

POV

Community
Engagement & Education

DISCUSSION GUIDE

All the Difference

A Film by Tod Lending



www.pbs.org/pov



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Writer

Faith Rogow, PhD
Insighters Educational Consulting

With content adapted from the *All the Difference*
College Bound Students Handbook,
written by Marcia Young Cantarella

Guide Producers and Background Research, POV

Eliza Licht
Vice President, Content Strategy and Engagement, POV

Aubrey Gallegos
Manager, Community Engagement and Education, POV

Margaret Fisher
Intern, Community Engagement and Education, POV

Design:

Rafael Jiménez

Copy Editor:

Natalie Danford

Thanks to those who reviewed this guide:

Tod Lending
Director, All the Difference





Robert and Krishaun in class at Urban Prep.

Photo courtesy of *All the Difference*

Filmed over five and a half years, **All the Difference** (82 min.) follows two promising young African-American men as they navigate their lives in low-income, high-risk communities in Chicago and go on to graduate high school and college and start their careers—against all the odds. The film explores the factors in their lives (parents and grandparents, teachers, role models and community support) that made all the difference—an example of prioritizing education as a tool to secure a place in the middle class.

In telling Krishaun’s and Robert’s stories, the film champions their individual drive without reducing their experiences to an oversimplified “pull yourself up by your bootstraps” tale. It shows that success is the product of an enormous level of support—from parents, grandparents, peers, teachers, role models, administrators, communities, the government and others.

Part of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting’s **American Graduate: Let’s Make It Happen** initiative, **All the Difference** is an excellent springboard for community discussions about practical ways to help “at-risk” students succeed. It showcases the strategies employed by Urban Prep Charter Academy for Young Men - Englewood, an all-male charter school dedicated to helping its students escape poverty. It looks at issues of assimilation and the degree to which colleges should adapt their cultures to minority students or expect all students to adapt to existing cultures. And it challenges audiences to look closely at all the people who contribute to Robert and Krishaun’s success, and then to ask what they can do to support young people in their own communities.

All the Difference is well suited for use in a variety of settings and is especially recommended for use with:

- Your local PBS station
- Groups that have discussed previous PBS and POV films relating to race, education, young men of color, first-generation students, college preparation and coming of age, including *American Promise*, *Omar & Pete*, *15 to Life: Kenneth's Story*, *Off and Running*, *The Principal Story* and *The Boys of Baraka*
- Groups focused on any of the issues listed in the "Key Issues" section
- Organizations dedicated to mentorship and/or supporting first-generation, minority, low-income and at-risk students
- High school students, youth groups and clubs
- Policy makers, including education officials
- Social service agencies and organizations focused on families and parenting
- Faith-based organizations and institutions
- Cultural, art and historical organizations, institutions and museums
- Civic, fraternal and community groups
- After-school programs, coaches and sports leagues
- Academic departments, guidance counselors, educators and student groups at colleges, universities and high schools
- Community organizations with a mission to promote community-building and learning, such as local libraries

All the Difference is an excellent tool for outreach and will be of special interest to people looking to explore the following topics:

- Academic achievement
- Achievement gaps
- African-American men
- African Americans
- at-risk students
- charter schools
- college tuition, financial aid, student loans and student debt
- college/university life
- coming of age
- culture clashes
- diversity
- education
- educational equity
- equity
- family support
- fathers/fatherhood
- first-generation college students
- graduation rates
- higher education
- high school
- identity
- masculinity/concepts of manhood
- mentors/mentorship
- parenting
- poverty
- private schools
- race and racism
- resilience
- social justice
- urban/inner-city schools and communities
- youth



The goal of this guide is to help a variety of audiences use this film as a way to start a substantive dialogue about supporting first-generation students and young black men to prepare for and graduate from college. It was designed for people who want to use **All the Difference** to engage family, friends, classmates, colleagues and communities. In con-

trast to initiatives that foster debates in which participants try to convince others that they are right, this guide envisions conversations undertaken in a spirit of openness in which people try to understand one another and expand their thinking by sharing viewpoints and listening actively.

A Note about Facilitation

All the Difference raises issues that may provoke difficult conversations. Some people may deflect their own discomfort with those issues by focusing on the decisions and behaviors of the individuals and institutions featured in the film. To avoid getting bogged down in unproductive personal attacks, you might remind participants that:

- The purpose of this discussion isn't to approve or disapprove of the actions of the people in the film, but to learn from their experiences so we can make our own families and communities better.
- Issues that come up for Robert and Krishaun aren't more important than other issues (e.g., the challenges faced by young women or by people of other races)—they are simply the obstacles that arose from the experiences of these two young men. This event is going to focus on what we can learn from those particular experiences.
- Joking can be a fun way to interact with friends, but since we don't have that relationship with everyone in the room, and since insults, even in jest, can be easily misunderstood, that type of joking is best reserved for other occasions.

For more detailed event planning and facilitation tips, visit www.pbs.org/pov/engage/



Controversial topics often make for excellent discussions. But by their very nature, those same topics can also give rise to deep emotions and the expression of strongly held beliefs. As a facilitator, you can create an atmosphere in which people feel safe, encouraged and respected, making it more likely that they will be willing to share their ideas openly and honestly. Here's how:

Preparing Yourself:

- **Identify your own hot-button issues.**

View the film before the event and give yourself time to reflect so you aren't dealing with raw emotions at the same time that you are trying to facilitate a discussion.

- **Be knowledgeable.**

You don't need to be an expert on the issues, but knowing the basics can help you keep a discussion on track and gently correct misstatements of fact. For a list of suggested websites and organizations, visit the **Resources** section (Pg. 24) of this guide.

