

# AFRO QUIZ 2020

## COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

### 13-15 AGE CATEGORY

*This year, CCACH is celebrating the different ways people of African and Caribbean heritage empower each other across continents and within their communities. As you read the material, it is our hope that you will learn about some of the men and women who have done a lot to empower their communities and beyond.*

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## SECTION 1: ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT AND SPORTS

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*Many community activists are people who are in the lime light. These people use the platform of fame to propel their ideas for the development and betterment of their communities. In this section, you will learn about one such person who did just that.*

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### NIPSEY HUSSLE



Nipsey Hussle was born Ermias Asghedon on August 15, 1985, to an Eritrean father and an African American mother.

He released his first studio album on February 16, 2018. Before this his musical outlet was through the production and sale of his mixtapes. He was an underground legend in the hip-hop world for over a decade.

Nipsey was a rapper, an entrepreneur, and a community activist. When news of his death broke out on March 31, 2019, many mourned not only the loss of a young and talented man, but also the loss of such an integral figure in the black community.

Hussle played a huge role in empowering the black community in his home state of Los Angeles. On the day after his death, Hussle was supposed to meet with the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) to discuss the issue of gun violence in the city. His hope was to find a way he could assist the LAPD in stopping gang violence and helping young children in his community avoid the gang culture which he had been a part of his life at their age.

## CRENSHAW BOULEVARD

Crenshaw Boulevard is in South Los Angeles. It was named in 1904 after George Lafayette Crenshaw, a banker and real estate developer. The boulevard is 23 miles long and starts at Hancock Park and ends in Palos Verdes.

It is known as the cultural and commercial spine of Black Los Angeles. The Crenshaw neighbourhood has the largest black community west of the Mississippi River. However, this was not always the case. From its establishment, Crenshaw was populated by white middleclass residents. It was not until after World War II, in the late 1950s and early 1960s that the boulevard saw any non-white residents. During this time Black and Japanese families started moving to the area.

The nightlife on and off the boulevard started to attract many people from the city as it featured clubs and other locations such as Maverick's Flat (Apollo of the West); which brought in the cream of the crop of African American musicians. Places like Maverick's were symbols of cultural pride for the black community.

Nipsey co-founded an initiative called "**Our Opportunity**" which was created in order to build black-owned business in South LA. Our Opportunity involved Nipsey putting in millions of dollars into real estate development in efforts to build up black-owned businesses. He built a strip mall on Crenshaw Boulevard; and this mall contained several stores in it which were mainly black-owned and which created employment opportunities for the predominantly black community of Crenshaw. This included, **Marathon Clothing**, a store which he owned and which provided employment opportunities to formerly incarcerated people. Before his death, Nipsey had plans to mimic the Our Opportunity initiative in other cities in the United States.

## DESTINATION CRENSHAW

Hussle was an integral part of another initiative or project called Destination Crenshaw. It is a 1.3-mile-long (2.09KM) outdoor art and culture experience which celebrated the black community of Los Angeles. A very important aspect of the project is that it will be built by the community in which it will be housed in and which it plans to celebrate. The project will include community gathering spaces, parks, improvements to the streets and hundreds of spaces where the community will be able to display their artwork.

Nipsey was involved in the project from the very beginning and was the man behind the logo for the project. This was his gift to Destination Crenshaw.

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"Destination Crenshaw is being built for and by Black Los Angeles atop a rich history of Black Activism. It will be a living celebration to remain standing for decades to come, one so stunning that everyone will call their friends saying, 'You've got to come see this.'"

Marqueece Harris-Dawson  
Councilmember, City of Los Angeles, District Eight

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## HUSSLE and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)

Aside from his efforts in community engagement through real estate, speaking out against gun violence and his involvement in many other initiatives, Nipsey Hussle was also invested in and advocated for STEM among black and brown youth. He was an investor in **Vector90**, a technology centre that was founded by his business partner Dave Gross. Vector90 consists of programs such as “Too Big to Fail” which aim to provide black and brown youth with the opportunity to experience and be trained in STEM fields. The program builds a bridge between these youth and Silicon Valley, allowing them to be immersed in the technology field. The Vector90 plans were to eventually expand the program across the country. His investment in youth education was not only limited to STEM, but also extended to his simple investment in holistic education of the youth in the community.

