



LOVE NOW  
MEDIA

2024  
ANNUAL REPORT

---

AMPLIFYING ACTS OF LOVE THROUGH MULTIMEDIA JOURNALISM, EDUCATION, AND THE ARTS.

# FROM OUR FOUNDER



**Jos Duncan-Asé**  
Founder and CEO  
Love Now Media

As the founder and CEO of Love Now Media, I am proud to present our 2024 Annual Report. Guided by our mission to create empathy-centered media for communities seeking hope, we have amplified acts of love through multimedia journalism, education, and the arts.

At the heart of our vision lies a reimagined media landscape where storytelling serves as a vehicle for connection, healing, and action. We aim to transform narratives, not only by inspiring hope but by collaborating with partners to embed our ethos of love into their work across cities and communities.

Our work this year exemplifies this commitment to fostering a more just, equitable, and compassionate future.

Love Now Media has solidified its role as a leader in introducing empathy and love to the media landscape. Our work challenges traditional narratives by centering Black and Brown voices and highlighting the power of love in addressing systemic inequities. Through our storytelling, we have not only inspired but begun to collaborate with partners in Philadelphia and beyond, encouraging them to adopt our values in their own storytelling efforts.



*In 2024, we expanded our reach and deepened our impact in several key areas:*

**DIGITAL NEWS AND JOURNALISM:** Through our digital platform, we published 72 stories, reaching over 70,000 new users. Highlights included in-depth reporting on local issues like Philadelphia’s block captains and the Save Chinatown movement, as well as collaborative pieces with national outlets such as Technical.ly and StoryCorps.

**LOVE NOW MAGAZINE:** Our quarterly print publication bridged trending themes of love and wellness with grassroots storytelling, featuring voices that inspire and celebrate resilience. From highlighting Philadelphia-based celebrities to engaging artists and activists, each issue served as a tangible reminder of our mission.

**PODCASTS AND MULTIMEDIA:** With three new podcast series, we amplified narratives that inform and challenge

audiences, focusing on themes of empathy and justice. Notably, “Making Love & Designing the Future” explored how design intersects with empathy to create equitable systems.

**WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS:** From monthly journalism and storytelling meetups to our Love Now Live storytelling and performance series, we engaged thousands of Philadelphians through immersive experiences that built trust and community.

As we reflect on 2024, we are energized by the growing impact of our work. Our commitment to narrative justice, representation, and collaboration remains steadfast. We are poised to deepen our partnerships, expand our community-centered initiatives, and continue to evolve our model for love-rooted storytelling in journalism, education and the arts.

# DIGITAL NEWS & JOURNALISM

The purpose of our reporting is to cover Philadelphians that are making a positive impact in our communities, adding uplifting narratives into the melee of traditional news and its coverage of violence, crime, and scandal.

We aim to disrupt the status quo, leveraging narrative justice to bring love and hope to the producers and consumers of our news ecosystem. Our vision for the future is a reimagined journalistic landscape where communities are media literate, engaged, and in a position to tell, publish, and be fairly compensated for their own stories.

Our focus for 2024 was expanding and deepening our coverage: hiring more freelance and community storytellers, broadening our editorial infrastructure, and partnering with more news organizations to ensure a steady stream of diverse coverage across all platforms. We're incredibly proud of the ways that we were able to broaden our editorial reach and strengthen our news culture this year.



# DIGITAL NEWS: BY THE NUMBERS

**72**  
STORIES

Published through our digital news imprint, averaging 1-2 stories per week

**70K**  
NEW USERS

Acquired at our digital news hub at [lovenowmedia.com](http://lovenowmedia.com) this year, with over 200K page views

**70%**  
OF STORIES

Featured original, on-the-ground reporting, including topical coverage of the 76ers stadium/Save Chinatown movement, Philadelphia's block captains and the W.E.B. DuBois Abolition school

**25**  
COLLABORATIVE  
STORIES

Partners include Philadelphia Journalism Collaborative, Technical.ly and StoryCorps to contextualize national trends in a local context

**21**  
WRITERS

Hired and/or platformed this year through our digital news imprint

# KEY PARTNERSHIPS.

We're thrilled to have had the opportunity to collaborate with an array of partners this year. We're especially proud of our work with:



A partnership of 30 local newsrooms focusing on issues that affect the daily lives of Philadelphia residents. In addition to attending monthly meetings and republishing a broad swathe of content, we've been able to collaborate on original coverage with newsrooms Madre Tierra, Technical.ly, Fun Times Magazine, PhillyCAM and WURD.