- **Be clear about your role.**

You may find yourself taking on several roles for a single event, including host, organizer—even projectionist. If you are also planning to serve as facilitator, be sure that you can focus on that responsibility and avoid distractions during the discussion. Keep in mind that being a facilitator is not the same as being a teacher. A teacher's job is to convey specific information. In contrast, a facilitator remains neutral, helping to move the discussion along without imposing his or her views on the dialogue.

- **Know your group.**

Issues can play out very differently for different groups of people. Is your group new to the issue or have the members of the group dealt with it before? Factors like geography, age, race, religion and socioeconomic class all can have an impact on comfort levels, speaking styles and prior knowledge. Take care not to assume that all members of a particular group share the same point-of-view.

Preparing the Group:

- **Consider how well group members know one another.**

If you are bringing together people who have never met, you may want to devote some time to introductions at the beginning of the event.

- **Agree to ground rules regarding language.**

Involve the group in establishing some basic rules to ensure respect and to aid clarity. Typically, such rules include prohibiting yelling and the use of

slurs, as well as asking participants to speak in the first person ("I think . . .") rather than generalizing for others ("Everyone knows that . . .").

- **Try to give everyone an opportunity to be heard.**

Be clear about how people will take turns or indicate that they want to speak. Plan a strategy for preventing one or two people from dominating the discussion.

- **Talk about the difference between dialogue and debate.**

In a debate, participants try to convince others that they are right. In a dialogue, participants try to understand one another and expand their thinking by sharing viewpoints and listening actively. Remind people that they are engaged in a dialogue. This will be especially important in preventing a discussion from dissolving into a repetitive, rhetorical, political or religious debate.

- **Encourage active listening.**

Ask the group to think of the event as being about listening as well as discussing. Participants can be encouraged to listen for things that challenge as well as reinforce their own ideas. You may also consider asking people to practice formal "active listening," in which participants listen without interrupting the speaker, and then rephrase what was said to make sure they have heard it correctly.

- **Remind participants that everyone sees through the lens of his or her own experience.**

Who we are influences how we interpret what we see. Everyone in the group may have a different view about the content and meaning of the film they have just seen, and each of them may be accurate. It can help people understand one another's perspectives if in addition to sharing their views, speakers identify the evidence on which they base their opinions.

- **Take care of yourself and group members.**

If the intensity level rises, pause to let everyone take a deep breath. You might also consider providing a safe space for participants to "vent," perhaps with a partner or in a small group of familiar faces. If you anticipate that your topic may upset people, be prepared to refer them to local support agencies or have local professionals present. Think carefully about what you ask people to share publicly, and explain things like confidentiality and whether or not press will be present.



A Step By Step Guide To Organizing A POV *All the Difference* Screening Event

BEFORE YOUR EVENT

Step 1: Determine your objectives.

POV's community engagement screenings can be tailored to your organization's specific goals.

Ask yourself:

Have I defined my goals?

Set realistic objectives with your partners by thinking about some basic questions: What do you want to happen as a result of your event? Who is your target audience? Keep in mind that some goals are easier to accomplish than others. For example, adding to a person's knowledge base is easier than changing his or her beliefs and behaviors. Being clear about your objectives will make it easier to decide how to structure the event (whether as a single meeting or an ongoing project, for example), target publicity and evaluate results.

Does the way I am planning to structure the event fit my objectives?

Do you need an outside facilitator, translator or sign language interpreter? If your objective is to share information, are there local experts on the topic who should be present? How large an audience do you want? (Large groups are appropriate for information exchanges, while small groups allow for more intensive dialogue.)

Have I arranged to involve all stakeholders?

Think about contacting other community organizations, public officials or experts who might be good speakers. If your group is planning to take action that will affect people other than those present, it is especially important to give voice to those not in the room and ensure that people are allowed to speak for themselves. Ask stakeholders to identify their objectives and determine to what extent they can be involved.

Possible goals include:

- encouraging dialogue around important issues that affect your community
- raising awareness of important world issues
- forming new organizational alliances
- making new contacts with the media and becoming a resource they will continue to consult
- recruiting new members through increased visibility
- enhancing your educational curriculum for students, staff and/or volunteers
- studying the art of documentary

Step 2: Sign up to host an event.

- **Register** in the POV Community Network at www.pbs.org/pov/engage/.
- **Activate your account:** Check your inbox for an activation link and temporary password.
- **Request:** Log-in to your account and click "Create an Event"
- **Screen:** We'll send the DVD to you about one month prior to your event, then you just send it back after your screening.

Have questions or need help? Send us an email at events@pov.org.

*As POV adheres to PBS guidelines, please note that objectives may not include a specific call to action around legislation unless both sides are represented.





Step 3: Handle Logistics

Decide on a date, time and location.

*Start planning your event at least one month in advance of the scheduled screening to ensure timely delivery of the film and other appropriate materials. If you do not receive the film you requested *one week* prior to your event, notify us at events@pov.org.

Your location should:

- be reserved for the duration of the film, if not longer
- be large enough to accommodate all attendees
- have proper A/V equipment

Let us know if you change any of your plans by contacting us at events@pov.org

Step 4: Preview the Film.

Tips:

We *strongly* advise you to watch the film on the equipment you will be using on the day of your event.

If you have any problems with the copy of the film you are sent, email us at events@pov.org and we will work with you to resolve the issue.

Ask Yourself:

If the group is large, are there plans to break into smaller groups? Or should attendance be limited?

Is the event being held in a space where all participants will feel comfortable?

Is the space wheelchair accessible? Is it in a part of town that's easy to reach by various kinds of transportation? If you are bringing together different constituencies, is the space in neutral territory? Does the physical configuration allow for the kind of discussion you hope to have?

Will the way that the room is set up help you meet your goals?