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## SECTION 2: POLITICS AND/OR ACTIVISM

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*Activism and politics are two very popular vehicles that are used to address issues that might be affecting a community. In this section, you will acquaint yourselves with two women who worked tirelessly to fight for their communities and empower them towards the common change they all sought after.*

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### DR. BONITA MABO



*Bonita was a prominent human rights activist who had spent most of her life fighting for the land and education rights of people in her community.*

Bonita Enerstine Neehow, was a descendent of Vanuatuan workers who were brought to Queensland, Australia to work on sugar plantations through a practice that was called “**blackbirding**”. This was a practice of enslaving South Pacific Islanders, and bringing them to work on plantations in Queensland, Australia. It occurred in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and was only stopped in 1904. The Islanders were deceived and often forced into it, with many being sometimes kidnapped from their island homes. Although it has been said that they provided cheap labour, the substandard conditions they were forced to work in are closer to those of

slaves rather than labourers. By 1904, it is estimated that almost 60,000 Pacific Islanders were brought to Australia to work on the plantations.

Dr. Mabo was born in Ingham, Queensland in 1943. In 1959, she married Eddie “Koiki” Mabo, with whom she had 10 children. Eddie was himself an activist who was fighting for the land rights of Indigenous peoples; and Bonita fought right next to him. They worked tirelessly so the Indigenous peoples would be able to own land which they would be able to pass on to future generations. This fight was won in 1993 when the **Native Title Act** was passed. The Act made it possible for Indigenous people to claim traditional rights to land and compensation.

The Mabos also fought hard for their community to receive quality education which was catered to them and their culture. In 1973, they established the **Black Community School**, Australia’s first Aboriginal community school, where she worked as a teacher’s aide, and where the culture and language of the Indigenous peoples was taught.

Bonita also advocated for the recognition of her ancestors and the difficult and harsh conditions they endured after being brought to Queensland. She called for all minority ethnic groups in Australia: Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and South Sea Islanders to work together to fight for their rights.

#### AWARDS AND HONOURS

- **2013 - Officer of the Order of Australia** for “distinguished service to the Indigenous community and to human rights”.
- **2018 - James Cook University’s Honorary Doctorate of Letters** (the university’s highest award) in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the community.

Watch this short news report on the state funeral of this formidable activist who passed on November 26, 2018. <https://youtu.be/myt1Svc3W5A>

**Hint:** Some questions may be asked from the content of the video.

#### MARÍA ELENA MOYANO



María Elena Moyano was an Afro-Peruvian community activist who sought to empower women in her community. She was born in Lima, Peru on November 29, 1958. She grew up in a time when there was a lot of change going on in Peru. A time when urbanization was taking place and many people were looking to find a place to call home in the city. She grew up in a wasteland on the outskirts of the city called **pueblos jóvenes** or **shanty towns** in a neighbourhood called

Villa El Salvador. In her neighbourhood, people from many different cultural backgrounds came together to build social institutions such as schools and other public places. However, it was evident to Moyano that women were not being included in the growth process. This is what led her to be dedicated to community work.

When she was 25, María was elected as the sub-secretary general of a new organization called ***Federación Popular de Mujeres de Villa El Salvador***. Within two years, she would become president. During her time as a community activist, she was also fighting for the improvement of the lives of Afro-Peruvians like herself who were marginalized due to racism, and in the case of women, sexism as well. She became a very influential person and great leader, picking up a following in her community. During her time as president of *Federación Popular de Mujeres*, she started many impactful programs and initiatives including one that supplied milk to children in the community.

