



# City of Cincinnati

801 Plum Street  
Cincinnati, OH 45202

## Agenda - Final

### Economic and Cultural Opportunity

*Chairperson Jan-Michele Kearney*

*Vice Chair Seth Walsh*

*Councilmember Scotty Johnson*

*Councilmember Albi*

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Monday, January 12, 2026

10:00 AM

Council Chambers, Room 300

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#### PRESENTATIONS

##### CINCINNATI SPORTS COMMISSION

Ben Huffman, Executive Director

##### URBAN LEAGUE GREATER SOUTHWEST OHIO

Ebony Young, Senior Vice President, Impact

##### AVONDALE FILM CAMP & FESTIVAL

Russ Harriston, Avondale Development Corporation

Executive Director & Russell Harriston Jr., Capital Heights

CEO & Event Producer

#### AGENDA

1. [202600070](#) **PRESENTATION**, submitted by Vice Mayor Kearney from Ben Huffman, Executive Director, Cincinnati Sports Commission entitled Cincy Sports Cincinnati Regional Sports Commission.  
**Sponsors:** Kearney  
**Attachments:** [PRESENTATION](#)
2. [202600069](#) **PRESENTATION**, submitted by Vice Mayor Kearney from Ebony Young, Senior Vice President, Impact, entitled Urban League Greater Southwest Ohio.  
**Sponsors:** Economic and Cultural Opportunity  
**Attachments:** [PRESENTATION](#)
3. [202600071](#) **PRESENTATION**, submitted by Vice Mayor Kearney from Russ Harriston and Russ Harriston Jr., Avondale Development Corporation entitled Avondale Film Camp and Festival.  
**Sponsors:** Kearney

Attachments: [PRESENTATION](#)

**ADJOURNMENT**



CINCY  
*Sports*

CINCY | CINCINNATI REGIONAL  
*Sports* SPORTS COMMISSION

# Why a Regional Sports Commission for Cincinnati?

## ↑↓ Fastest Growing Travel Segment

### Significant Economic Impact Annually

- **\$128 Billion** in youth & amateur sports
- **\$114 Billion** in spectator sports
- **\$28.6 Billion** in tax revenue generated
- **116.2 Million** hotel room nights annually



### Elevates City Profile & Talent Acquisition



- Visitors are 2-3 times more likely to consider relocating to a community they visit for sports.
- Attracts young talent by enhancing the city's appeal as a desirable location for events and living.

### Proven Regional Success Stories

Neighboring cities have leveraged sports commissions for substantial economic gains:



- Indianapolis (est. 1979): Over **\$4 Billion** in spending.
- Louisville (est. 1999): Over **\$1 Billion** in spending.
- Columbus (est. 2002): Over **\$1.7 Billion** in spending.

**CRBC, CBC & Visit Cincy Engaged Clancy's Sports to update a regional sports marketing assessment that included facilities review, understand our competition, and recommend a new organizational design and funding structure to enable Cincinnati to compete in the sports tourism sector.**



**CLANCY'S  
SPORTS**

The Orlando-based company is a sports consultancy company specializing in strategic planning, organizational design, event programming, sports tourism initiatives and facility assessments, all of which drive economic vitality to communities.

Clancy's Sports is a Florida based LLC which was founded in May of 2014 by former Walt Disney World executive, Mike Millay.

Millay helped found and run the Greater New Orleans Sports Foundation, formed the National Association of Sports Commission, and was an executive at the ESPN Wide World of Sports complex.

**CBC**

Cincinnati Business Committee



# Sports Commission Stakeholder Engagement

## One-on-One Stakeholder Meetings

- Over 20 meetings conducted with public, private, and civic stakeholders

## Vision Casting Workshop (October 2, 2023)

- 26 invitees
  - Major sports orgs
  - Universities
  - Large companies
  - Local government partners
  - Economic development partners

## Youth Sports Work Session (October 2, 2023)

- Nine invitees
- Warren County CVB
- Youth sports leagues
- Local sports venues



**CBC**

Cincinnati Business Committee





# Ben Huffman

Almost 20 years of growing Cincinnati regional sports tourism

Warren County, OH is ranked the #3 sports tourism destination in the country.