Is the room comfortable? Will everyone be able to see the screen easily and hear the film? If you intend to have a discussion, will people be able to see one another? Are there spaces appropriate for small breakout groups?

Have you scheduled time to plan for action?

Planning next steps can help people leave the room feeling energized and optimistic, even if the discussion has been difficult. Action steps are especially important for people who already have a good deal of experience talking about the issues on the table. For those who are new to the issues, just engaging in public discussion serves as an action step.





Lake Forest professor Judy Dozier.
Photo courtesy of *All the Difference*

Step 5: Choose a Facilitator and/or Speakers.

- If you are bringing together different segments of your community, *we strongly recommend using an experienced facilitator.*
- If you need to find someone else to facilitate, some university professors, human resource professionals, clergy and youth leaders may be specially trained in facilitation. In addition to these local resources, groups such as the National Conference for Community and Justice and the National Association for Community Mediation may be able to provide or help you locate skilled facilitators.
- It is best to choose people who are familiar with the issues and can create a friendly environment for open discussion and generate meaningful dialogue about the issues raised by the film.

Tips:

To help your facilitators or moderators, we have free downloadable discussion guides available in our partner toolkits for all of our films at www.pbs.org/pov.

Email or send your facilitators the [Tips for Facilitators \(page 6\)](#).





Krishnaun and friends at Fisk.
Photo courtesy of *All the Difference*

Step 6: Do Media Outreach.

- **Send us a completed Media Contact list** (at the end of the guide) and your press release as soon as you have established your press contacts.
 - Our Communications Department must approve your contacts to ensure there is no overlap between our outreach efforts and yours.

Please note that all materials must include the **POV logo** (www.pbs.org/pov/pressroom) and the phrase "This event is a collaboration with POV, the award-winning independent nonfiction film series on PBS. (www.pbs.org/pov)"

- **Prepare press kits for distribution** on the night of your event.
 - Mail press kits to media contacts who cannot attend.

Each kit should include:

- a press release (you can adapt the **POV** version available in our online Pressroom: <http://www.pbs.org/pov/pressroom/>)
- a flyer adapted to your event (you can contact us at events@pov.org for a template)
- general information about your organization

• Ask reporters to attend your event or review the film.

- Pitch the value of this unique screening and the importance of encouraging dialogue around contemporary social issues.
- If reporters cannot attend and would like to obtain a copy of the program for review, they should contact POV's Communications Department at (212) 989-8121x331.
- If local broadcast information (day and time) is available, encourage reporters to include it in their stories so others can tune into the program.



DURING YOUR EVENT

Step 7: Handle Certain Tasks on the Day of the Event.

- Confirm facilities.
- Make sure all A/V equipment is working properly.
- Go over discussion points with your facilitator.
- Take pictures during your event—send us copies if you like!
- If you are expecting a large audience, plan to break participants into groups for discussion following the screening of the film.

Tips:

Pass around a sign-up sheet at the beginning.

Pass out Audience Evaluation forms at the end.

Reserve the last half hour of your meeting to strategize about follow-up activities.

Announce the local broadcast date (if applicable) and pass around flyers encouraging audience responses to the film and ensuring that audience members know how to purchase the film.

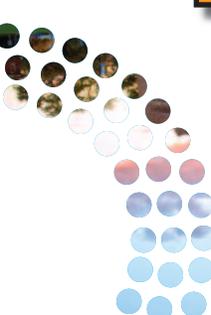
Inform audience members that they can continue the dialogue after the event by posting comments on the POV website at www.pov.org.

AFTER YOUR EVENT

Step 8: Wrap Up.

- Mail the film and completed audience evaluations to:
**POV, Attn: Community Engagement, 20 Jay Street, Suite 940,
Brooklyn, NY 11201.**
- Log in to your POV account at www.pbs.org/pov/outreach/amdoc/events/ and fill out your event coordinator evaluation (click on “edit evaluation”).

Collecting feedback is a great way to measure the impact of your event. It can be helpful to have concrete data when you are looking for funding for future programs. Feel free to use the data collected in the POV audience evaluations for your own purposes



Selected People Featured in **All the Difference**

Robert Henderson was 17 months old when his father killed his mother. He and his six siblings were raised by his grandmother Ona, a former Mississippi sharecropper who escaped to Chicago after suffering years of abuse from her husband. When Robert arrived at Urban Prep, he was failing math and was at least a grade behind in his other classes. He graduated high school with honors and attended Lake Forest College in Illinois on a partial scholarship, starting with majors in history and pre-med. Robert graduated with a double major in history and American studies and a minor in Asian studies. He then joined City Year, an education organization fueled by national service. He is now living in Colorado, where he is an elementary school teacher, and working to pay off his college loans. He is still interested in a service-oriented career, maybe as a firefighter and/or an emergency medical technician.



Krishaun Branch was a gang member, as were his mother, father and uncle. He was reared by his mother, who left the gang after being shot and nearly killed. He had little contact with his father. When Krishaun began his studies at Urban Prep, he was at least a grade behind in math and reading and was still dealing drugs to make money. Krishaun was expelled from Urban Prep during his sophomore year for getting into a fight, but asked to come back after the death of a friend made him re-think his choices. Urban Prep saw his potential and readmitted him under strict conditions. Following his graduation, he attended the historically black Fisk University in Tennessee with partial scholarships and grants. After graduation, he returned to Urban Prep to work as an adviser to students. He is now a father, which is bringing new responsibilities and challenges.



