

# CONSCIENCE OF THE CONGRESS

 **BHERC** BLACK HOLLYWOOD  
EDUCATION AND RESOURCE CENTER

## CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS DOCUMENTARY FUNDRAISING OVERVIEW

Prepared By

 **DIEM VAN GROTH**  
PRODUCTIONS

The 13 founding members of the Congressional Black Caucus. Standing, from left, Parren J. Mitchell, Charles B. Rangel, William L. Clay Sr., Ronald V. Dellums, George W. Collins, Louis Stokes, Ralph H. Metcalfe, John Conyers Jr. and Walter E. Fauntroy. Seated, from left, Robert N. C. Nix, Sr., Charles C. Diggs, Shirley Chisholm and Augustus F. Hawkins. (Courtesy Office of the Clerk, U.S. House of Representatives)



# LOGLINE

*They are the Conscience of Congress –  
and their story has never been told.*



A group of African American Congress members, both men and women, are standing in front of a large, classical-style building with columns. They are dressed in professional attire, including suits and blouses. The image is dark and serves as a background for the text.

## STORY

*At a time when American democracy is deeply divided and Democrats are searching for moral clarity and strategic direction, the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) stands as both a legacy of leadership and a blueprint for the future. Representing over 82 million Americans, these 62 lawmakers form a powerful collective force for justice, equity, and progress.*

*This film tells the untold story of the CBC – revealing its rising influence as the conscience of Congress and a vital force in shaping the future of American democracy.*

*The Conscience of the Congress is not about a single candidate or party – It is about Dignity, Grace, Compassion, Faith, and Love of People over Politics.*



# IMPORTANCE

*"They are the Conscience of the U.S. Congress – and yet their story has never been told."*

## WHY THIS FILM?

Founded in 1971, the Congressional Black Caucus is the moral backbone of Congress, representing 62 members and 82 million Americans. Yet, their full story has never been told—until now.

This film will change that.

## THE MOMENT

At a time when American democracy is under threat and the Democratic Party is seeking vision, the CBC offers what few do: *moral clarity, political strategy, and real results.*

### This film will:

- Highlight the legacy and present-day work of the CBC.
- Inspire a new generation of civic engagement.
- Empower donors to support a collective movement – not just one candidate.

## WHY NOW?

- The CBC is entering a generational transition.
- The next wave of Black leaders needs to understand the strategic victories of the past.
- Political engagement is rising among young Black voters—this film will fuel that momentum.
- There has never been a high-quality documentary capturing this history with urgency and clarity.

## DONOR IMPACT

You're not backing one candidate. You're empowering **62 Members of Congress** whose policies impact millions.

*Donor perks include:*

- Early screening access
- Name in film credits
- Executive Producer options
- Private roundtable events with CBC-aligned leadership



# POWER AND LEGACY

## Past

- Founded in 1971 by 13 Black members of Congress, the CBC was led by trailblazers like Shirley Chisholm, John Conyers, and Charles Rangel. From civil rights to housing, education, anti-apartheid activism, and the creation of the MLK Holiday, the CBC has been at the forefront of transformative legislation and justice.

## Present

- 62 Members strong – the largest CBC in history.
- Represents 82+ million Americans (~25% of the U.S. population).
- Influential figures such as Kamala Harris, Barack Obama, Barbara Lee, Barbara Jordan, Hakeem Jeffries, and Cory Booker have all emerged from or been shaped by the Congressional Black Caucus.
- Legislative power on issues of justice reform, economic equity, healthcare, and democracy.

## Future

- Represents the rising generation of Black political leadership shaping policy on AI ethics, climate justice, education access, and voting rights.
- Poised to lead during a time of demographic shifts and national transformation.
- At the forefront of preserving democracy and the rule of law.