A multi-market media outlet focused on stories of entrepreneurship, innovation and the pursuit of equitable economic growth. We're thrilled to have collaborated with the Philadelphia newsroom on original reporting & a subsequent essay series on AI & the Digital Divide. The stories explored the gap between the technologists who espouse artificial intelligence and the everyday people expected to use it. The series was reported by YouTuber and influencer TechLifeSteph.



A national storytelling organization whose mission is to help us believe in each other by illuminating the humanity and possibility in us all — one story at a time. In 2024, we became a licensed content partner, revitalizing and distributing content from the StoryCorps archive to our audience. We published eight StoryCorps features on topics ranging from space travel to Black cowboys, adding editorial context and republishing key audio for a Philadelphia audience.



A multi-media and multi-platform communications company that is home to the only Black owned and operated talk radio station in Pennsylvania. We host a bi-weekly Love Now radio segment on Dr. James Peterson's Evening WURDs, a daily news program dedicated to a critical analysis of the news, culture, and arts stories that resonate with the Philadelphia community.



# KEY INITIATIVES.

## A MORE LOVING PHILLY

In collaboration with the Philadelphia Journalism Collaborative and reporting partners Madre Tierra, PhillyCAM, and WURD Radio, Love Now Media launched A More Loving Philly in January 2024. Each news organization set out to interview and survey their communities about their vision for 'A More Loving Philly' and to understand what kinds of services and/or interventions might be needed for them to experience love in their families and communities.

Our opening installation took place at the annual Global Citizen MLK day event at Girard College. Our youth team interviewed 30 community

members including Lorraine Ballard Morrill, Director of News and Community Affairs for iHeartMedia Philadelphia, and Philadelphia's Police Commissioner Kevin Bethel.

In our first application of artificial intelligence in our newsroom, the editorial team aggregated themes to better understand people's visions for a more loving Philly and used them to inform subsequent original reporting. With the help of AI, we found that Philadelphians need community and unity, safety and non violence, education and mentorship, respect and understanding, and action and investment in youth to feel the love in their city.



A more loving Philly is people that understand that the current situation that you're in is not the situation that you have to stay in.

**-Devin**



# KEY INITIATIVES.

## A MORE LOVING PHILLY

Following this analysis, we published three, in-depth reports on community figures working to make A More Loving Philly:



### Philly Block Captains Hope Cleanups and Care Will Keep Streets Safe from Gun Violence

Written by [Sammy Caiola](#)



### School Groups De-escalate Youth Violence by Meeting Students Where They Are

Written by [Annette John-Hall](#)



### ATTIC Youth Center and PhillyBOLT Invest In Youth to Future-Proof Philly

Written by [Kristin Holmes](#)



My vision for a more loving Philly involves just a really friendly, happy place: people saying hello to each other on the street, having each other's backs, looking out for one another.

**-Abby**

Notably, Sammy Caoila's original reporting on Block Captains for Love Now Media inspired several spinoff reports; we were especially excited to see it inform the 6th edition of [RESOLVE Philly's Equally Informed Newsletter](#).

The reporting done for A More Love Philly also inspired subsequent efforts to capture and report on civic engagement trends under the Every Voice, Every Vote initiative.