Ona Caldwell – Robert's grandmother



Pam Jones – Krishaun's mother



Tim King – Founder and CEO of Urban Prep Academies



Robert in the Lake Forest library.
Photo courtesy of *All the Difference*

Immediately after the film, you may want to give people a few quiet moments to reflect on what they have seen or pose a general question (examples below) and give people some time to themselves to jot down or think about their answers before opening the discussion:

- If a friend asked you what this film was about, what would you say?
In one word/phrase, what was your first reaction to the film? How did it make you feel?
If you could ask anyone in the film a single question, whom would you ask and what would you ask them?
Did anything in the film “speak truth” to you?
Name one thing you saw that was familiar and one thing that was surprising.
Describe a moment or scene in the film that you found particularly disturbing or moving. What was it about that scene that was especially compelling for you?





Robert and his City Year team.

Photo courtesy of *All the Difference*

Creating a Culture of Success

Urban Prep's Evan Lewis says, "We can't escape the fact that when [Krishaun] leaves school every day he's running up against some forces and some people that would much rather see him make poor decisions than make the right decisions." How do people in Krishaun's life make sure that he hears a counter-message? Who expects him to do well and how do they let him know that?

What do Krishaun and Robert expect of themselves? How are their expectations shaped by those around them?

Krishaun and Robert come from families that urged them to go to college. What do you think these families understand that so many other families, who don't push their children to go to college, don't? Why might some families be hesitant to support their children's pursuit of college degrees? What could their concerns be and what would you say to them to allay those concerns?

In addition to their immediate family members, who are the prominent people in Robert's and Krishaun's support networks? Who in your life offers support and/or

paves the pathway to success in school and in life? What do they do or say that is most helpful? What do you do to stay connected to those people?

At his college graduation, Robert says to his high school teachers, "You guys believed in me. If you guys didn't take a chance on us, I would not be here right now." How did it help Robert to know that people believed he could achieve?

Ona tries to become educated, even though as the daughter of a Mississippi sharecropper she did not have an opportunity to attend school after fifth grade: "I continued to read everything I could get my hands on and count and whatever." How does the value that Ona placed on becoming educated influence Robert? Who in your community has a similar story? Who tells those stories to your community's children?

Professor Sheila Peters asks her college students what they would tell younger students who doubted their own ability:



Robert coaching a youth football team.

Photo courtesy of *All the Difference*

“They’ve had teachers or they’ve had losses in their lives and they don’t think that they could make it. What could you tell them? . . . The 10- or 11-year-old says, ‘I don’t like math.’ What can you do?” What would you say to students who doubted their ability to make it to high school graduation and beyond?

Robert says, “Being in an all-boys schools really helped me find out what a real man is. You know, I was able to stay focused. I don’t have to worry about trying to impress some female.” What do you think about single-sex schools? Do you see sex segregation as a viable strategy to improve education in inner-city districts? Why or why not?

Growing up in Krishaun’s world, fighting was an important survival strategy:

In Chicago, like, nice quiet kids—they’re not accepted. So, either, I had a choice, either I was going to fight back or I was going to continue to be victimized and that’s what I did not want, so I began to fight back. And once I fought back once, I was accepting fighting as a lifestyle.

How could schools, communities, or parents re-

spond to this sort of cultural issue without telling students that what they know to be true is wrong?

The community served by Urban Prep has a long history of violence. How would you convince someone from that community to prepare for the future when they have valid reasons to think that they won’t make it past age 18?

What was your reaction to the creed recited by the students at Urban Prep? How does the structure, discipline and philosophy of the charter school benefit its students? What are its limitations?

Reflecting on Krishaun’s achievement, Evan Lewis of Urban Prep says:

The moments that really tell Mr. Branch’s story aren’t . . . the moment that everybody celebrates [or] the moment when he walks across the stage . . . It’s the moment when he begins to believe you know, and that’s something that he does for himself . . . a moment

**Krishاون and Tim King.**Photo courtesy of *All the Difference*

that happens at home at night before you go to bed. That's not the moment that the world is there to see, but those are the moments that make all the difference. Those are the moments when you do begin to believe in yourself, and when you commit yourself to acting on that belief.

Name three things you've seen or done that helped a person believe in themselves. Name three things you've seen or done that may have undermined a student's self-confidence.

Robert acknowledges his limitations:

You've got to realize that you're not going to be the smartest person in the world . . . When I failed that first chemistry quiz it was like, you know, it was a reality check . . . I was feeling down, but it's a learning process. You're just not going to learn everything just like [snapping] your fingers. It's not going to happen. It's about you know, put the pride to the side and seek out help. If you don't know you need to ask, because if you don't ask you're never going to know it.

What makes asking for help hard? What could schools or families do to make it easier?

At City Year, Robert observes, "I can see some of

the kids who are lost. They are afraid to ask questions." He tells them, "First rule: to believe in yourself. Second rule: put the effort in. Other, last rules: be respectful, be respectful to your peers." And he shares his personal story to "let them know that, you know, it's okay not to get math on the first try." What do you think of Robert's rules? Do you think the children would respond to those rules the same way if they came from someone older or someone with a different racial background? How does Robert's background earn him credibility with the students?

Robert says, "While I was in middle school I was unexposed to college. College was something that was like a fairy tale in my mind." What could people do to make sure that college isn't a "fairy tale" to young people in your community?

Urban Prep's Tim King says, "It really only takes one generation to [right the course] for any family . . . We are giving these guys a chance to kind of rewrite the future for their families." As Krishاون puts it:



Krish Shaun at Urban Prep graduation.

Photo courtesy of *All the Difference*

Neither my mom nor my father graduated high school. I completed what people told me that I would never complete. I feel that my son is actually starting many steps ahead of where I started. That was my goal—if I was to bring someone into this world that they would be in a greater situation than I was.

Do you agree with Tim King's statement? How does Krishnaun's achievement change the opportunities available to his son?

Character and Values

Provide one example of a positive decision each young man made in the film that you thought made a difference for him (i.e., a decision that made him a better student, family member or man). What poor or bad decisions did each young man make in the film that made you think, "Oh, I would never have done that"? What did you learn from their examples?