**"The Conscience of Congress."**

**Anchored in history. Powered by community. Positioned for the future.**



# PRODUCTION



David M. Massey – Producer/Director

Massey has produced and directed numerous films and TV shows, including *Men of Courage*, which won an NAACP Image Award and aired on BET, and *Dare to Struggle, Dare to Win*, a documentary on Ghana's 31st December Women's Movement. He also produced *Fespaco*, a documentary narrated by Danny Glover, and six short films, such as *Island Song*, which won the Audience Award at the 2014 Pan African Film Festival. His 2015 documentary *When Justice Isn't Just* explored law enforcement shootings of unarmed African Americans.

His recent work includes *Where We're From*, a documentary about the LA independent hip-hop scene, *Not All Lost*, a PBS reality show, *Hinika*, a documentary about a new hospital in Ethiopia, *Passage*, a historical film set in 1600s West Africa, and *Golden Flower*, a short film about Taino culture. He also produced the documentary *612: Darkness in the Land of Nice*.

A former co-chair of the Black Association of Documentary Filmmakers, West (BAD-West), Massey has received several awards, including the PBS Innovation Award and the NEA's "Advancement of Learning Through Broadcasting" award. He is a voting member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and serves on its Executive Committee for the Short Film Branch and the Academy Museum Subcommittee.

**CONSCIENCE OF THE CONGRESS**



Donna Guillaume – Producer

Guillaume is an Emmy-nominated television producer known for her creativity, experience, and dedication to impactful storytelling across media and politics. She began her career at Channel 2 News and the CBS Evening News bureau in Los Angeles, later producing the KCBS newsmagazine *Two on the Town*.

She co-created and executive produced HBO's long-running animated series *Happily Ever After: Fairy Tales for Every Child*, and her documentary credits include *Unchained Memories*, *Middle School Confessions*, *Reading Their Hearts Out* (all on HBO), *Passion and Memory* (PBS), and *John Lewis: Get in the Way* (PBS).

A Harvard graduate, Donna has received a Cable Ace Award, a Christopher Award, the Humanitas Prize, and multiple Emmy nominations. She is a founding board chair of Artists for a New South Africa, and a former board member of TransAfrica Forum, and currently serves as vice-president on the Board of the Getty House Foundation. She is a member of the DGA, NABJ, and BAD West.



Charles Floyd Johnson – Executive Producer

Charles Floyd Johnson is a veteran African-American television and film producer, actor, and activist with a career spanning over four decades. A three-time Emmy Award winner and seven-time nominee, he is best known for his work on iconic series such as *The Rockford Files*, *Magnum, P.I.*, *Quantum Leap*, *JAG*, and *NCIS*, which he continues to executive produce.

Johnson also produced the acclaimed Lucasfilm feature *Red Tails*, chronicling the heroic Tuskegee Airmen, and the PBS documentary *John Lewis: Get in the Way*.

Johnson has received numerous honors for his creative leadership and contributions to the industry.



Sam Pollard – Producer

Sam Pollard is an acclaimed American filmmaker with a distinguished career spanning decades in directing, editing, and producing film and television. He is renowned for his collaborations with Spike Lee, editing films such as *Mo' Better Blues* and *Bamboozled*, and co-producing the Oscar-nominated *Four Little Girls* and Emmy-winning *When the Levees Broke*.

Pollard has directed powerful documentaries including *Slavery by Another Name* (PBS), *August Wilson: The Ground On Which I Stand* (American Masters), *Two Trains Runnin'*, *Sammy Davis Jr.: I've Gotta Be Me*, *MLK/FBI*, and *Atlanta's Missing and Murdered: The Lost Children*. Recent projects include the series *Why We Hate* (Discovery) and HBO's *Black Art: In the Absence of Light* and *Citizen Ashe*.

His work has earned numerous accolades including Peabody and Emmy Awards and an Academy Award nomination. In 2020, the International Documentary Association honored him with a Career Achievement Award. Spike Lee calls Pollard "a master filmmaker," and Henry Louis Gates Jr. praises his documentaries as a vital body of work chronicling African-American history.



# PRODUCTION



Diem Van Groth – Producer

Diem Van Groth is a writer, director, producer, and seasoned executive with 20+ years of global experience in media, metaverse tech, corporate strategy, and urban planning. He began his career at 16 in finance before leading global brand strategy at New Zealand's International Trade Agency, supporting companies across film, media, and tech.