# KEY INITIATIVES.

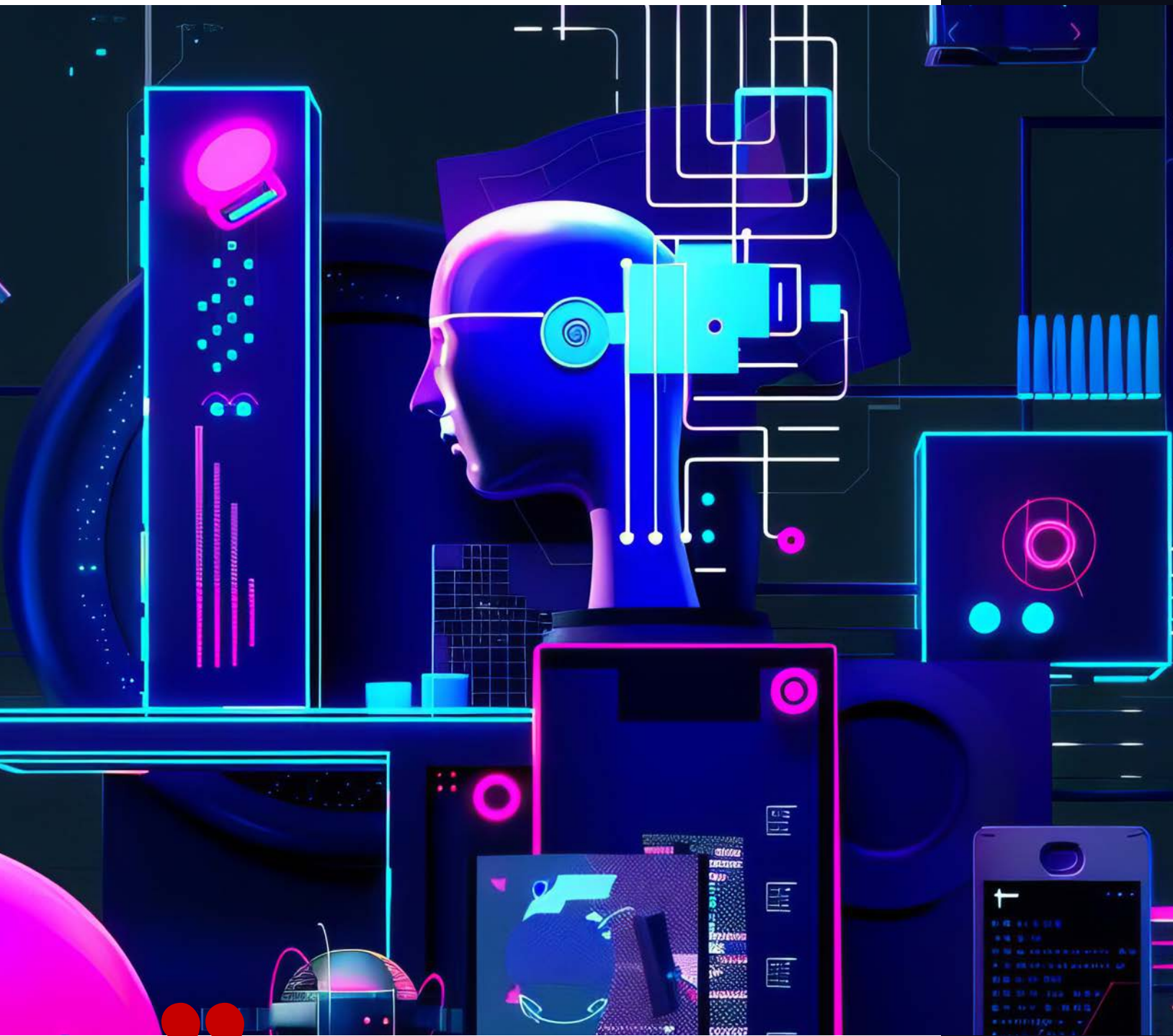
## AI & THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Love Now Media collaborated with renowned reporter Stephanie Humphrey (TechLifeSteph) and the editorial team at Technical.ly to produce a reporting series focused on the intersection of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the Digital Divide. This series produced five in-depth stories that investigated the impact of AI on education, personal safety, healthcare, politics, and the future of work, with a particular emphasis on equity and access.

The key objectives of the series were to raise awareness about the disparities in AI access and adoption and provide actionable insights and tools for underserved communities. Our youth team completed 5 vox populi-style interview sessions in community locations throughout Philadelphia, serving as lead producers on 52 interviews.

These interviews were then shared with reporter TechLifeSteph, who reported on each topic in a series of original essays that were edited and co-published by our editorial team and Technical.ly Philadelphia.

Interestingly enough, though we hoped to have a significant impact on public discourse surrounding AI, we found that our audiences and those we spoke to were already avid users of AI and deeply engaged in conversations about AI use. Our newsletter about the series, which included AI detection tools and other resources, had one of our highest open rates of the year (at 45%), and our collaborator TechLifeSteph shared that the videos she posted in conjunction with each piece consistently got higher than average engagement on her social media pages, particularly Instagram.