Professor Peters says, "So many African-American males that enter college know as many, if not more, from their community that ended up in juvenile or dead . . . To make it out of that community means that you're

resilient." What does resilience mean to you? What does it look like in practice?

Upper classman MarQo Patton challenges Krishnaun to expect more from himself rather than just taking easy classes and settling for a passing grade, "because if you don't expect much you're not going to do much." How do you balance holding yourself to a high standard while remaining realistic about your strengths, weaknesses and abilities?

Being a Man

Krish Shaun says:

I want to be a successful man. I want to complete the things that I want to do with my life, like being a U.S. Marshal, being a successful family man, having children, having a gorgeous wife, be able to buy the things I want to buy. Everything is in my hands.

What's your vision of a "successful man"?

Robert says, "There's been [a] numerous amount of times that I came close to quitting. The thing that keeps me going is knowing that the amount of people who worked hard to get me here . . . I can't let everybody down." He knows that college is his way out of Englewood and that his grandmother "didn't give up on me, God didn't give up on me. My family didn't give up on me. My friends didn't give up on me. Why should I give up on myself? If I give up on myself that's a slap in the face of all the people who supported me." How is Robert's sense of responsibility to those who have supported him an expression of manhood?

After his brother's murder, Krishaun says, "I felt like he didn't really understand why I was gone. I feel like I let him down when I left because I was all he knew." What do you think Krishaun's responsibility was in terms of guiding his brother along a good path? What do you think someone like Krishaun could do to continue positively influencing a sibling's life while also leaving the family in order to attend college?

Robert's father killed his mother, and Robert struggles with forgiving him: "Then I realized okay, I don't really need him, you know. I made it this far without him." In your view, how was Robert's life affected by the fact that his father was not a part of it?

Reflecting on his brother's murder, Krishaun says:

You know I want to hurt somebody but I can't, because I'm not the only one I'm affecting. I can do better things for Tay Tay instead of, you know, going to find the person that killed him, but that's not going to do anything for him or you know for me or my family.

How does Krishaun's response challenge typical ideas about manhood, especially in neighborhoods where violence is common?

College Life

What were Robert's and Krishaun's expectations about college? As it turned out, which of those expectations were accurate and which weren't? How did the misconceptions affect their respective college performances?

Robert chooses to attend Lake Forest "because it's not too far from home, though I'm not too close to home either," and

also because, "They're giving me a lot of money, in-state scholarship, leadership scholarship, also academic scholarship." In contrast, Krishaun chooses to attend Fisk University in Tennessee. What factors would be or were most important to you in choosing a college?

Both Robert and Krishaun wonder if they can handle the freedom of being on their own at school. Krishaun says, "Being as free as I am, it's kind of difficult. I don't really know how to use my time wisely a lot. Anything can get me off-track real quick." What could schools (or other individuals or organizations) do to support students who struggle to handle their newfound freedom or manage their time? If you are a student, what type of support do you want?

Krishaun's family throws him a "trunk party" with gifts of things he'll need at college. If you were assigned to fill a trunk for a new college student, what would you include?

Robert has a girlfriend at home, but ends up dating a classmate at school. Why are relationships from home hard to sustain when someone goes off to college?

Overcoming Obstacles

To cope with being the only African-American man in his classes and the underlying prejudice that somehow he isn't qualified to be there, Robert says, "Any classroom I go into I always sit in the front. I don't sit in the back, because I'm here to focus on the professor." What do you think of his strategy?

Krishaun faces a \$1,000 tuition increase and a grade point average that may not be high enough to keep his financial aid. His mother can't afford to contribute more than \$200 and he worries he'll have to drop out. What do you think should happen when a qualified student can't afford to pay for college?

Robert works two jobs and still doesn't have enough money to purchase the books he needs for his Asian studies class. And when he misses a class with his adviser, Lori Del Negro, she recalls this conversation: "He said, 'Well, I had to go to work.' And I said, 'You can't miss class to go to work.' And he says, 'Well, but I'm worried. I don't think I have enough money to make my next tuition payment.'" How does Robert's economic insecurity influence his college experience? How does he cope?



Robert teaching as part of City Year.

Photo courtesy of *All the Difference*

Without additional scholarship money, Robert faces graduating with more than \$40,000 in debt and Krishaun is looking at a possible \$45,000 in debt. How long do you think it will take these young men to pay off those amounts? What impact does this level of debt have on future choices and opportunities? In your view, should society treat student debt as an individual responsibility, or should there be policy changes to make higher education more affordable (and if so, what should those policies be)?

An adviser suggests to Krishaun that he speak with each one of his instructors in classes where he isn't doing well: "Let's make that a monthly goal. Why do you think I would ask you to do that?" Why do you think she would ask Krishaun to do that?

Robert says, "If you work hard, you can do anything." Do you think he's right? What's your evidence?

Adviser Lori Del Negro appreciates Robert's commitment to his long-term goals but cautions, "We want to keep the goals manageable in the short-term so that you can see some progress and know that you're doing the right thing."

How do you translate long-term goals into short-

term actions?

Ona warns Robert, "Don't have your girlfriend here and get her pregnant and her mama be cursing me out." How would becoming a father affect Robert's prospects for graduation and a career?

Professor Peters recognizes that some students come from privilege while others don't, but she says that nobody is going to hold their hands or say that they should be coddled because being African-American can be hard sometimes. How would you distinguish between support that levels the playing field and support that infantilizes disadvantaged students?

Krishaun says:

The first semester I was kind of anxious to go back to what I was used to, but now I'm kind of getting used to doing some new things. My attitude is getting a lot better . . . When I first got here I didn't trust anyone. I



Fisk University campus building.