2-time recipient of the Sports Tourism Organization of the Year

In 2024, generated over 125,000 hotel room nights and \$125M in economic impact through youth and amateur sports travel.

# Stakeholder Integration Strategy

## Venue Partners

Map regional facilities and capacity capabilities: convention centers, private facilities, universities, parks, stadiums, etc.

## Event Organizers

Establish regional sports event advisory group and regional calendar



## Accommodation Network

Create comprehensive hotel room inventory database

## Community Engagement

City and County elected officials, business leaders, service organizations

# Setting the Foundation: First 30 Days

## Communication Setup ✓ ACHIEVED



We established dedicated phone, email, and contact channels.

Cincysports.com is live and functional, and we are working with Simpleview to update and make it more robust.

## Facility Engagement ✓ ACHIEVED



We have connected with a vast majority of major venues and all universities in the community

## Customer Outreach ✓ ACHIEVED



We connected with many new clients and former contacts, generating new leads.

## Hotel Partner Meetings ✓ ACHIEVED



We hosted our first annual regional hotel meeting, engaging with 23 hotels. We will host a Hamilton County focused sports meeting in January



# Strategic Initiatives – Months 2-5



## Building Brand Visibility ✓

We are building brand visibility through conferences, media engagements, and marketing efforts.



## Quick Wins ✓

We are leading regional initiatives, growing some of our current events, and secured a few quality events for the community.



## Integrate Stakeholders ✓

We are continually working to connect our facilities, event owners, and hotel partners.



## Statewide Engagement (OH and KY) ✓

We are consistently engaged with the OH Tourism and Sports Committee, Team Ohio, and Kentucky Sports Alliance

# Building Brand Visibility

## TEAM Ohio Showcase

Attend August event to strengthen state partnerships.

## TEAMS Convention

Announce commission at Columbus industry event.

## Rights Holder Engagement

Coordinate pre/post TEAMS site visits to Cincinnati.



# Quick Wins

Our immediate focus was to deliver tangible results and build momentum for the Cincinnati Regional Sports Commission by securing diverse and impactful events.

## US Steinholding Championship



Targeting a national audience event that offers unique visibility and a strong community engagement opportunity.

## USA Fencing North American Cup



A confirmed event bringing in **3,500 guests**, generating an estimated **\$2.0 Million** in economic impact for the region.

## AAU Girls Volleyball Cincinnati Grand Prix



A multi-day event with **100+ teams** and, projecting a significant **\$1 Million** in economic impact.



# Building our Brand: Recent Conference and Networking Activity

## TEAMS Conference (Columbus)



## US Soccer WWC31 Bid (NYC)



## Site Visits

USJN Basketball,  
AAU Volleyball,  
Perfect Game,  
USA Fencing,  
World Rugby



## United by Rugby Summit (Chicago)



# Future Marquee Events

Beyond immediate gains, our long-term vision includes proactively pursuing global and national high-profile events, solidifying Cincinnati's position as a premier destination for major sporting events 5-10 years out.

## NFL Draft & All-Star Games



Strategically bid for top-tier national events, leveraging our city's passion for major league sports.

## FIFA Women's World Cup



Position Cincinnati as a prime host city for prestigious international soccer tournaments, showcasing our world-class facilities and diverse community.

## Rugby World Cup



Explore opportunities to host segments of major international rugby competitions, significantly expanding our global sports footprint.