However, her social mobilization and advocacy were not appreciated by the rising communist party, Shining Path, established by Abimael Guzmán. Guzmán and his party saw Moyano's community activism as a hindrance to their revolutionary political agenda. María continued to speak out against them as their mandate went against the betterment of people, and so they decided to speak against her too. They defamed her character and accused her of setting a bomb and stealing money, in efforts to discredit her, but she did not let this deter her from continuing to empower her community. On February 15, 1992, on the day after she led a protest against the party, they retaliated by coming to her house and murdering her in front of her son and husband.

A book about the life and work of this brave Afro-Peruvian was published in 2000 by the University Press of Florida.

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**Can you think of any other countries in South or Central America that have large populations of African Descendants?**

### AFRO-PERUVIAN

- Afro-Peruvians are people from Peru who are descendants of the slaves who were brought to Peru.
- The first slaves arrived in Peru in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century. Slavery was abolished in Peru in 1854.
- The last census taken that included the Afro-Peruvians, demonstrated that their population is roughly 3 million.
- Even Peru was the first Latin American country to apologize to its African community for the injustice of slavery, Afro-Peruvians still face racism, discrimination, and battle with poor living conditions.
- Moyano left other Afro-Peruvians who have continued to fight for the right of their community and their campaigns have yielded some results:
  - In **2015**, Peru had its first ever conviction for racial discrimination
  - In **2017**, the national census expanded on its ethnic categories to include "Afro-descendants".



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## SECTION 3: CANADIANA (TRUE, NORTH, STRONG)

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*In this section you will learn about two women and their foundations. They have both had impactful careers and are engaged in work that empowers their communities through the arts.*

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### MORÉNIKÉ ỌLÁỌŞEBÌKAN



“Stereotypes don’t get in my way; they don’t limit my potentials.” - Moréniké Ọláọşebìkan

A great example of community empowerment is demonstrated by Moréniké Ọláọşebìkan, an exemplary woman who was moved to engage her community into action for a cause that she experienced during a time when she was most vulnerable.

Born in Lagos, Nigeria, Moréniké moved to Edmonton in December 2003 to pursue a degree in Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences at the University of Alberta. Years earlier in Lagos when she was 19, she had suffered from Tuberculosis and underwent 9 months of treatment at a health centre which also treated people living with HIV and AIDS. Although she was suffering herself, Moréniké was touched by the plight of people living with this deadly virus.

From stigmatization to and lack of treatment to the painful and difficult deaths they endured. At the time, she felt there was not much she could do to alleviate the suffering that they endured, but she would never let go of the need to make a difference. Upon moving to Alberta, Moréniké met like-minded people who also wanted to make a difference. She pitched her idea to do raise money and awareness for the plight of people living with HIV and AIDS.

#### ABOUT THE RIBBON ROUGE FOUNDATION

**Ribbon Rouge** is a charitable organization which Moréniké established in 2006 with the support of the Kamit African Caribbean Society at the University. Having learned to sew at the age of 8 and having a passion for art, Moréniké came up with the idea to have a fund raiser where her designs, made of African fabric, and her art work



*“Ribbon Rouge foundation is committed to raising the voices of people affected by HIV. We believe in the liberating power of the arts to promote self-expression, build community and facilitate positive social change”*

[www.ribbonrouge.com](http://www.ribbonrouge.com)

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would be auctioned and the proceeds donated to organizations working with HIV awareness. The first ever Ribbon Rouge event was held on March 15, 2006 in Edmonton. The organization is registered in both Canada and Nigeria and it not only generates funds for HIV awareness; but also provides artists in the community a platform to spread messages of positive social change.

Aside from the annual fundraising event which is now called **Arts 4 Action**, the foundation also runs grassroots initiatives and mentorship programs. By 2018, the organization collaborated with 260 artists and donated nearly \$46,000 for HIV relief to HIV Edmonton, the Stephen Lewis Foundation and the Joint United Nations AIDS program.

