



August 22, 2023

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**Statement Regarding Louisville Public Media Allegations:  
Issued on behalf of Amped Inc. and Yvette Gentry**

On August 17, 2023, Louisville Public Media released a misguided and misleading story regarding Amped and our work to develop the Russell Station Tech and Learning Center. This story misses the mark, narrowly focusing on the price paid to acquire land and buildings<sup>1</sup> but overlooking entirely why these assets are valued for less in Black neighborhoods. It never talks about historically low property value assessments and biased appraisals in redlined neighborhoods across America<sup>2</sup>. It never challenges the systems that lead home prices in Black neighborhoods in Louisville to be valued at 27% less than comparable homes in white neighborhoods<sup>3</sup>. It shies away from unpacking the hard truths around home and property valuations that contribute to a startling income and racial wealth gap<sup>4</sup>.

More importantly, it ignores the fact that Amped purchased nearly an entire city block within minutes of downtown including a former 10,086 sf. Black-owned department store. Rather than celebrate a \$309,860 land and building acquisition price that will lead to more than \$9,300,000 in investment, the article casts doubt on the motives and intentions of two Black leaders who have spent decades serving their community - Dave Christopher and Yvette Gentry. These are individuals who've invested their own personal dollars into initiatives that uplift the Black community and, in the case of Ms. Gentry, a woman who quite literally put her life on the line in the course of her work with the Louisville Metro Police Department. Suggesting that corruption and profiting is at the heart of their motives is unfair and simply incorrect.

What's more, the story downplays what Amped is committed to doing with this development- taking an asset that once was a thriving center for Black commerce and breathing new life into it as a technology training center. It dismisses the in-demand, free training, targeted at west end and near west end

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<sup>1</sup> Amped paid \$309,860 for 12 parcels of land including a 10,086 sf, three-story building. PVA assessed values are one data point used to determine market value. The most recent PVA values (which can be accessed at <https://jeffersonpva.ky.gov/>) for these parcels total \$160,320.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/biased-appraisals-and-the-devaluation-of-housing-in-black-neighborhoods/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/devaluation-of-assets-in-black-neighborhoods/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.federalreserve.gov/econres/notes/feds-notes/wealth-inequality-and-the-racial-wealth-gap-20211022.html>



residents that will take place in this building, training that will lead to jobs that pay \$40,000-\$60,000 per year at healthcare companies across the city. It never mentions that these annual, living wage jobs will translate to tens of millions of dollars in earned income over a working career for individuals, parents, and their families. It seems to forget that it will be these dollars that lift families out of poverty, that lead to better educational attainment, that improve health outcomes, that lower crime. It forgets the children today and the children to come who will benefit when their parents, loved ones, and caregivers can access job training right in their community, in a space that will signal hope, rather than generate vague memories of a time when dollars used to stay in the west end.

The story misrepresents the sentiments of many of those they interviewed, such as Councilman Jecorey Arthur who offered this statement about the article, “My comments about AMPED wrongfully using coronavirus relief funds were hypothetical in response to claims. When Metro Council debated this funding, my concern was the development benefiting current residents in the West End. We're thankful Dave Christopher committed to making that happen, as he has for years with all his work.”

Amped, its staff and Board, Ms. Gentry, and the community we collectively serve deserves better. We deserve stories that align with Amped’s foundational belief - that every child and every person who walks through our doors has everything they need to succeed; they simply lack the resources and money to do it. We need stories that showcase Black people responsibly investing in Black communities, as is happening with this development and as is happening with the series of projects the article referenced and then similarly discarded. We need stories that celebrate the spaces our children and families will live in, learn in, play in, and receive services in. In a city that just eclipsed 100 homicides in less than 8 months, we need to focus on investment that changes lives. Amped’s work does that, and our Russell Station Tech and Learning Center will take these efforts to scale. That is the story. That is what matters.

We respectfully ask that Louisville Public Media retract their story and apologize for the harm that it has already caused.

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**Amped Board of Directors:** Amped’s Board stands firmly behind this response to the false, unfair, misleading LPM story. As Board Chair, Patty Marguet writes, “We condemn the story's attempt to erode the public's confidence regarding the success, progress, and self-actualization of the Black Community. Russell Station furthers Amped's mission to provide transformational opportunities through job training that will build and keep wealth in the west end community.”

**About Amped:** Founded in 2014, Amped has a nearly decade-long track record of serving residents of Louisville with its mission to amplify and accelerate the economic and equity transformation of Black and brown communities. Amped’s vision is to build generational wealth for families and entrepreneurs creating self-sufficiency, economic mobility and a more equitable society. This is accomplished through a



family oriented ecosystem that builds generational wealth for marginalized communities through youth programming, in-demand workforce development and business incubation. Our programs uplift the community by providing free out of school time musical education, technical training that leads to thriving wage jobs, and business incubation support that stabilizes and strengthens Black and brown business owners.

**About Yvette Gentry:** Yvette Gentry is the Director of Resident and Community Safety with LDG Development, a firm focused on providing affordable housing that spurs economic growth and enriches neighborhoods. Gentry made history in 2020 as the first woman and the first Black woman to lead the Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD). She took on the interim role as Police Chief, stepping into leadership of the troubled agency while it faced extreme scrutiny over the police shooting of Breonna Taylor. Yvette previously retired from LMPD as a Deputy Chief in 2014 where she served for two decades in investigations, strategic planning, budgeting, and patrol. She then served as Chief of Community Building in Mayor Fischer’s administration before joining Metro United Way as a Project Director.