPERS OF THE KWANZAA LEGACY



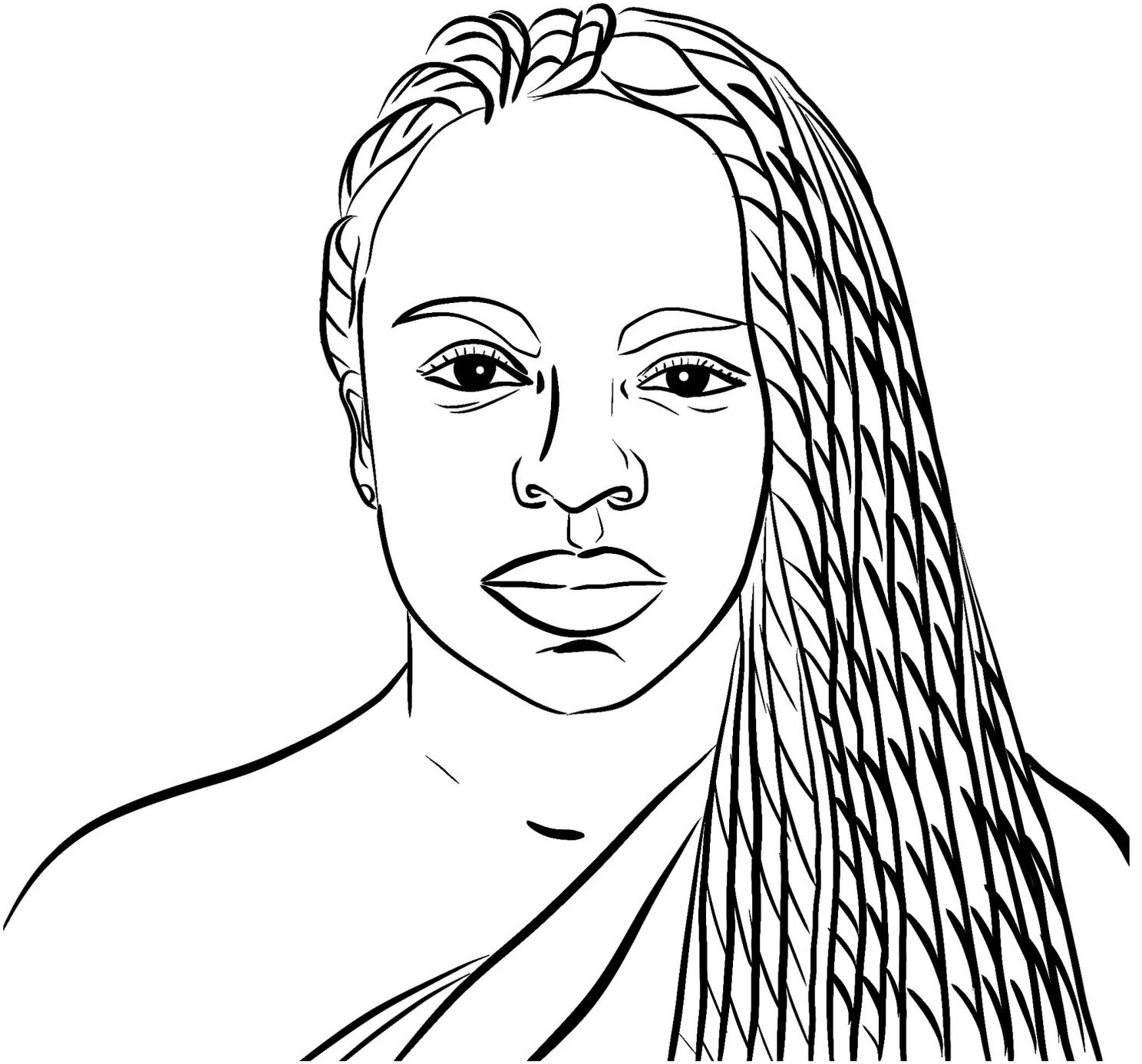
The 2021 Keepers of the Kwanzaa Legacy were selected because of their embodiment of particular principles of Kwanzaa that are evident in their work. They are inspiring because of their deep commitment to doing work that uplifts and celebrates Black people.



Kwanzaa was founded as a celebration of our African heritage and philosophy of culture by Dr. Maulana Karenga in 1966 in response to the damage the 1965 Watts Riots caused to the Black community. Dr. Karenga identified the following principles as the pillars of the celebration after researching African harvest celebrations:

- UMOJA.....Unity
 - KUJICHAGULIA..... Self-Determination
 - UJIMA.....Collective Work & Responsibility
 - UJAMAA.....Cooperative Economics
 - NIA.....Purpose
 - KUUMBA.....Creativity
 - IMANI.....Faith
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UMOJA



BRITTANY PACKNETT-CUNNINGHAM
Civil Rights Activist

Brittany Packnett Cunningham is a social justice activist and cultural analyst. She served on President Barack Obama's task force on 21st Century Policing, the Ferguson Commission*, and co-founded Campaign Zero. She currently hosts the popular podcast, UNDISTRACTED.

The Ferguson Commission was a task force created after the death of Mike Brown in Missouri which created a report that outlined almost 200 policy items that would help address racial inequality in the St. Louis area. The work of the Commission continues through a non-profit named Forward Through Ferguson

KUJICHAGULIA



DAYMOND JOHN
Entrepreneur

Daymond John is the founder, president and chief executive officer (CEO) of FUBU, a popular clothing line. He also is one of the cast members of Shark Tank, a show where entrepreneurs pitch their products to the panelists in order to potentially receive more funding. Mr. John has invested more than eight million dollars in other companies and recently founded The Shark Group, a brand management and consulting firm.

UJIMA



KIZZMEKIA CORBETT, Ph.D
Researcher

Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett studies viral immunology and is a professor at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Prior to arriving at Harvard, Dr. Corbett was the lead researcher at the Vaccine Research Center (VRC) located at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

Dr. Corbett's (VRC) team is largely responsible for the development of the COVID-19 vaccine.

UJAMAA



ROBERT F. SMITH
Philanthropist

Robert F. Smith is founder and CEO of Vista Equity Partners, a company that manages and generates income for its clients. Mr. Smith is a noted philanthropist, donating large amounts of money to organizations such as the Louis Armstrong House Museum, City of Hope, and the Prostate Cancer Foundation. In 2019 he pledged to pay off the student debt of all 396 graduating seniors at Morehouse College.

NIA



KENDRICK SAMPSON
Actor & Activist

In addition to his work on TV shows like *Insecure* and *The Flash*, Kendrick Sampson is a fierce social justice advocate through his organization BLD PWR which he founded in 2019. He was active during the Los Angeles protests of the murder of George Floyd and was assaulted by members of the LA Police Department (LAPD). He also worked with Black Lives Matter LA on the creation of The People's Budget that was later presented to LA City Council.

KUUMBA



AMANDA GORMAN

Poet

Amanda Gorman is the youngest ever Presidential Inauguration poet. In 2020 she performed her poem *The Hill We Climb* before Joe Biden and Kamala Harris were sworn into office. Ms. Gorman was appointed as the first National Youth Poet Laureate in 2017.

IMANI



RAPHAEL WARNOCK, Ph.D
U.S. Senator

Dr. Raphael Warnock assumed his senate seat representing the state of Georgia in January of 2021 after defeating Kelly Loeffler. Dr. Warnock is also the senior pastor at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, the church once pastored by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. Warnock first became involved in politics as he fought to extend health benefits for the elderly.
