inVENTURE TRIP™ is an Invention Lab and seed fund that caters to Black Male Drug Dealers, ages 13 - 23, to create businesses in the inner city urban core. It is a space and place where invention merges with venture. We seek to assist Black males, ages 13-23, to research, design, prototype and finance commercialization of their new legal invention.

Why Necessary?

Music stars have glamorized drug gangsters Frank Lucas and Nicky Barnes as these gentlemen commandeered huge illegal business enterprises, generating millions of dollars, in a time when a factory was the only employment opportunity for African American men. Today, a factory job is not even an option. Unemployment and underemployment for African American men nationwide is 14.1% and 53% respectively. Despite the bleak statistics, African American men dream to build multi-million dollar enterprises and have thus resorted to hustling and crime to earn a share of the American dream.

Review the photos of every business incubator and accelerator entry class and African American Men are non-existent. African American Men and their children, despite their history of inventions, have been left out of the 21st invention and innovation creation economy. The sad irony, they are fueling the tech industry with their purchases of mobile phones, video game consoles and video games. Since they are perpetuating the crime that makes people afraid of inner cities, they are the perfect candidates to change it.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
Most crime, in inner cities, is due to the drug war and competitive turf maintenance. Black Male Drug Dealers are able to build vast drug enterprises meaning they have entrepreneurial talents. If African American men had an opportunity to practice their entrepreneurial talents in a legal environment, the drug trade would be severely reduced. The lasting impact would be a reduction of crime while pumping income and jobs into inner cities where jobs are nonexistent. Residents would have an opportunity to walk to work, save transportation dollars and eliminate the stress of long commutes. Families would have more productive non-stressful play and family time. Children would become emotionally and financial prosperous eliminating at-risk elements that impairs their learning at home and school. More children will graduate from high school and matriculate to college creating an upward business cycle. inVENTURE TRIP™ has the ability to change the trajectory of inner cities quickly and permanently.

PARTICIPANTS

inVENTURE TRIP™ seeks to serve young people ages 13-23 year olds. Target market for this project are students and young people who are either adjudicated youth with drug charges, or those who live in neighborhoods who have a high drug possession activity, according to crimemapping.com, such as the zip codes 48201/48205/ 48207.

METRICS

inVENTURE TRIP™ will eliminate crime as Back Mae Drug Dealers will now have support to achieve their American dream of legal upward mobility. As they achieve upward mobility legally, they will return income and jobs back to inner cities propelling prosperity and
elimination of crime. Small businesses continue to spur U.S. job growth. ADP National Employment Report shows Companies with fewer than 50 employees created 45 percent of the 188,000 new jobs in June 2013. This trend has occurred for most of 2013.

**inVENTURE TRIP™** success will be measured by these metrics:

1. Participant scores on MEAP/MME.
2. Participant high school graduation and/or completion
3. Participant invention of prototype
4. Participant completion of business strategy for prototype
5. Participant launch if start-up venture
6. Creation of neighborhood taxable income/jobs.

Our goal is to:

- reduce recidivism
- reduce families’ reliance on TANF and SNAP
- reduce matriculation of students into the juvenile justice system

**RESEARCH**

**inVENTURE TRIP™** will return peace and liveability to inner cities. There is 50 years of research that show Successful Criminals Share Traits With Entrepreneurs. Researchers at major universities, such as Harvard, Northwestern University, University of California Davis, University of California Santa Cruz, University of Michigan provide the viability of entrepreneurial training as THE mechanism to eliminate crime. Yet, very little money has been
allocated to such programs. Instead trillions of dollars have been funneled to criminal justice programs to expand mass incarceration under the guise of declaring war on drugs.

According to Professor Jeff Brice, Jr in the article, *Legitimate and Illicit Entrepreneurship: An Opinion Concerning the Relation of Convergent and Divergent Business Development Strategies*, “Organized crime is a functional part of the American social system that, primarily, minorities and immigrants have used as a means of upward mobility.” African American and Puerto Rican crime organizations follow the entrepreneurial network, the same model as the small businessperson.

Professor Fairlie in the 2002 article, *Drug Dealing and Legitimate Self-Employment*, implies drug dealers possess unobserved characteristics, risk taking, high levels of entrepreneurial ability, and a preference for autonomy. Professor Jeff Brice, Jr. states it best, “A drug dealer is really an entrepreneur who is simply selling the wrong products.”

American leaders, both political and business, do not believe African American Men, unless they have a college degree, have the competence or skills to operate profitable businesses. *There’s a whole other area of theory that says people in crime are social misfits, have behavioral problems, can’t fit in,* states Professors McCarthy.

