



FORWARD



MARCUS GRAHAM
project

"YOU CAN'T BE WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE"

Eddie Murphy's character, Marcus Graham, in the 1992 film *Boomerang*, was an anomaly. A black man in the marketing & advertising industry, surrounded by other successful African American professionals, was a compelling story. But one that had only been told on the big screen.

For many who connected with Marcus Graham, something happened. People used to being the only minority voice in the room have often envisioned having other diverse voices around them. And an entire generation of leaders who might have never considered pursuing a career in marketing started looking for opportunities.

THE CHANGING FACE OF AN INDUSTRY

In the marketing and advertising industry, approximately **15%** of employees are people of color. **37%** of the populace in the United State are minorities. This isn't just a problem. It's a wasted opportunity.

Having a seat at the table doesn't mean anything unless the voice of the individual occupying that seat is heard and valued. The table of the future has voices from many perspectives, from different races, genders, geographical locations, and beyond.

The next generation of hungry, talented voices are ready to be heard, but they need our help. Individual efforts wouldn't be enough to disrupt an industry. It would require building a network, with mentors for guidance, professionals for training, partners for sustainability and young talent to carry the torch.

Inspired by the legacy of William "Bill" Sharp (one of the foremost pioneers in developing a generation of African-American advertising talent in the 1960s), the vision of the impact of Eddie Murphy's character, and the potential for change, the architects of the Marcus Graham Project began their work in 2007.

As a bold vision of what the Marcus Graham Project (MGP) could be started to form, each new voice added clarity and expertise. Before long, this vision led to a skilled community of mentors throughout the country, ready to recruit and train a new generation of professionals.

"DESPISE NOT THE DAYS OF HUMBLE BEGINNINGS"

In 2009, MGP's flagship program, **ICR8 Bootcamp**, was formed. It was the culmination of community building to provide an immersive experience for future leaders. When the first group of recruits entered the program, they faced the challenges of completing projects for real clients, handling difficult feedback from mentors and advisors, and following a grueling schedule with a limited budget. As expected, they rose to the occasion.

The first **iCR8 Bootcamp** was a success and immediately drew national media attention ranging from Ad Age and CNN to Ebony Magazine and Black Enterprise.

AT&T came on as MGP's first corporate sponsor, with many more to follow. Soon international brands such as Fossil, Google, Apple, Microsoft, Beats by Dre, P&G and Facebook were among those supporting and expanding the efforts of this remarkable community.

This flagship program is still running strong, providing tomorrow's pros with a crash course in industry life. With real clients and portfolio-ready work, this evolving curriculum is preparing more and more talented individuals for career readiness and craft capability.



TRAINING FOR LEADERSHIP

Participants operate with courage and curiosity. **Our curriculum is rigorous**, as rigorous as working in a real agency. We demand a lot because it provides recruits a rare chance to **work on actual client work**, and finish the program with top-tier work in their portfolios. Through **interactive workshops** and **agency/company visits**, we expect more than “fake it till you make it”. Our recruits learn it till they earn it.

ICR8 Bootcamp

The boot camp's primary purpose is to provide diverse aspirants in the field of advertising & marketing with the exposure and experience necessary to solidify careers within the advertising, media & marketing industry. The boot camp team will form themselves into a pop-up agency that they will run for the summer, as they manage the clients that they will partner with. Each year, the selected team provides consultancy for a select non-profit organization, as well as a large corporation and a small to midsize business.

KEEPING IT MOVING

Since its initial success, The Marcus Graham Project, now a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization, has been setting the stage for the next generation of media and marketing thought leaders. MGP continues searching for exceptional individuals from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities, and providing them with the resources they need to prove themselves in the media industry.

ICR8 Workshop

The iCR8 Workshop, initially launched with the Cleveland Cavaliers and Moët Hennessy, brings together the top creative minds for an intense, weekend-long topical experience where young professionals receive mentorship and coaching and get to tackle a real-world brief from a major brand. The workshops now have a national footprint in cities including New York, Miami, Detroit, and Chicago, with new markets being added annually.

Together with the iCR8 Boot Camp, these intensive programs find and train talented individuals nationwide who are willing to put in the work forging new paths in this industry. With the help and support of the MGP community, we are sculpting leaders who will, in time, pass the torch to the next generation ready to accept the challenge.