## Olympic Trials & NCAA Championships

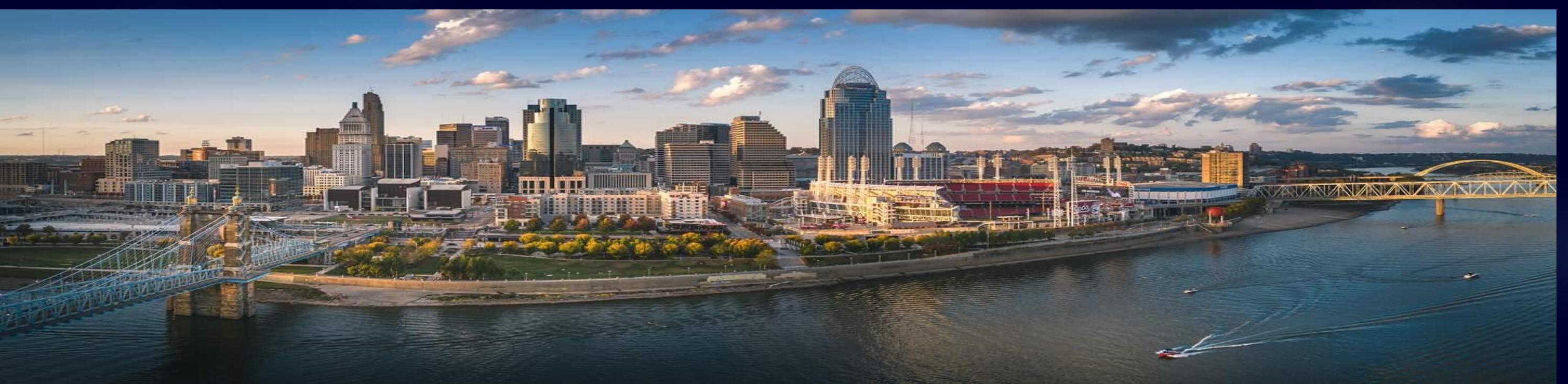


Attract significant collegiate championships and Olympic qualifying events, drawing national attention and substantial economic impact.

# Participant Event Possibilities

We are actively working through the RFP process for several significant events, projecting substantial economic impact and showcasing Cincinnati's growing appeal as a sports destination.

-  2026 USJN/New Balance Girls Basketball
-  2027 MLS Next Cup
-  2028 USA Fencing and/or USA Judo Trials
-  2030 Sports ETA Symposium
-  Various Cheer and Dance Events



# Vision for Regional Commission Success



## Economic Growth

Increased visitor spending across entire region



## Lead Regional Collaboration

Unified multi-county sports tourism strategy



## National Recognition

Cincinnati recognized as premium sports destination with consistent and big wins



Balanced event portfolio across all seasons



CINCINNATI REGIONAL  
SPORTS COMMISSION

Endless Opportunities

# City of Cincinnati: Economic & Cultural Opportunity Committee

Urban League of Greater Southwestern Ohio - Workforce Development Update

*Empowering Communities. Changing Lives.*

# URBAN LEAGUE MISSION

The Urban League of Greater Southwestern Ohio is on a mission to end generational poverty through advocacy and by empowering individuals to establish careers, become entrepreneurs, build wealth, and develop as leaders.



# OUR PROGRAMS

## Workforce Development

Building Futures  
Urban League Tech Collective  
SOAR (Solid Opportunities for Advancement & Retention)  
Community Partnering Center  
Comprehensive Case Management & Employment Program

## Financial Empowerment Center

700 Credit Club  
Comprehensive Financial Coaching  
Homeowner Seminars

## Business Development and Entrepreneurship

Urban League Business Bootcamp  
Business Development Cohort  
Economic Empowerment Center  
Small Business Development Center

## Leadership Development

ULGSO Leadership Development Program  
Urban Champions





URBAN LEAGUE  
GREATER SOUTHWESTERN OHIO

## SOAR

### Solid Opportunities for Advancement & Retention

Establish in 1998, SOAR — A job readiness program for individuals who are chronically unemployed or underemployed, offering one-on-one coaching, skills training, and barrier removal to prepare participants for thriving-wage jobs.