I feel I am a better listener as a result of working with the Love Now Media team. I also feel that my capacity for empathy has expanded in how I think about responding to others, and I've been able to better consider intentionally centering love in my interactions with others moving forward.

**-TechLifeSteph**

# KEY INITIATIVES.

## EVERY VOICE, EVERY VOTE

Beginning in summer 2024, Love Now Media's youth team took to the streets of Philadelphia to better understand what young Philadelphians need in their families, communities, and neighborhood in order to experience the love they imagine.

This project, partially inspired by our work for A More Loving Philly, aimed to address the urgent need for young-adult-led engagement and civic participation in Philadelphia's political processes in the runup to the 2024 election. By focusing on young voters and engaging our youth team as lead producers, our key objectives were to bridge the gap between young Philadelphians and the

issues that impact their lives and to ensure that their voices were heard and valued in the public discourse.

Our youth team engaged 70 people through on-camera interviews at locations around the city, including vox populi interviews conducted in partnership with Show Up Strong and REC Philly. While most of those interviewed were millennial and Gen Z voters, our team was also able to engage notable community members like author, playwright and television writer R. Eric Thomas and Tiffany Tavaréz who serves as SVP, Technology Diverse Segments, Representation and Inclusion (TDSRI) for Wells Fargo.



My advice would be - don't be afraid, just know that your voice does count. I know that sounds very repetitive, especially when you always hear your voice matters, but I think that the young people need to know that it does.

**-Alyssa**



# KEY INITIATIVES.

## EVERY VOICE, EVERY VOTE

Following these engagements, we published three in-depth reports - written by Gen Z reporters - to engage young voters around the election and beyond:



### **“Yes, and?”: Philadelphia’s Gen Z Voters aren’t taking just “Yes” for an answer**

**Written by Lanaa Dantzler and republished by the Philadelphia Citizen**

### **What is an Auditor General and Why Do We Care?**

**Written by Lucy Tobier**

### **Seeking Solutions to Youth About Houselessness**

**Written by Lanaa Dantzler**

We took a social-first approach to sharing these stories, augmenting our reporting with a social media campaign and compilation videos of youth voters, discussing civic trends, in this year’s season of Dinner With Friends. We saw a lot of engagement across platforms and were excited to see reels attached to Dinner With Friends and Every Voice, Every Vote rack up over 31,000 views.

Through this initiative, we’ve learned that Philadelphia’s young voters are some of the most engaged in the country and care deeply about issues that affect our city. This reporting will continue through 2025, and we look forward to engaging more young readers and writers toward civic action and understanding.