Photo courtesy of *All the Difference*

think for myself I'm just so used to living in a dangerous environment. I'm used to worrying about walking down and getting jumped on.

What's the impact on a student when they don't feel safe? What are all the possible ways that a school could help students like Krishaun feel safe and trust people?

When Robert's grandmother is given a 90-day notice to leave her home, Robert returns to help with the move. Which types of students are most susceptible to having their studies disrupted by family responsibilities? What sorts of support could be put in place to ensure that those students complete their degrees?

After a poor performance on an exam, Robert is challenged by one of his professors:

Do you have any thoughts on how you studied for that exam and things that you wanted to change or do differently? That's really the part you want to work on. Figuring out what information is actually provided to you and how to organize it. Once you learn to do that, most of these problems become fairly easy to solve. . . That problem-solving skill is a lifelong skill, and

you're learning it now. And it's hard.

Did your education focus on what to learn rather than how to learn? How/where could students who lack study skills acquire them?

Krishaun didn't get accepted to the fraternity he wanted and Robert had to give up on his pre-med major. What prevented these setbacks from completely derailing their studies? How did each of them deal with disappointment?

Culture and Belonging

Krishaun says:

Coming to a black college was important to me, and it's more like a family instead of just being probably one of the black guys on campus or being just a regular student. And, like, I'm proud that I'm here. There's so much history around me that, you know, it makes it even better.

**Robert in class.**Photo courtesy of *All the Difference*

In contrast, Robert is one of the few African-American men attending Lake Forest. What are the advantages and drawbacks of choosing a campus where most of the student body shares your race or religion? Which do you think you might choose and why?

Robert says:

It's been hard being a black man at Lake Forest College . . . I'm doing something that most African-American men is [sic] not doing—excelling at a predominantly white college. You could feel the vibe when I walk into the classroom . . . You can just tell by the look in their eyes. They look at me like, oh, what the heck are you doing here? . . . I'm not naive, but I've never let the people who criticize me determine my destiny and my purpose I have at this college. I just pay attention to my schoolwork.

Have you ever experienced being the only minority in a class or workplace? How did your experience compare to Robert's? What difference do numbers make? What percentage of a group needs to look like you in order for you to feel comfortable?

Lake Forest professor Judy Dozier observes that a student like Robert, from Chicago's South Side (which is still quite segregated), is accustomed to being around people who look and talk like he does and who understand him:

And he comes up here and he's somewhat a fish out of water, kind of like an alien. He has to learn to be comfortable with that, how to fit in and how to let other people understand him. That can be very challenging . . . One student once said she felt like a black stain on a white t-shirt. And I thought that was a powerful metaphor about how out of place she sometimes felt. And this was a student who had adjusted, who was popular, who was smart and it just floored me to hear her say that, you know. But then she was constantly dealing with that sense of being so different.

Beyond recruiting more students of color, what sorts of things could the school do to help students like Robert feel



Krishoun at Fisk graduation.
Photo courtesy of *All the Difference*

as though they belong? Where would you draw the line between accommodating the cultures that minority students bring to a campus and expecting that minority students will assimilate into the existing campus culture?

Like many colleges and universities, Lake Forest is open to having a diverse student body but doesn't always attract a racially diverse group of applicants. What did you learn from Robert's experience that could help the school diversify? What did you learn about the benefits and drawbacks of having students with a mix of backgrounds on campus?

As young men who aren't incarcerated, dead, unemployed or dropouts, Krishoun and Robert are minorities in their own community. How does that affect their sense of belonging? Do you think Chicago's South Side still feels like "home" to them? What can communities do to embrace achievement without graduates' accomplishments alienating them from their own neighborhoods?

Closing Questions

What is one thing you learned from the film that you wish everyone knew? What do you think would change if everyone knew it?

This film is important because _____.

I was inspired by _____.

If you could make this film mandatory viewing for policy makers, what would you want their "takeaway" to be?

Additional media literacy questions are available at:
www.pbs.org/pov/educators/media-literacy.php

All the Difference is more than a film. We hope to help fuel a campaign that mobilizes families, educators, young adults and advocates to take part in conversations and actions revolving around how we can support young black men and first-generation students, ensuring that all young people are equipped with the same opportunities for excellence. This section provides audience members with tangible actions they can take to help make a difference. Facilitators, please print out the next few pages and hand them out to your audience members.

- Share the **All the Difference College Bound Students Handbook**, **Facilitator's Guide** and **Family Tip Sheets** with students, educators, families and organizations in your community or workplace.
- For educators, use the **College Bound Students Handbook** in your classroom to help guide students who are considering college or about to start their college careers. For tips, strategies and ways to use the handbook in classes, download the **Facilitator's Guide**.
- Host a parent meet-up group and use the **Family Tip Sheets** to guide supportive conversations and activities for local parents.
- Join in **American Graduate: Let's Make It Happen** initiatives in your community. Click on "Find Your Community" at americangraduate.org.
- Volunteer for a mentoring program in your community (e.g., Big Brothers Big Sisters).
- Set up a program that matches students who are the first in their families to apply to college with people in the community with college degrees who can serve as "application mentors." Mentors guide high school students through the application process, help them understand what to expect on campus and provide support through their freshman years.
- Make a "This mind will . . ." poster using teens and their dreams for high poverty communities in your city or region. For an example, see: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/sites/default/files/FSA-English-Print.pdf>
- Arrange college visits for elementary and middle school students to make college real and give them a vision for the future.
- Host a book club or convene a study circle to read and discuss Wes Moore's book *The Other Wes Moore*, which was the inspiration for the film.
- Host a series of college application prep workshops for high school students in financially strapped districts. Use www.pbs.org/pov/allthedifference/student-handbook as a guide.
- Host a screening for local and state education policy makers. Ask them to commit to at least one change or action that would directly benefit black boys and/or minority and first-generation students.
- Participate in online conversations about the film. Consider regularly checking discussion threads to gather wisdom from other parents, educators or community members, and then sharing what you have learned with your group or in local and community meetings.
- Add a card to The Race Card Project, started by NPR journalist Michele Norris. Each participant summarizes his or her feelings in a single sentence composed of six words. Create your own local wall of cards and use them as prompts for further community dialogue. For examples, visit the project website, theracecardproject.com.