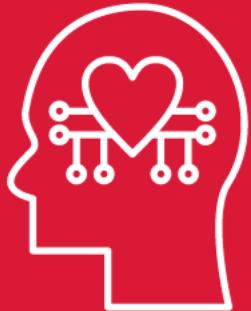




SELF  
DISCOVERY



HARD  
SKILLS  
TRAINING



SOFT  
SKILLS  
TRAINING



BARRIER  
REMOVAL



CAREER  
PATHWAYS

# SOAR

## SOLID OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCEMENT & RETENTION

Supports unemployed and underemployed individuals with skill assessment, employment readiness, career exploration, business acumen, barrier removal, and thriving-wage job placement.

## Urban Tech Collective

The Urban Tech Collective is a vibrant, inclusive tech ecosystem where individuals have clear, supported pathways to learn, work, and grow; equipping them to thrive in the digital economy through:

- Inclusive training and workshops
- Industry-recognized credentials
- Coaching and mentoring
- Employer connections that lead to sustainable careers.



## Urban Tech Collective

**Funded by J.P. Morgan Chase and delivered in partnership with Grow with Google and the Cincinnati Regional Chamber,** participants receive expert-led training and earn industry-recognized certifications in:

- IT Support
- UX Design
- Data Analytics
- Project Management
- Cybersecurity
- Digital Marketing & eCommerce
- AI Essentials



## Building Futures

A 12-week pre-apprenticeship program that prepares participants for careers in the skilled trades. It addresses the region's construction labor shortage while creating pathways to lasting economic mobility.

- Bricklayers
- Cement Masons
- Electricians
- Elevator Constructors
- Glaziers
- Heat and Frost Insulators
- HVAC/R Service
- Technician
- Iron Workers
- Laborers

- Masonry Restoration
- Operating Engineers
- Painters
- Pipefitters
- Plumbers
- Roofers
- Sheet Metal Workers
- Sprinkler Fitters
- Tile, Marble & Terrazzo





The Urban League of Greater Southwestern Ohio is a **pipeline for talent** and a **catalyst for economic and consumer growth** - driving a stronger, more prosperous Greater Cincinnati for all.

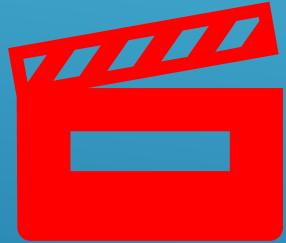
Thank you, City of Cincinnati, for your support and investment in our communities.





ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL  
OPPORTUNITY COMMITTEE

- ▶ [Avondale Film Festival 2025 video](#)



AVONDALE: FILM, ART, AND  
ENTERTAINMENT



**Problem:** Underrepresented communities have a lack of education and job resources for residents. We will provide education and platforms in film, which is a large market with high demand but rare skill sets. With us, residents will obtain marketable skills for job opportunities with a global outreach.

**Solution:** Work with under resourced communities to give residents a platform to showcase their voice, gain marketable skills, and change the reputation of the community. Help elevate a community's cultural awareness and identity.

## OUR OPPORTUNITY





# ENTERTAINMENT MARKET ANALYSIS

- Largest in the world at \$660 billion (International Trade Administration)
- Market volume of US\$53.13 billion in 2027 (Statista)
- U.S. events market projected to surpass \$1 trillion by 2035 (Market Research Future)



## TARGET MARKET

- Filmmakers & enthusiasts
- Leaders in underrepresented communities
- Community organizations in low-income neighborhoods.