Diem founded DigiMC and GVBACK LLC, launched MetaCampus, and managed blues legend JJ “Bad Boy” Jones. He also became the leading importer of Hungarian wine in the U.S., celebrating Hungarian contributions to Hollywood and California wine.

He co-created GVBACK Tuesday with his son to support global service work and is executive producer of Trace the Line, and writer/director/producer of CBC and the upcoming Heart Beats Film (2025).



Mel Donalson - Writer / Research

Mel Donalson earned his Ph.D. in American Studies from Brown University and taught at Bates College, UC Santa Barbara, UCLA, Cal State LA, and Pasadena City College. His courses spanned African American Studies, American Literature, Film History, Gender and Sexuality, and Creative Writing.

He edited Cornerstones: An Anthology of African American Literature and co-edited the Encyclopedia of 20th Century African American Literature. His critical works include Black Directors in Hollywood, Masculinity in the Interracial Buddy Film, and Hip Hop in American Cinema. He also authored three novels—The River Woman, Communion, and The Third Woman—and a poetry collection, Revelations.

His one-act play The Corner was staged at the Paul Robeson Theater Festival (2017), and his full-length drama Shout premiered the same year in South Pasadena. As a filmmaker, he wrote, produced, and directed the shorts A Room Without Doors (1998) and Performance (2009). He was Associate Producer of the documentary Medical Racism: The New Apartheid (2021) and Writer-Producer of the short film Passage (2021).



Beverly A. Tate – Writer / Research

Beverly A. Tate holds a B.A. and M.A. from Pepperdine University and has extensive experience in public education. She taught English composition in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), where she was selected as a Mentor and Master Teacher. Tate then spent 15 years as a professor at Pasadena City College, teaching African-American Literature, Intercultural Communications, and composition. She also served as the College's Diversity Initiative Coordinator, organizing lectures by nationally recognized authors.

Tate's work includes critical essays in the Encyclopedia of African-American Literature (2007), poetry in the Altadena Literary Review (2020), and children's books such as Being Grace (2020), Being Grace: Bunnies on a Trolley (2021), and Being Grace: Baba and the Great Trike Race (2022).

In 2015, she founded Tate's Consultant Services (TCS), LLC, an educational consulting firm focused on promoting literacy. TCS collaborates with Luis J. and Trini Rodriguez's Tia Chucha's Centro Cultural & Bookstore on two literacy initiatives. Black and Latino Men Read (BLMR) encourages reading among Black and Latino male students in high school and college through an annual essay contest with financial awards. Her latest initiative, Young Women of Color Read (YWOCR), launched in March 2023, is an essay contest for young women of color in their senior year of high school.



Frank Dawson – Writer / Research

Frank Dawson is a media executive, producer, and educator. He served as Dean of the Center for Media and Design at Santa Monica College and Chair of the Communication and Media Studies Department after years as a tenured professor. He is also a founding partner of NuHouse Media Group, originally launched in partnership with CBS Entertainment Productions. Frank currently develops projects independently and is the co-producer/director of the documentary Agents of Change.

His career began in radio before moving into advertising at Benton & Bowles (NYC) and later joining CBS Television in Los Angeles, where he wrote and produced network promos. At Universal Television, he served as Director of Comedy Development and Director of Programming, overseeing shows like Charles in Charge, Miami Vice, and He's The Mayor.

Frank holds a B.A. from Cornell University and an M.S. from Syracuse University's Newhouse School, where he was inducted into its distinguished alumni gallery.



# ENGAGE

## **Support "Conscience of the Congress"**

Join us in bringing the untold story of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) to the world. This documentary highlights the CBC's vital role in shaping American democracy and its rise as the conscience of Congress. We need your help to raise \$1M and fund key initiatives to engage communities, amplify the CBC's impact, and spark critical national dialogue on justice, unity, and progress.

### **How Your Support Helps:**

- **Preserve and Amplify Black Political Leadership**

Support the telling of the CBC's untold history and its powerful influence on American politics.