FILM-RELATED WEB SITES

FILMMAKER WEBSITE

www.nomadicpictures.org/film/all-the-difference

Original Online Content on POV

To further enhance the broadcast, POV has produced an interactive website to enable viewers to explore the film in greater depth. The **All the Difference** website—www.pbs.org/pov/allthedifference—offers a streaming video trailer for the film; an interview with filmmaker; a list of related websites, articles and books; a downloadable discussion guide; and special features.

COLLEGE BOUND STUDENTS HANDBOOK

<http://www.pbs.org/pov/apps/allthedifference/student-handbook/>

Introduced by Wes Moore and intended for first-generation, college-bound high school students, the handbook covers such topics as college selection, financial aid packages, time management, networking, academic majors and stumbling blocks.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

For educators, guidance counselors and college prep programs, the guide offers strategies and activities to use the film to start conversations with students and help them prepare for college.

FAMILY TIP SHEETS

For parents, guardians and/or other adult family members, the tip sheets offer insight and advice on everything from how to throw a trunk party, to financial aid, to what to expect for your college freshman.

From the Film

CITY YEAR

www.cityyear.org

The AmeriCorps service program where Robert is employed after college, City Year identifies schools in high-poverty, high-risk, high-need locations and bridges the gap between the support the students actually need and what their schools are designed to provide.

URBAN PREP ACADEMIES

www.urbanprep.org

The website of the charter high school that the boys attend describes the school's history, philosophy and creed (which we see the boys chant).



Books Related to the Film

THE OTHER WES MOORE: ONE NAME, TWO FATES

BY WES MOORE

<http://theotherwesmoore.com/>

Two kids with the same name living in the same decaying city. One grew up to be a Rhodes Scholar, decorated combat veteran, White House Fellow and business leader. The other is serving a life sentence in prison for felony murder. Here is the story of two boys and the journey of a generation.

THE WORK

BY WES MOORE

The acclaimed author of *The Other Wes Moore* continues his inspirational quest for a meaningful life and shares the powerful lessons—about self-discovery, service and risk-taking—that led him to a new definition of success for our times.

I CAN FINISH COLLEGE: THE OVERCOME ANY OBSTACLE AND GET YOUR DEGREE GUIDE

BY MARCIA Y. CANTARELLA

<http://icanfinishcollege.com/>

This book serves as a complete guide to applying for college and graduating with success.

PROMISES KEPT: RAISING BLACK BOYS TO SUCCEED IN SCHOOL AND IN LIFE

BY JOE BREWSTER AND MICHÈLE STEPHENSON
WITH HILARY BEARD

<http://www.americanpromise.org/#/book>

Promises Kept presents 10 parenting and educational strategies that researchers have discovered can assist parents, educators, and other members of their proverbial Village to help Black boys become the happy, healthy, well-educated, well-developed people they are capable of being. Filled with innovative research, practical strategies, and the voices of parents and children who are grappling with these issues firsthand, *Promises Kept* will challenge your assumptions and inspire you to make sure your child isn't lost in the gap.

Reports and Stats

BLACK LIVES MATTER: THE SCHOTT 50 STATE REPORT ON PUBLIC EDUCATION AND BLACK MALES

<http://blackboysreport.org>

This comprehensive 2015 report by the Schott Foundation for Public Education includes national data on the four-year graduation rates for black males compared to other subgroups and highlights how the persistent systemic disparity in opportunity creates a climate and perception of a population who is less valued.

ECONOMIC COSTS OF YOUTH DISADVANTAGE AND HIGH-RETURN OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE

https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/mbk_report_final_update1.pdf

This report, released by the White House in July 2015, examines the barriers that disadvantaged youth, particularly young men of color, face and quantifies the enormous costs this situation imposes on the U.S. economy.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

<http://nces.ed.gov/FastFacts/#>

This website provides summaries of federal research on topics such as graduation rates, student debt and popular majors.

Supporting Students on the Path to Graduation

AMERICAN GRADUATE: LET'S MAKE IT HAPPEN

www.americangraduate.org

All the Difference is part of **American Graduate: Let's Make It Happen**, a public media initiative made possible by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to help local communities keep more students on the path to graduation, college and careers. Find out what people in your community and around the country are doing to improve graduation rates.

AMERICA'S PROMISE ALLIANCE

<http://www.americaspromise.org/Resources.aspx>

America's Promise Alliance provides a toolkit for parents and other resources.

THE AMERICAN PROMISE CAMPAIGN**<http://www.americanpromise.org/>**

In partnership with trusted organizations around the country, the American Promise (POV 2014) team launched a national campaign to mobilize parents, educators and young people to identify ways that Americans can better support black boys' social and emotional needs and encourage people to consider the role they play in advancing success for all children. This endeavor is supported by a set of strategic tools:

- A companion book, *Promises Kept: Raising Black Boys to Succeed in School and in Life*, written by Joe Brewster, Michèle Stephenson and acclaimed author Hilary Beard, and published by Random House;
- Promise Clubs: local parent support groups designed to foster advocacy and engagement for parents;
- A mobile app that helps parents set and track goals and development for their children; will regularly provide tips for parents;
- A professional development guide for educators by Teaching Tolerance a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center;
- A program designed to foster peer-to-peer mentorship and dialogue for young mentors developed by Active Voice;
- A special campaign with the Big Brothers Big Sisters' Mentoring Brothers in Action program.