# AVONDALE FILM CAMP

**JUNE 6 -7 2025 12:00 PM -5:00PM**

**DOORS OPEN AT 11:30 AM**



- FREE WORKSHOPS ON WRITING, DIRECTING, AND ALL ASPECTS THAT GO INTO MAKING YOUR FAVORITE MOVIES AND TV SHOWS! HEAR FROM THE BRIGHTEST TALENTS IN CINCINNATI FROM UNIVERSITIES TO PROFESSIONAL STUDIOS.**

- PANELS, WORKSHOPS, THE MAKING OF AN ORIGINAL FILM**

- TEENS AND ADULTS AGES 14 AND UP**
  - SIGN UP NOW!**
  - AT [GROWAVONDALE.ORG/FILMCAMP](http://GROWAVONDALE.ORG/FILMCAMP)**



**LOCATION: 3539 READING RD SUITE 100,  
CINCINNATI, OH, 45229**

  
**AVONDALE  
DEVELOPMENT  
CORPORATION**  
CONNECT. BUILD. GROW AVONDALE

**MORE INFORMATION: [@CAPITALHEIGHTSCOUNSELLING](https://www.instagram.com/capitalheightscounseling) [GROWAVONDALE.ORG](http://GROWAVONDALE.ORG)**

- 2023 - present
- Workshops & panels from Universities and local studios
- Increased attendance by 45% annually
- 93 attendees in 2025



# COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



“This has improved my writing”  
– Shawn Melvin



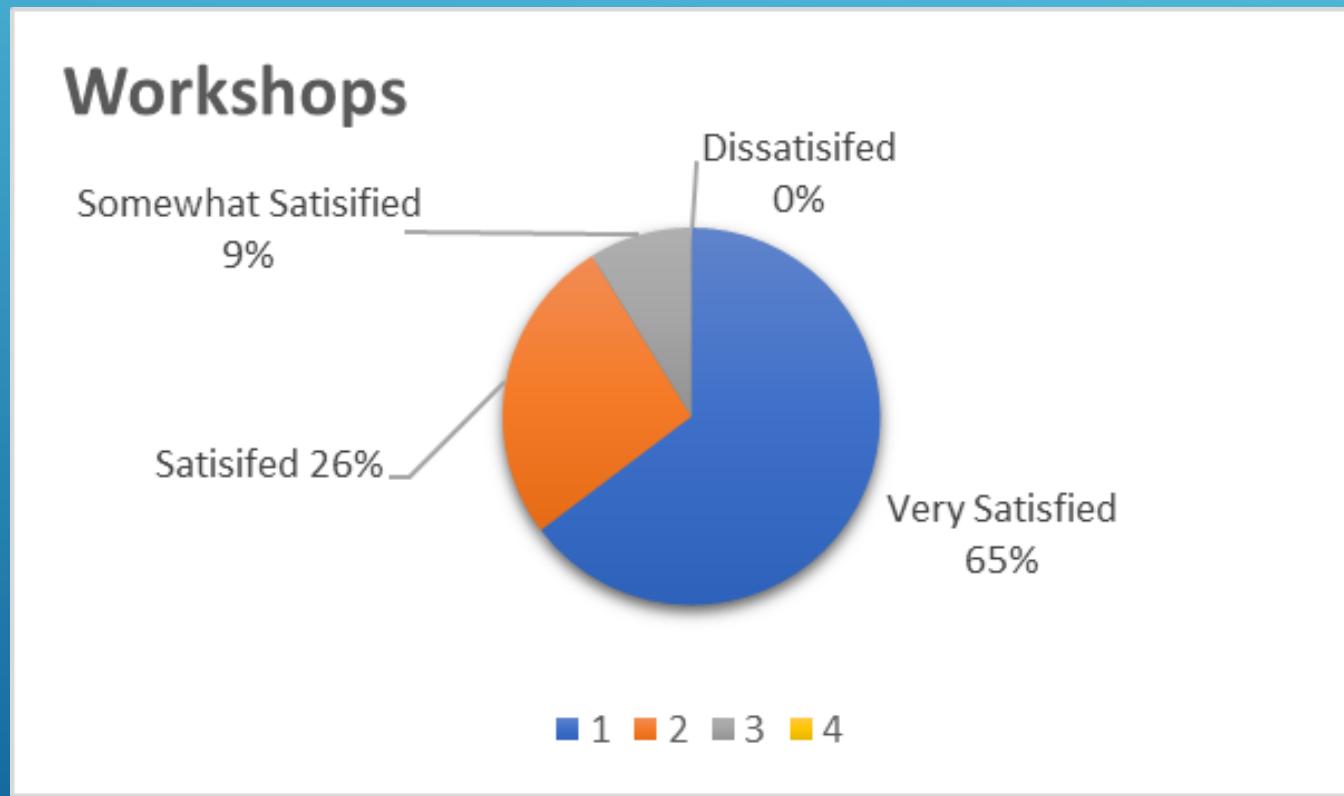
“This event was great! We never get opportunities like this in our community” – Reno O’Neal