# LOVE NOW MAGAZINE

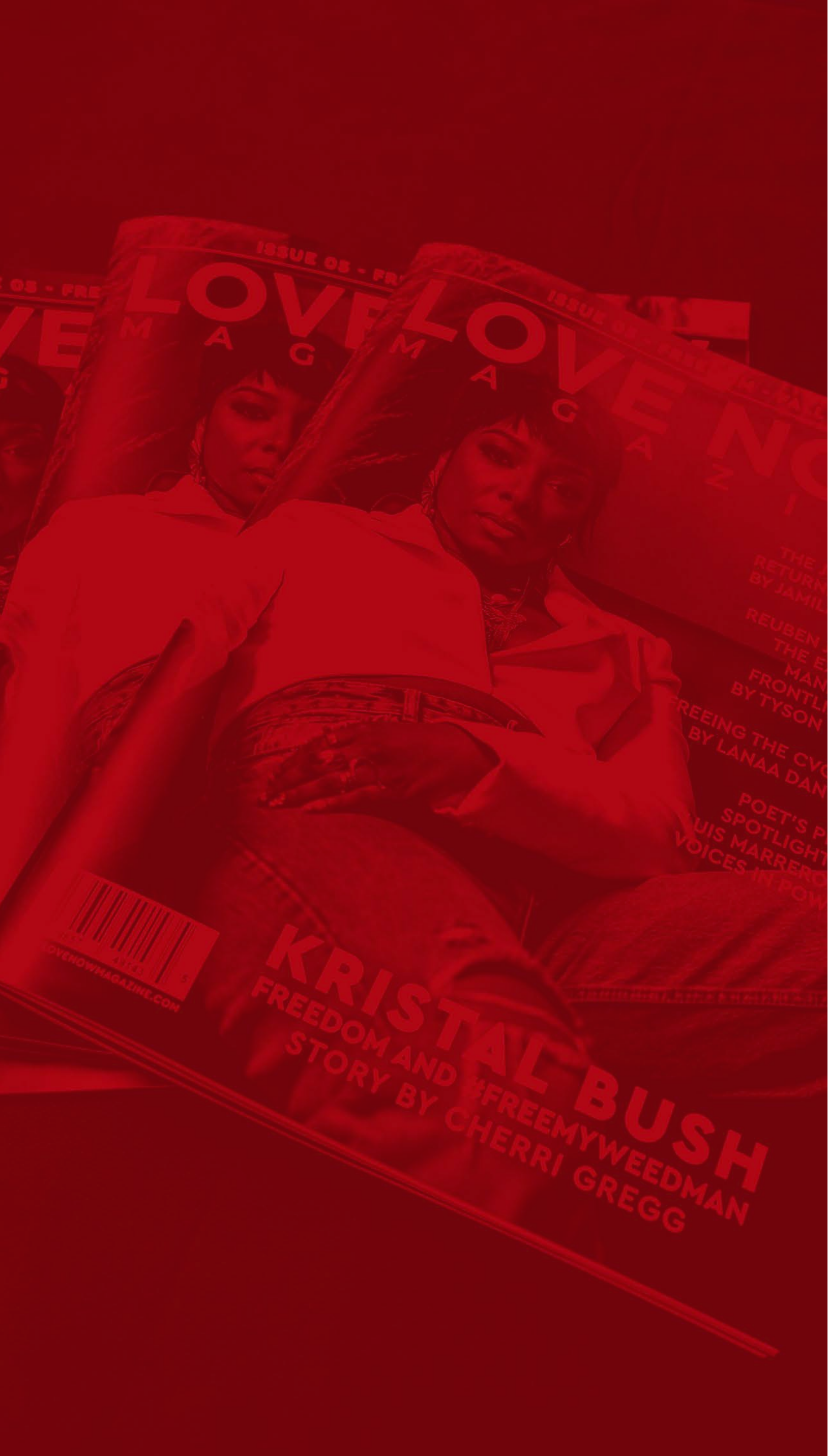
Love Now Magazine is a quarterly print publication intended to bridge the gap between trending ideas related to love and self-care and everyday people seeking joy and hope. The magazine features community stories from professional journalists, freelance writers, and Love Now Media staff that inspire people to love their lives now.

While some may see print publications as a thing of the past, we utilize our magazine as a perennial opportunity to stay connected to our audience without the barrier of algorithms; we invest in the magazine, and its stories, with a permanence that allows us to slow down, listen to authentic stories, and put love in people's hands.

## EACH ISSUE INCLUDES:

- A cover story, chronicling a Philadelphia celebrity or mainstream celebrity with Philadelphia roots, which features a styled photo shoot aligned with the theme of the magazine.
- Several features on prominent community figures engaging in acts of love
- Columns on Love & Money and 'How To' build various proficiencies
- Affirmations for love & wellness





# KEY PARTNERSHIPS.



The Syphax Family, owners of The Bayou and Booker's Restaurant in West Philly, invited us into a place-based sponsorship, hosting two of our four magazine release events at the Bayou and purchasing ads in the Fall issue of Love Now Magazine. We're very grateful for their extended partnership and were thrilled to feature their love story as our 'Couple's Story' in the Fall issue of Love Now Magazine.