Professors McCarthy of UC Davis and John Hagan of Northwestern University showed in their 2001 study, *When Crime Pays: Capital, Competence, and Criminal Success*, that drug dealers generated higher incomes, nearly three times, than those employed in traditional jobs available for young people.

These drug dealers share the same traits with entrepreneurs operating on the right side of the law: Both are risk-takers, each collaborates with others, they aspire to wealth, and demonstrate
competence in their chosen fields, which each demand intelligence, dependability, and self-confidence. Entrepreneurial traits become present during youth.

THE PROBLEM: The Zip Code where a student lives and their families’ economic status determines where they land in adulthood.

Not Intelligence. Not Ideas. Not Work Ethic

Affluent suburban students are groomed with hands-on invention lessons from kindergarten through high school graduation. They are then provided with financial support to turn their inventions research during k-12 into a startup venture by ages 18-22.

Urban poverty stricken students with the same entrepreneurial traits are CRUSHED with theoretical factual non-invention oriented lessons, ridiculed, humiliated and stereotyped as failures until they become behavior/discipline problems. These students are labeled behavioral and emotionally impaired. They normally land in the school graveyard - SPECIAL EDUCATION. Sixty-nine (69%) percent of Detroit students in Special education do not graduate from high school Leaving them no honest alternatives for their future (Michigan Consortium for Education Research, 2011)

McCarthy argues, “it's simply adverse circumstances -- a tight job market, a lack of education -- that lead young people into crime. We are losing all sorts of valuable resources by not providing sufficient opportunities in the economy for these bright people. We bear a considerable cost imprisoning people like this who could make a contribution in the legal economy. ”
In his 1989 Presidential Address to the National Economic Association, Professor Samuel Myers, Jr., criticized policy makers for not exploiting “the entrepreneurial talents of street-wise hustlers and dope-dealers in the inner city to enable them to become managers and owners of legitimate inner city businesses.”

Light and Rosenstein in the 1995 book, *Race, Ethnicity, and Entrepreneurship in Urban America*, points out that entrepreneurial training may serve as a useful intervention program for at-risk youth, redirecting them from becoming drug dealers and other criminals into becoming owners of legitimate businesses. Uplift, Inc. piloted an alternative high school, Hustle & TECHknow Preparatory High School fall 2006. Located on the campus of Compuware a 1.5 billion dollar software, Hustle & TECHknow Preparatory High School utilized cyber curriculum and hands–on projects. Hustle & TECHknow Preparatory High School catered to adjudicated youth with 70% of the students being Black Male Drug Dealers. Here are our results:

**Hustle & TECHknow Preparatory High School (H&T) 2006-2007**

- Piloted this classroom online curriculum school for high school dropouts
- Compiled Reading class that moved collective reading grade level from 4.2 to 7.8
- Sent 3 quarterfinalists out of 10,000 students to the National Vocabulary Championship
- 80% graduation rate, 100% postsecondary matriculation
- Educational Program of the Year 2007, Automation Alley
Empirical data from Hustle & TECHknow Preparatory High School showed students desired a program that would prepare them for a high paying technology job or an inventive entrepreneurial company. Empirical data from out Catalyst of the Invention Revolution program also shows young people love to invent.
inVENTURE TRIP™ will serve as that entrepreneurial training with a focus on inventing legal products and services that solve residents problems.

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Phase I

Curriculum to prepare their mindset to invent

Phase II

Introduction to design and manufacturing equipment. Design and invention of a prototype.

Phase III

Immersion in Corporate America simulations
Phase IV

Market Research for invention. Compilation business strategy

Phase V

Fine Tuning Presentation skills.

Phase VI

Launch start-up venture.

Phase VII

Mentorship of participant and venture to success.

Our goal is to begin Year 1 with 300 young people ages 13-18 and 50 young people ages 19-23. Young People in the age bracket of 13-18 will be in an after school program with a commitment of at least 1 full time summer camp experience. Students will have an opportunity to remain in the program for a maximum of 5 years.

Young People in the age bracket of 19-23 will be in a full time 36 week training program with 24 weeks dedicated to the invention process followed by 12 weeks of formal entrepreneur training. Upon graduation launch of their start-up participants will be matched with a coach/coaching team to ensure the business becomes profitable.

inVENTURE TRIP™ Invention Lab and seed fund has the ability to change the economic trajectory of urban inner cities quickly and permanently by assisting Black Males establish LEGAL
sustainable ventures, which create jobs for residents, which reduce poverty. Drug warfare and hence crime.