



Contact: Jerjuan A. Howard  
Cell: (313) 444-7560  
Email: [j.howard@umojadebateteam.org](mailto:j.howard@umojadebateteam.org)  
Website: [umojadebateteam.org](http://umojadebateteam.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

04/17/2023

## **UMOJA DEBATE TEAM PARTNERS WITH UNIVERSITY OF DETROIT MERCY SCHOOL OF LAW TO BRING DEBATE SUMMER CAMP TO CAMPUS**



Umoja Debate Team's annual debate summer camp has a new home!

Last year in partnership with Detroit Public Library and Gleaners Food Bank, Umoja Debate Team held its inaugural debate summer camp at Parkman Branch Library. The 6-week camp had a total of 15 youth participants. It included a curriculum tailored towards proper research, public speaking etiquette, confidence and conflict resolution. Myka Burley's son Michael participated last year and championed the program stating that it "helped me develop a sound argument strategy, learn how to calmly and diligently argue my point, build my confidence and focus on the facts rather than opinions."

After a successful first year, Umoja Debate Team now has big plans to expand the program and with the help of the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law, they are doing just that! This year's program has several new features including, a new location, an increase in youth participants to 50, a 2-week extension making the program 8 weeks total, community engagement at Umoja Village and impactful mentorship by college interns majoring in education or pre-law.

"This partnership does so much for our youth. It allows them to experience a law school campus. That type of exposure at an early age has the power to make something that can sometimes be viewed as far-fetched, more realistic, and tangible for our future leaders" said Arieana Hemphill, creative content director for Umoja Debate Team.

“We’re excited about this partnership. It’s a great opportunity for our Metro Detroit youth to begin seeing themselves as lawyers” said Courtney Griffin, Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging at Detroit Mercy Law.

The group plans to start the camp on June 21 and will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays at the School of Law’s Riverfront Campus in the heart of downtown Detroit and on Fridays at Umoja Village for the community engagement portion of the camp.

A registration link for participants will be posted on Umoja Debate Team’s website in the upcoming weeks. Youth ages 11-14 are eligible to join the summer debate camp. The 50 spots will be filled on a first-come basis.

To keep the program free and accessible, Umoja Debate Team is actively seeking sponsorships and donations.

**About Umoja Debate Team:** *Umoja Debate Team is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. We are a youth debate team based in Detroit, MI. By using debate as our vehicle, we provide students with the opportunity for self expression, critical thinking skills, and conflict resolution skills.*

<https://www.umojadebateteam.org/>