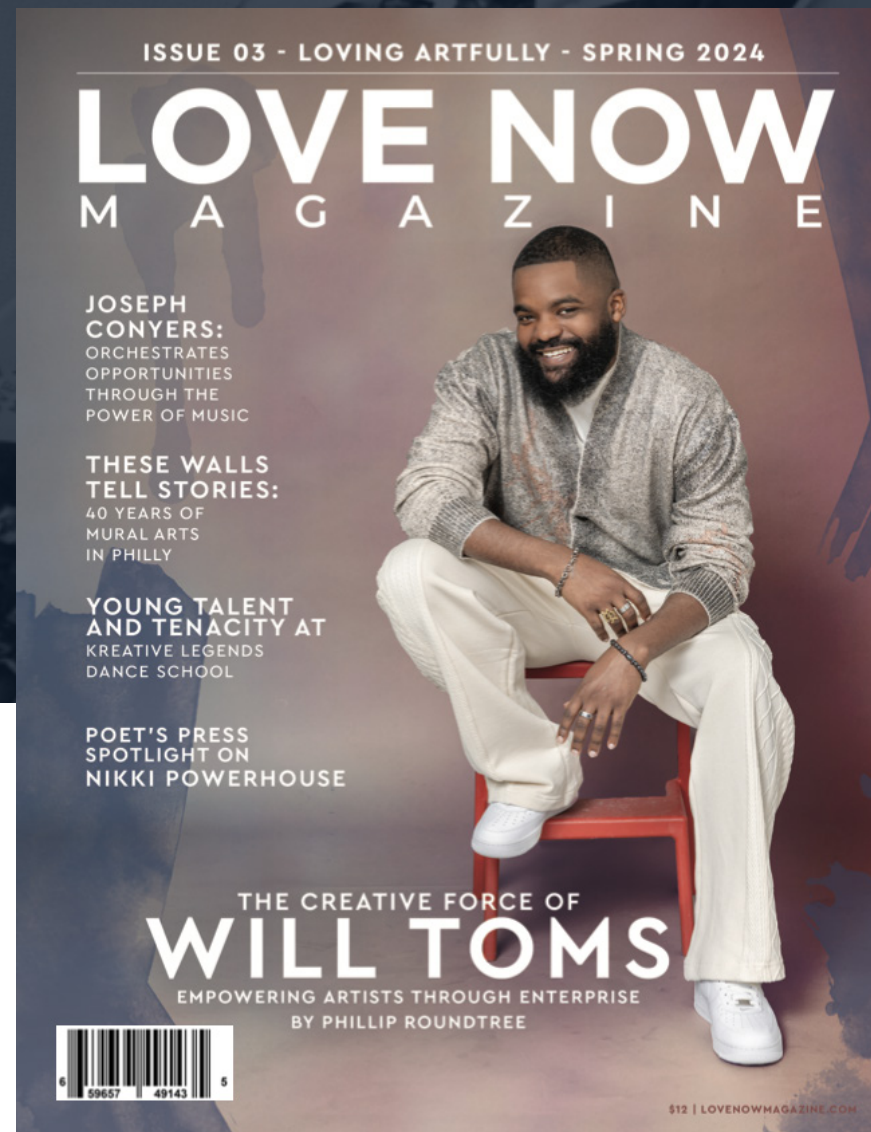


Brown's Family Super Stores Inc. have been a foundational support to the establishment and distribution of Love Now Magazine. Our magazines are sold in eight of their locations, across Philadelphia, and our team hosts occasional pop-ups in various locations to engage the community and build our audience. The partnership is buoyed by their consistent advertising and social media support, and we're looking forward to expanding our collaborations in 2025.



Odunde, the nation's largest African-American street festival, was a key promotional partner this year. In addition to inviting us to participate and vend at the festival, Odunde co-hosted our summer release event and its CEO graced the cover.

# 2024: ISSUE-BY-ISSUE



## Spring 2024 | Loving Artfully

The Spring Issue, released on March 15, was a meditation on art and creativity anchored by the 'love-driven' cover story of **Will Toms**, founder of REC Philly.

The issue offered exclusive features on Joseph Conyers, Philadelphia Orchestra's first black principal bassist, and Mural Arts Philadelphia, a beloved community partner.



## Summer 2024 | Family Love

Summer's lovin' was all about Odunde: our summer issue featured CEO **Oshunbunmi Fernandez-West** and its theme, Family Love, gave way to a beautiful story about the legacy that Bunmi inherited from her mother, Odunde's founder.

The issue also featured original poetry from acclaimed emcee and comic book writer LindoYes, and profiles of Brandi Aulston's Hike + Heal movement and the sisters behind the award-winning apothecary, Dope Botanicals.