Watch this short video on Ribbon Rouge 2015 demonstrating the growth and success the foundation has achieved since its inception in 2006. <https://youtu.be/1lOeySMfz2g>

**Hint:** Some questions may be asked from the content of the video.

## THE MICHAËLLE JEAN FOUNDATION

The Michaëlle Jean Foundation was founded by Her Excellency, the Right Honourable **Michaëlle Jean**, Govenor General of Canada, 2005-2010, and her husband **Jean-Daniel Lafond**. They believe that *“young people are one of Canada’s most precious resources. When given the opportunity, their ideas, their creativity and their capacity for innovation can have a transformative impact on our society.”*

The foundation is a charitable organization that is recognized nationally. It enables marginalized youth to use their creativity to change their lives and their communities. They engage these young citizens using the unique arts for **collective impact model**. The organization empowers youth to develop new solutions to relevant issues that are affecting them and their communities, through the arts. The foundation runs many different programs which have substantial impacts on members of various marginalized communities.



- **The Young Arts Entrepreneur program** has provided funding to up and coming artists or collectives of artists between the ages of 18-30 from disadvantages backgrounds. These artists are given start-up funding which they use to implement a project that they have pitched. These projects have to benefit underserved communities.
- **4<sup>th</sup> Wall: Make the Invisible Visible** is a program whose goal is to give a voice and national profile to young creators who usually do not have a seat at the table. The program works

with various museums and art galleries who open their doors so that these youths can display their work.

- **Impact in the Black Community-** The foundation worked with organizations across Canada to organize the **2019 National Black Canadian Summit** which was held in Ottawa, Ontario. The next summit will be held in Halifax, Nova Scotia in March 2020, and Her Excellency will be one of the speakers. The organization has also worked with the Environics Institute's Black Experience Project and the Nia Centre for the arts on an initiative that empowered black youth through the arts. These youth were primarily from the Greater Toronto Area. An exhibition was held at the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) which displayed art work from 11 young artists from the Black community.

To learn more about the foundation, click on this link <http://www.fmif.ca/>

Check out this video on **The Black Experience Project**, which is a seminal research study which examines lived experiences of people who self-identify as Black and/or of African heritage living in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). <https://youtu.be/JKezwsr7N10>

Can you or someone you know relate to any of the people you have listened to?

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## SECTION 4: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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*There are many unique ways in which one can empower their community. In this section you will learn about a man who was marginalized due to a difficult situation, but found a way to not only help himself, but also the people in his community who were in similar situations. You will also learn about a digital activist and computer scientist called Joy Buolamwini, whose love for art and science led her to pursue a career in eliminating bias in computer technology.*

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### JOY BUOLAMWINI



Joy Buolamwini is of Ghanaian Heritage and was born in Edmonton, Alberta. She grew up in Mississippi, Alabama. She is a Rhodes Scholar, a Fulbright Fellow a speaker on social justice and technology; and the founder of the **Algorithmic Justice League** (AJL). She also known as the *Poet of Code*.

With a mother who is an artist and a father who is a scientist, Joy says that she saw art and science as one and this led her to pursue a career in computer science, which according to her, represented both art and science. She was inspired by code at a very young age and taught herself web design when she was in high school. She was active in the computer science world and took part in many competitions.

Joy launched project **Zamrize**, as a Fulbright fellow. The project empowered youth from Zambia to become creators of technology. As a Rhodes Scholar, she launched project **Code4Rights**, that builds on the work of *Zamrize*, but its goal was to promote human rights through technology education.

#### Algorithm

*An algorithm is a set of rules or steps that have to be followed in order for a specific task to be completed. In the case of computers, algorithms tell the computers what to do and how to perform a certain task.*

#### Bias

*Bias is when a certain idea, person or thing, is favoured over another or others. Because of the favouritism, people act in a way that only benefits the idea, person or thing that they favour.*

As she developed her skills and passion for computer science, she started to see that there is some **bias** in **algorithms** and coding language. Her research, **called Gender Shades**, has shown that the people who were most affected by the algorithmic bias were people with darker skin and women. The term that she gives to algorithmic bias is the **coded gaze**. Her research led her to start an organization called **Algorithmic Justice League (AJL)** that raised awareness of this bias and worked to do something about it.