We are **unapologetically diverse**. Period. The truth is, diversity of experience equals diversity of thought. We focus on voices underrepresented in the current industry. Voices that will shake things up, providing more creativity and better results.

We're also **demanding**. We want the best talent out there, so we expect passion, character, and grit from every recruit going through our programs.

Step 1: Recruitment



Mentorship is fundamental to the program, providing both support and the challenge of handling real-time feedback. Participants get the chance to meet program alumni, providing advice for the moment, and wisdom for the road ahead.

As part of the program, recruits also have access to executive coaching, professional speakers, and other experiences that are important to being effective in “the real world”.

Step 2: Mentorship



Everything we do at the Marcus Graham Project is supported by our member network of industry pros. Sponsors get connected with young, creative voices who become invaluable contributors to their businesses and agencies. Alumni connect with new recruits to advise and inspire them as they enter their careers.

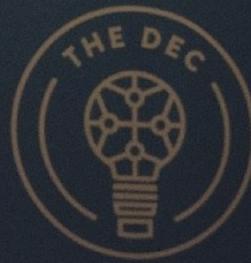
Step 3: MGP Community Connection



STRENGTHENING ALUMNI + THE MGP NETWORK

The GO Fund

The Go Fund allows sponsors to help MGP alumni and community members attend conferences, seminars, networking functions and training courses that might otherwise be impossible. Alumni have been able to strengthen the MGP network by attending 4A's Transformation Conference, Advertising Week, Creative Week, South by Southwest Interactive (SXSWI), ADCOLOR, and other pivotal experiences.