## Fall 2024 | Freedom (Anniversary Issue)

To celebrate the first year of Love Now Magazine, we invited **Kristal Bush**, local activist and subject of PBS Documentary A Woman Outside, to grace our cover. Through her advocacy for cannabis and the expungement of the records of those convicted for its now-legal use, Kristal is the embodiment of the freedom we hoped to express through this issue.

Stories included features on viral sensation Philly's Motivation, the love story behind West Philly's Booker's Restaurant and Bar, and the music of local artist CVGEBIRD, written by 16-yr-old Lanaa Dantzler. Notably, following our profile of CVGEBIRD aka Selina Carrera, her story was picked up by 6ABC.



## Winter 2024 | Healing

The cover for our Winter Issue, themed healing, came to us amidst the celebrations for our fall issue. Ayana, of twin duo **Aaries**, came to us after fall's Love Now Live and let us know that she'd loved its feel and would like to work with us on a feature or a cover. This gave way to our first dual-feature on a cover, twin sisters Ayana and Ayinké of Aaries.

This issue, our biggest to date, featured stories from nationally-revered artists Vashti Dubois (of the Colored Girls Museum) and Mary Baxter - also known as Isis the Saviour - with original poetry from Philadelphia's Poet Laureate, Kai Davis, and stories of healing throughout.



# SPOTLIGHT:

## Love Now Media's Poet's Press



Love Now Media's Poet's Press is a unique space where poets can offer nuanced perspectives on local and global news, from a community-focused viewpoint, alongside our traditional news and magazine offerings.

Love Now Media's Poet's Press is pioneering in its approach, employing Black and Brown poets alongside journalists to publish works that provide context, challenge narratives, and celebrate the richness of our communities.

We make our commitment to love visible by supporting these poets with equitable compensation and providing a platform for poets to be featured alongside journalists, fostering relationships with major news outlets and highlighting their creative endeavors.

In Love Now Magazine, we also offer poets the opportunity to be photographed and celebrated alongside notable features - a unique and dynamic approach to platforming these artists, who often don't have access to headshots or professional-grade photography.

In 2024, we commissioned 8 original poems by 6 poets, including **Philadelphia's Poet Laureate Kai Davis**, and covered issues ranging from Gaza to gun violence. We also published our first collaborative poem, engaging over 20 budding poets at our Fall event to submit anonymous haikus on the theme of freedom and curating them into one community offering.

In 2025, we look forward to continuing our quarterly Magazine features and expanding our digital poetic offerings.

SUMMER 2024 | ISSUE OF LOVE NOW MAGAZINE

# POETRY FEATURE

## Dying of Old Age: A Protest By Lindo Yes

I want to die old

To be ghosts

Haunt the bad behaviors out of my descendants

Talk with ancestors about did I do enough

This has much to do with us not getting to

Grow old to give breaths to the flowers

Become dirt for others to be grounded to live

Or dust to take up space

I want you to grow old

Feel grays be the silvering lining of being

Alive long enough

Dying of old age is an act of protest

When life is taken by this oppressive system

May you not be taken for granted

May you be granted old age

May you give your last breath as you would like to live





# PODCASTS

In 2024, Love Now Media produced and distributed 3 podcast series - our second youth production of Dinner with Friends, the inaugural season of Making Love and Designing the Future, and Beyond the Razor Wire Fence (in partnership with the Women's Way Gender Wealth Institute's Narrative Justice Fellowship). Each series was designed to inform, inspire, and challenge audiences to engage with new perspectives while also reinforcing community building and empathy.



# KEY PARTNERSHIPS.



Love Now Media partnered with Technical.ly who provided marketing and distribution support for Making Love and Designing the Future. The partnership included short episode write-ups published on their website to engage a broader audience of design and tech-based listeners. Technical.ly's Dania Henninger not only appeared as a guest on the podcast but also helped secure ad space throughout the 10-episode inaugural season.



This collaboration supported Dinner with Friends by amplifying youth and young adult voices around civic engagement and voting. The series incorporated vox populi-style interviews with young Philadelphians to highlight their voting experiences and perspectives on the 2024 election.