“This was an incredible film camp, I learned so much! It was definitely an invaluable experience” – Dorien Maxwell

## SURVEY FEEDBACK

**Question:**  
What was your satisfaction level from the WORKSHOPS? (34 responses)

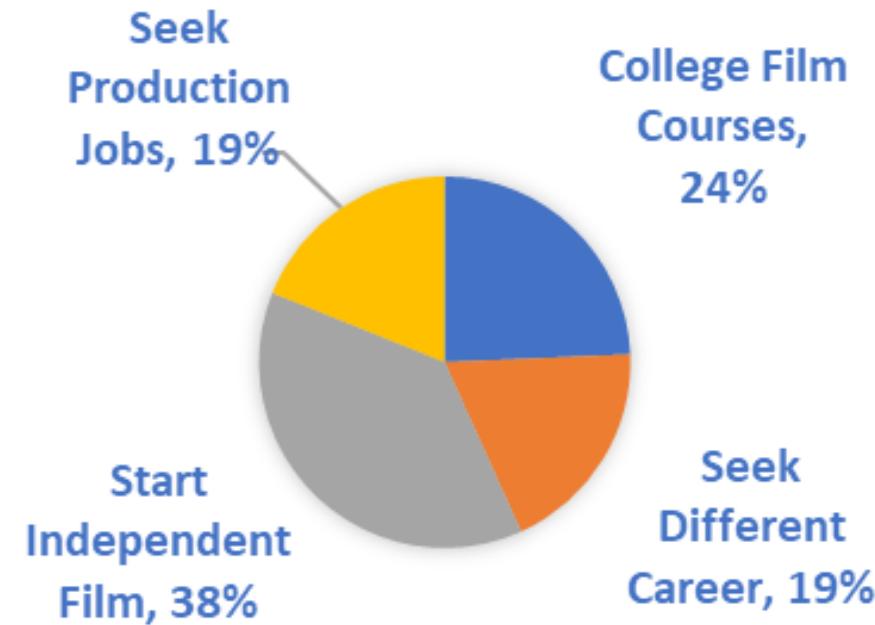


\*93 attendance

## SURVEY FEEDBACK

**Question:**

What are your plans after this camp?  
(37 responses)

**PLANS**

# COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

"I've been looking for something like this. I love what you're doing for Cincinnati."

- Vernon Williams

"Avondale is a community I grew up in. Thanks for giving filmmakers a place to showcase our hard work and stories. " – Ingrid Williams

"Festivals like Avondale remind filmmakers why we create: to connect, challenge, and move people. I appreciate the love and support, and I can't wait to see how this festival continues to grow!" – Johnny Kirk





- Over 8,000 attendees in 5 years
- Host creative job fair
- Cash prizes to film makers



# Contact

- \$300,000 over 3 years
- Year 4 = Sustainable

<b>Funding Requirements</b>			
<b>Expense Breakdown (Year 1 Projection)</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>% of Expenses</b>	<b>Projected Amount</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Program Services (Event Costs)	30%	\$30,000	Venues, staff, production equipment
Administrative Costs	45%	\$45,000	Salaries, software, insurance, utilities
Sales & Marketing	15%	\$15,000	Digital campaigns, sponsorship acquisition
Contingency	10%	\$10,000	Emergency funds, unexpected costs
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	

Let's Grow Avondale!