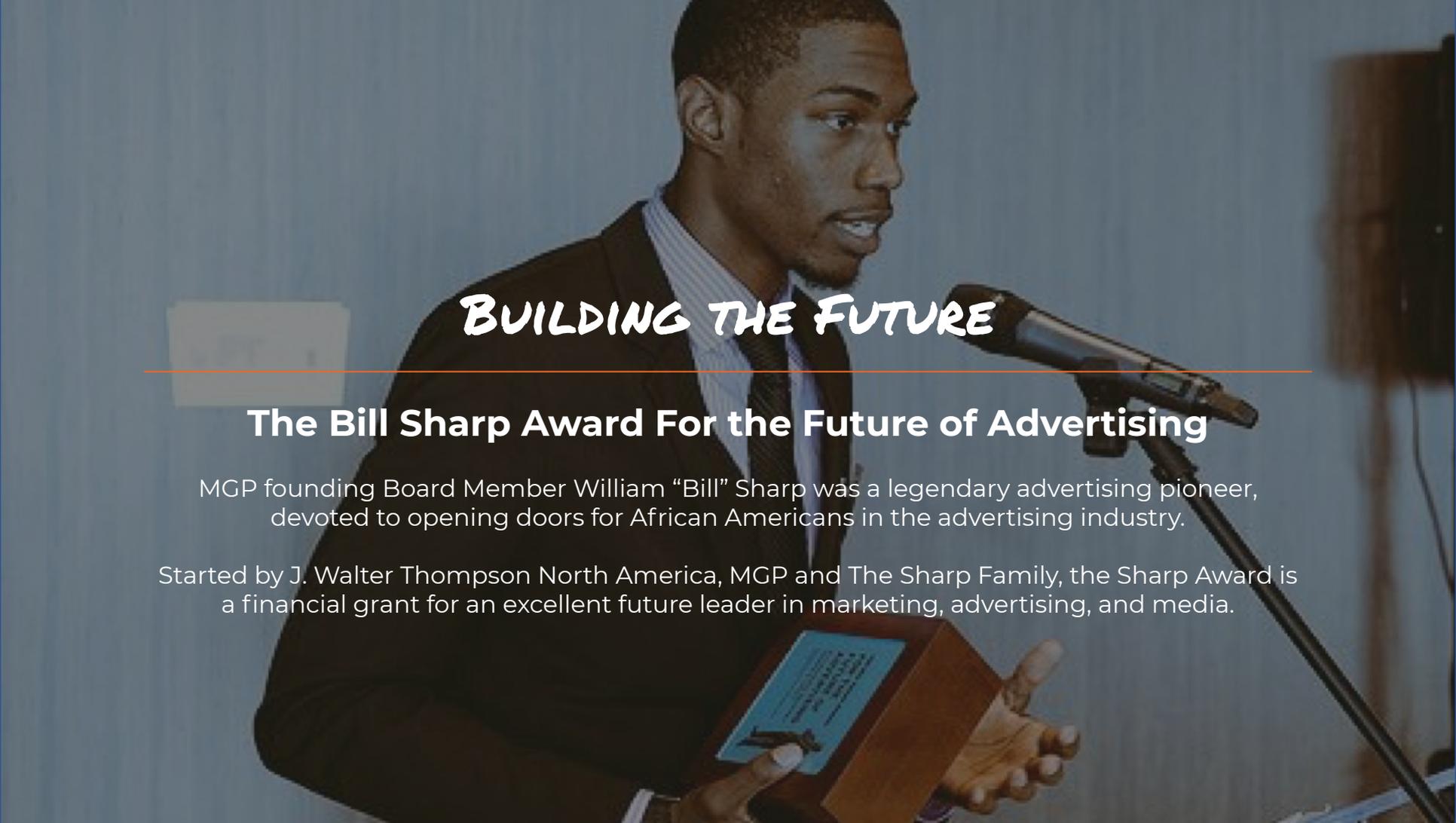


DALLAS
ENTREPRENEUR
CENTER

EMPOWERING THE MGP COMMUNITY

The Sound Bite

These networking opportunities were created to give program alumni a chance to connect face to face. It has evolved into “lunch and learn” style forums and “small-group” gatherings where alumni and network members connect over relevant issues, to aide in the advancement of leadership potential and forging lasting relationships.

A man in a dark suit, white shirt, and dark tie is speaking at a podium. He is looking to his right. A microphone is positioned in front of him. He is holding a wooden award plaque with a blue card on it. The background is a plain wall with a light switch.

BUILDING THE FUTURE

The Bill Sharp Award For the Future of Advertising

MGP founding Board Member William “Bill” Sharp was a legendary advertising pioneer, devoted to opening doors for African Americans in the advertising industry.

Started by J. Walter Thompson North America, MGP and The Sharp Family, the Sharp Award is a financial grant for an excellent future leader in marketing, advertising, and media.

LOCOMOTUS

This is our **most ambitious** attempt to extend the iCR8 program into a year-round talent incubator. As the media industry evolves, so must the voices that constitute it. Locomotus provides agency-level experience to minorities and women who are hungry to connect with industry leaders in brand management and strategy, digital media services, and other creative innovators.

THE RESULTS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES

On average, 96% of graduates from the MGP Program are employed within 6 months.

Previous Clients include

Uber



THE
SHOW ME
CAMPAIGN



forplai
BY LAMIAN RUCKER
reduce stress and help you win



FOSSIL
GROUP



Google



MGP graduates now work for



IBM

P&G

BANANA REPUBLIC

hulu

Lo Burned

Wieden
Kennedy⁺



IMAX[®]



FOSSIL
GROUP

SPIKE
DDB[®]

72andSunny

RAPP



(and many more)

THE FUTURE IS WRITTEN IN ACTIONS, NOT WORDS

MGP embraces the power of untapped potential by investing our time and resources in programs working to unlock it.

We risk action now, rather than assuming the greater risk of inaction.

Change is inevitable. Evolving is not. We all have to ask ourselves: What will we do to evolve our country, our industry, our community, and ourselves?

SAY LESS. DO MORE.

HOW THE FUTURE IS WRITTEN

In order to fund these programs and continue to evolve, MGP requires ~\$1.25M a year in sponsorships and investments.

3-Year commitments from major contributors ensure that this invaluable network of corporations, business professionals, and MGP graduates continues to evolve and grow.

Each contribution is an investment into a network of evolving talent that enriches everyone involved. The future is written by what we do right now.

- Boot Camp Presenting Partner: \$250,000
- Boot Camp Brief Sponsorship: \$75,000
- Workshop Presenting Partner: \$50,000
- Workshop Brief Sponsorship: \$20,000
- Go Fund Scholarship: \$50,000
- Bootcamper Scholarship: \$25,000
- Sharp Award Sponsorship: \$15,000



marcusgrahamproject.org

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