- **Engage Communities Nationwide**

Help us host free town halls to bring people together in meaningful conversations on democracy and justice.

- **Reach Millions through Film Festivals & Streaming**

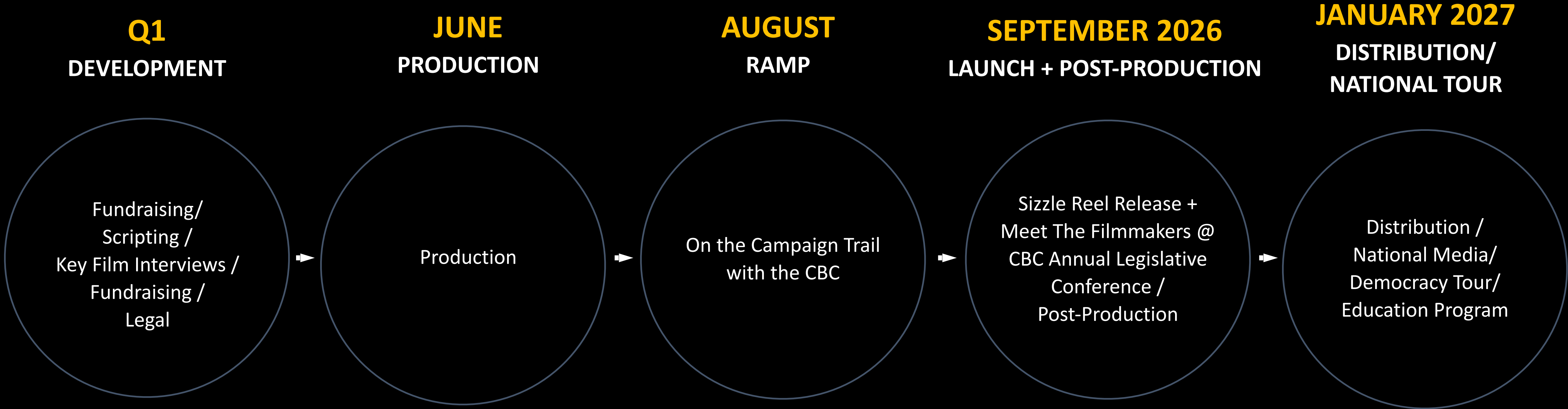
Your donation ensures the CBC's story reaches a wide audience through film festivals, streaming platforms, and educational outreach.

- **Use Storytelling for Unity**

At a time of deep division, we are using nonpartisan storytelling to inspire collaboration and progress.



TIMELINE | 2026





# DISTRIBUTION STRATEGY

1

## SOCIAL MEDIA

- Short-Clips of Interviews.
- Features on organizations and people in the film.
- Posts covering issues in the film.
- Announcement and updates.
- Influencer Shout-Outs and Reposts.
- Viral Activist Campaigns.



2

## INTERVIEWS

- Media Interviews (cast, crew, producers, organizations): Internet, TV, Radio, Podcasts.



3

## FILM FESTIVALS

Submit to Film Festivals.



4

## DEMOCRACY TOUR

Community Screenings and Action Plan Launch (cities may vary):  
  
Washington DC. (ALC Sept. 2026)  
Twin Cities, Milwaukee, Houston, Chicago, Detroit, Cincinnati, Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Nashville, Atlanta, Denver, Miami, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, Baltimore, Oakland, Las Vegas,



5

## DISTRIBUTION

### DISTRIBUTORS

- Streaming Services.
- Public Television.
- Foreign.
- In-flight entertainment (IFE).
- YouTube.
- Educational Partnerships.
- Licensing.

\*Congressional Black Caucus Annual Legislative Conference (ALC)



# CONSCIENCE OF THE CONGRESS

## Fiscal Sponsor



### **Black Hollywood Education and Resource Center**

2121 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 800  
Los Angeles, CA 90067

501(c)3 ID# 31-1595352

#### Banking Information:

- City First Bank
- 4601 Wilshire Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90010
- Routing Number: 54001686
- Account Number: 7200393929

## To Donate or Have Questions

Prepared By



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