

## **Derrick The Gent's Why:**

Since moving back to Chicago in 2013 from Washington, D.C. – **Derrick The Gent (Derrick Marcell Fleming, Jr.)** also known as “**Mr. Oh Yea**” in front of large crowds has been on a personal mission to serve the youth, adults, and communities of Chicago and beyond. As a native Midwesterner, born/raised on the Southside of Chicago, a Chicago Public Schools graduate, first-generation college graduate, and raised in a low-income community, **Derrick** has witnessed many things that could have persuaded him to choose a different path in life. However, **Derrick** is currently on a mission to develop root cause solutions to eradicate and dismantle historic and current forms of institutional racism and additionally, eliminate the racial wealth and achievement gaps through the power of amplified voice, social/collective impact, coalition building, human-centered design thinking, creativity, joy, and authenticity.

**Derrick** currently consults, advises, and speaks with individuals/groups, organizations/institutions, and companies that allows him to do two things he loves most: (1) lead and coach teams/individuals to achieve goals and strategic plans collaboratively that supports the mission and vision of the organization/company while developing root cause solutions to some of the systemic issues in our city/country and (2) to create innovative work environments, programs, curriculums, partnerships, events/activities, revenue generation, and more that allowed youth and adults to be a kid again and discover their own unique superpowers, gifts, and talents.

Above all, **Derrick** wants to ensure all youth (their families & our communities) and/or adults raising/supporting youth – but especially youth/adults from disadvantaged backgrounds, have a fair, inclusive, and equitable chance at a successful life. Now, **Derrick** is currently on a journey to gain new experiences, while utilizing past leadership/lived experiences, to support organizations and companies in achieving their goals and outcomes. Here is, “***Where VISIONARIES come to find SOLUTIONS.***”

---

## **Derrick The Gent's Bio:**

When you think of style and class; organization and structure; education and empowerment; equity and advocacy, **Derrick Marcell Fleming, Jr.** (he/they), also known as “**Derrick The Gent**”, is the man to make it happen. With a heart to serve and a passion for youth, collective impact, and systems change, **Derrick** brings electrifying energy to any atmosphere. As a former White House Staff Member under the Obama Administration and recently was the Managing Director of Strategic Engagement for [Chicago Scholars](#); **Derrick** oversaw corporate, college, community, and civic/ government partnerships and engagement, in addition to managing strategic initiatives for Chicago Scholars that supported raising nearly \$8 Million annually. **Derrick** is now a Project Management and Coaching Independent Consultant focusing on nonprofit management and operations, leadership and liberation coaching, and event curation. **Derrick** is also a social entrepreneur (**The JUST BE campaign.** (2020), **TGEL Enterprises** (2017), and his newly curated passion project **Gent's Flowers & Company** [2024]). In all **Derrick's** entrepreneurial endeavors, 10% of all revenue earned goes back into local Chicago communities. **Derrick** also serves in various national and local community/education leadership capacities, including serving as a National Advisory Board Member for the [National Partnership for Educational Access](#) (NPEA) and the Board Chair for [Public Narrative](#).

With nearly 15 years of experience in the nonprofit and government sectors focusing on education, social impact, community development, youth and adult development, violence prevention, and mentorship; 10+ years of project management, coaching, and training experience; and 8+ years of program and people management experience. **Derrick** brings a level of problem-solving skills that sets everyone at ease and makes solutions-focused work feel like fun. **Derrick** has his Bachelor's degree in Communications from Alabama State University and a Master's degree in Nonprofit Management from Spertus Institute. **Derrick** is a 2020 Surge Institute [Fellow](#), 2021 Forefront Illinois Education Equity [Fellow](#), 2022 Chicago Urban League IMPACT [Fellow](#) in partnership with the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business, and a 2022 Aspen Institute National Index [Fellow](#). **Derrick** was also featured in [Forbes](#) in 2023 for his work to improve post-secondary education outcomes for young men of color in Chicago and in 2023 was a Chicago Innovation Awards [nominee](#) for the same work. **Derrick** loves love and life. He believes in respectful indifference, equity, and justice for all but especially our Black, Brown, Asian/Pacific Islander, Indigenous, Disable, and LGBT+ communities. He enjoys the arts, having a very active life, great music, worshipping God, traveling, spending time with those closest to his heart, and advocating for those in need.