BLACK ALLIANCE FOR EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS**<http://www.baeo.org/>**

The mission of the Black Alliance for Educational Options is to increase access to high-quality educational options for black children by actively supporting parental choice policies and programs that empower low-income and working-class black families.

CAMPAIGN FOR BLACK MALE ACHIEVEMENT**<http://blackmaleachievement.org/>**

The Campaign for Black Male Achievement is a national membership network that seeks to ensure the growth, sustainability and impact of leaders and organizations committed to improving the life outcomes of black men and boys.

COALITION OF SCHOOLS EDUCATING BOYS OF COLOR**<http://www.coseboc.org/>**

The mission of this group is to connect, inspire, support and strengthen school leaders dedicated to the social, emotional and academic development of boys and young men of color.

CONCERNED BLACK MEN NATIONAL**<http://www.cbmnational.org/>**

This organization's tutoring program offers an academically focused program in an afterschool setting that links learning to the school day.

FACING HISTORY AND OURSELVES**<http://www.facing.org/>**

This program works with educators to improve their effectiveness in the classroom, as well as students' academic performance and civic learning.

MY BROTHER'S KEEPER**<https://www.whitehouse.gov/my-brothers-keeper>**

President Obama launched this initiative to address persistent opportunity gaps faced by boys and young men of color and to ensure that all young people can reach their full potential.

NATIONAL OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN CAMPAIGN**<http://www.otlcampaign.org/content/about-otl-campaign>**

The Opportunity to Learn Campaign unites a growing coalition of advocates and organizers from across the country working to ensure that all students have access to a high-quality public education.

REACH HIGHER**<https://www.whitehouse.gov/reach-higher>**

The Reach Higher initiative is the First Lady's effort to inspire every student in America to take charge of their future by completing their education past high school, whether at a professional training program, a community college or a four-year college or university.

TEACHING TOLERANCE**<http://www.tolerance.org/>**

A project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, Teaching Tolerance offers a place where educators who care about diversity, equity and justice can find news, suggestions, conversation and support.



For Students

ALL THE DIFFERENCE COLLEGE BOUND STUDENTS HANDBOOK

<http://www.pbs.org/pov/apps/allthedifference/student-handbook/>

Introduced by Wes Moore and intended for first generation, college-bound high school students, the handbook covers such topics as college selection, financial aid packages, time management, networking, academic majors and stumbling blocks.

BETTER MAKE ROOM

www.bettermakeroom.org

This U.S. Department of Education/Civics Nation social media project invites students to share their successes and sends encouraging text messages to help students stay on track while they are prepping for the SAT, applying for financial aid and taking other steps related to college.

FEDERAL STUDENT AID

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/>

This U.S. Department of Education website addresses students interested in applying for financial aid for college.

GET SCHOOLED

<https://getschooled.com/dashboard>

The videos, games and other resources collected here are intended to help teens choose a college, get accepted, find financing and graduate.

I'M FIRST

<http://www.imfirst.org>

This online community is designed for first-generation college students—and their supporters.



HOW TO BUY THE FILM

For updates on how to purchase the film, visit www.nomadicpictures.org/film/all-the-difference.



Produced by American Documentary, Inc., POV is public television's premier showcase for nonfiction films. The series airs Mondays at 10 p.m. on PBS from June to September, with primetime specials during the year. Since 1988, POV has been the home for the world's boldest contemporary filmmakers, celebrating intriguing personal stories that spark conversation and inspire action. Always an innovator, POV discovers fresh new voices and creates interactive experiences that shine a light on social issues and elevate the art of storytelling. With our documentary broadcasts, original online programming and dynamic community engagement campaigns, we are committed to supporting films that capture the imagination and present diverse perspectives.

POV films have won 32 Emmy® Awards, 18 George Foster Peabody Awards, 12 Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards, three Academy Awards®, the first-ever George Polk Documentary Film Award and the Prix Italia. The POV series has been honored with a Special News & Documentary Emmy Award for Excellence in Television Documentary Filmmaking, two IDA Awards for Best Continuing Series and the National Association of Latino Independent Producers (NALIP) Award for Corporate Commitment to Diversity. More information is available at www.pbs.org/pov.

POV Digital www.pbs.org/pov

Since 1994, POV Digital has driven new storytelling initiatives and interactive production for POV. The department created PBS's first program website and its first web-based documentary (*POV's Borders*) and has won major awards, including a Webby Award (and six nominations) and an Online News Association Award. POV Digital continues to explore the future of independent nonfiction media through its digital productions and the POV Hackathon lab, where media makers and technologists collaborate to reinvent storytelling forms. @povdocs on Twitter.

POV Community Engagement and Education

POV's Community Engagement and Education team works with educators, community organizations and PBS stations to present more than 650 free screenings every year. In addition, we distribute free discussion guides and standards-aligned lesson plans for each of our films. With our community partners, we inspire dialogue around the most important social issues of our time.

Front cover: **Krishau** speaking to students at Urban Prep. Photo courtesy of *All the Difference*

American Documentary, Inc. www.amdoc.org

American Documentary, Inc. (AmDoc) is a multimedia company dedicated to creating, identifying and presenting contemporary stories that express opinions and perspectives rarely featured in mainstream media outlets. AmDoc is a catalyst for public culture, developing collaborative strategic engagement activities around socially relevant content on television, online and in community settings. These activities are designed to trigger action, from dialogue and feedback to educational opportunities and community participation.

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You can follow us on Twitter @POVengage for the latest news from POV Community Engagement & Education.



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