

Defining ourselves for ourselves is a major goal for this documentary. With the working name "In Inglewood," I have begun shooting the interviews of guests who assist with refining the defining of Blackness. Acknowledging that there is no single definition that covers such a diverse group, we can make the representation more accurate with primary sources instead of filtered secondary and tertiary sources that often don't share our history. "In Inglewood," will deliver the perspective of Black individuals who have been residents of the area for over a decade. Many have lived in this area for over four decades, and can give a nuanced oral history. Timing is crucial as the demographics have already begun to change with the announcement of the new NFL stadium. Gentrification and the othering of long-time residents are among topics to be touched upon. This is part of the umbrella project entitled "I Am The Diaspora," summarized the "I AM" project.

The "I AM" the Diaspora Project is a documentary film that will document the present-day lives of the descendants of enslaved Africans in the Caribbean and the Americas. As Caribbean African American woman whose life and ancestry traverses the African continent, the Caribbean islands, and North, and Central I will retrace in reverse the journey of the enslaved Africans from the main ports used to store and ship humans from Ghana to the Americas. Most of the enslaved who were kidnapped across Africa were exported, like inanimate commodities, from ports along the West coast of Ghana. The history is undoubtedly involved and worthy of being shared. We intend to refine the defining of Blackness in the stories told through this film. A part of understanding the Black experience is knowing that no single person or group defines Blackness. How we see ourselves is important. The product will be an educational entertainment piece that shows us solely through our own lens.

Born on the Caribbean island Nevis, in the country of St. Kitts and Nevis, I was born after the island-nation gained its independence from the United Kingdom. Raised in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, I was introduced to "the American dream" as an attainable goal. Growing up on Freedom Street, I walked past cotton trees on my way to and from the school bus daily. The popular social venue was called "The Old Mill," an old sugar mill on a slave plantation where sugar cane was harvested, crushed, and boiled. This history lives in me.

Still a child, I moved to California at 17 to begin studies at Stanford University. I call this period my coming of age period because I had an awakening to the violent vestiges of slavery in the everyday American life. I didn't know what I didn't know; that living and reading about the experience of racism a quite starkly different. I will document my journey and help others tell their origin stories as part of the film as well.

This documentary is ultimately a Sankofa event that I hope will allow its viewers to both go back and bring forward our shared stories, histories, interconnected ancestries, and realities. (Sankofa in summary means that "One must return to the past in order to build a future." – Sankofa Proverb) "Reality" is used in its plural form because each of us understands from where we stand, and therefore live, experience, survive, and thrive in very different realities. So, with this documentary, we go back in order to grow forward.