As someone who loves art, Joy ensures that AJL uses the arts to carry out their mission and raise awareness. Inspired by her **Gender Shades** research, Joy created a spoken word piece to highlight the gender and skin shade bias that she found in facial analysis technology. This spoken word piece is inspired by Sojourner Truth's **'Ain't I a Woman'** speech.

Watch here as the Joy, the "Poet of Code" shares *"AI, Ain't I a Woman, a spoken word piece that highlights the ways in which artificial intelligence can misinterpret the images of iconic black women: Oprah, Serena Williams, Michelle Obama, Sojourner Truth, Ida B. Wells, and Shirley Chisholm"*.

<https://youtu.be/QxuyfWoVV98>

## LEARN MORE ABOUT CODED GAZE AND BIASES IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The website [www.notflawless.ai](http://www.notflawless.ai), is "a place for users and makers of artificial intelligence to share stories, concerns, and flaws". Here you will be able to learn more about how the coded gaze affects people in so many ways. Scroll down the webpage and you will also see 3 books that have been written about the biases in artificial intelligence.

One of these books, **Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism**, was written by **Safiya Umoja Noble**. The book was published in February 2018. In this book Safiya Noble looks at how search engines like google promote negative representation of people of colour and specifically women of colour.

## Algorithmic Justice League (AJL)

### Mission:

- To highlight algorithmic bias through media, art and science.
- To provide a place for people to voice concerns and experiences with coded bias.
- To develop practices for accountability during the design, development, and deployment of coded systems.

### SAFE Face Pledge:

This pledge holds companies accountable, so they follow Artificial Intelligence ethics by making public commitments. These commitments are:

- **Show Value for Human Life, Dignity, and Rights**
- **Address Harmful Bias**
- **Facilitate Transparency**
- **Embed Commitments into Business Practices**

## THE COMFORT DOG PROJECT

In the early 1990s, Northern Uganda was in a civil war between the ruling government and a rebel unit called the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), which was led by a man called Joseph Kony. The war spanned two decades and led to the displacement of around 1.6 million people from Northern Uganda with roughly 40,000 who have been abducted and turned into child soldiers.



### UGANDA

#### COUNTRY PROFILE

- Uganda is a country in East Africa.
- Gained independence from the British in 1962.
- President: Yoweri Museveni (since 1986)
- As of July 2018, the population of this 241,038 sq km country was 40,853,749.
- English is the official language with Luganda being the most widely spoken, and Swahili being a second official language.

Francis Okello is a man from Northern Uganda, who was unfortunately blinded by a bomb left behind by the war. This happened at the age of 12. He had a difficult time adjusting to his new situation and was stigmatized by his peers and his community. He was attending a boarding school and was not able to walk to the bathroom by himself at night, but he also did not like the idea of bothering anyone to be his guide. His situation left him in dismay, and he was struggling with his mental well-being. However, this all changed for him when he met a dog called Tiger at his school. He and Tiger bonded and soon, it was Tiger who would lead him to the bathroom at night.

From his experiences, Okello received training as a community psychologist and went on to start the **Comfort Dog Project** in 2015. This project pairs up a traumatized community member with a dog (usually a stray) as a therapy animal. Comfort Dog has helped over 300 people.

Please follow the link and watch the short video that explains this project in more detail and centers around one community member named Filda who has benefitted greatly from the program. <https://youtu.be/XCgOu0p7x0c>

**Hint:** Some questions may be asked from the content of the video.

#### HOW GOOD ARE YOU AT GEOGRAPHY?

Without googling, can you identify which of these countries listed below are Uganda's neighbours? *Hint: only 3 apply*

KENYA

LIBYA

RWANDA

TANZANIA

ZIMBABWE

LAOS

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## SECTION 5: CURRENT EVENTS

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*This section is based on current news and events that highlight progress, positivity and celebration in the Black community and Black personalities around the world. The period covered will be the year 2019 and may also include recent news that happened in January and February 2020. You are encouraged to read a broad spectrum of information paying close attention to black based news on various platforms.*

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