Love Now Media provided program design and leadership services for the Gender Wealth Institute's Narrative Justice Fellowship, integrating elements from our Designing Love Storytelling Program. Fellows explored personal stories, the historical design of social justice issues, and reimagined systems and policies through a lens of love. These efforts culminated in the production of Beyond the Razor Wire Fence.



Renowned journalist and educator Denise James joined the Dinner with Friends production team to provide editorial support and coaching, ensuring journalistic integrity and thematic consistency.



As a production and editing partner for Beyond the Razor Wire Fence, PhillyCAM provided high-quality facilities for a live video and audio production. This collaboration allowed fellows impacted by the carceral system to engage directly in the production process, gaining firsthand experience in media creation. PhillyCAM also broadcast episodes of Dinner with Friends on its cable network (Comcast 66/966HD/967 and Verizon 29/30), significantly increasing the show's reach.



# KEY INITIATIVES.

## MAKING LOVE & DESIGNING THE FUTURE

A new offering, Making Love & Designing the Future is a Love Now Media podcast that explores the design of systems and structures, and the way products, policies, and processes intersect with people's everyday lives to improve them.

Each episode explored spaces, relationships, and solutions to pressing social issues that center empathy and make love possible.

In its first season of 10 episodes, the podcast garnered **over 500 unique downloads** and secured two advertising sponsors.

The podcast is hosted by Founder and CEO Jos Duncan Asé, and examines the role of design in creating a just, well, and equitable future. By interviewing guests, in various fields, on the topic of empathy and how it has or could be used in their organizations, we were able to provide actionable insights as a framework for a more equitable and empathetic workforce.

The year's most popular episodes were:

**"Committing Acts of Journalism"**  
with Chris Norris of StoryCorps  
**"Disruptors for Change"**  
featuring Diane Cornman-Levy  
and Kelly Sheard of Women's Way.



# KEY INITIATIVES.

## DINNER W/ FRIENDS

In October, we launched the second season of Dinner with Friends with 4 audio and video episodes of the podcast serving as a platform for youth-centered solutions journalism. The project aligns with our broader goals of enhancing media literacy, increasing civic engagement, and elevating young voices in public discourse. The podcast has also sought to bridge the gap between young Philadelphians and issues impacting their lives, fostering a more informed and engaged community.

To do so, the team engaged expert guests for episodes on topics like how to ethically consume the news (Denise James, former broadcast journalist and professor of journalism at Temple University) and how to manage finances (life coach and author Coach Dawn Michelle).

Building on lessons learned from season one, our young adult producers streamlined their

production workflow, achieving efficiency by planning, producing, and launching season two in just three months. They also coordinated five vox populi-style interview sessions across Philadelphia, gathering authentic perspectives on civic engagement from young adults. These segments gave the podcast episodes more depth, creating a powerful blend of storytelling and community dialogue.

Regarding program growth, the team brought on another youth producer to serve as a correspondent for this season, highlighting organizations in the community that are dedicated to work with youth and young adults. The team member was successful in using new techniques and equipment such as teleprompters to create an informative segment that can serve as a resource to young people across the city of Philadelphia.



There are a lot of folks who take the job of being a journalist extremely seriously, defenders of democracy, carriers of the truth, challengers of power.

**-Denise James**  
(Season 2 | Episode 1, Breaking News)

# KEY INITIATIVES.

## BEYOND THE RAZOR WIRE FENCE

In partnership with Women's Way Philadelphia, Love Now Media produced a seven-episode audio and video series featuring 11 fellows and community organizations addressing carceral system injustices. The podcast served as the final deliverable for Love Now Media's six-month partnership with Women Way in the facilitation & delivery of the Gender Wealth Institute's Narrative Fellowship program.

A point of pride for us was our ability to successfully advocate for and secure Producer

credits for all 11 fellows. We partnered with PhillyCAM to provide professional production facilities, ensuring high-quality audio and video outputs while offering fellows unique, hands-on production experience.

By highlighting the lived experiences of individuals impacted by incarceration, and empowering them as creators and editors of their own stories in their own right, the podcast served as an example for narrative equity in media production that moves beyond the exploitation of its subjects.



# DOCUMENTARY



A short documentary exploring how access to nature can serve as a healing force for inner-city youth impacted by gun violence.



Twin singers Ayana and Ayinké, better known as AAries are featured on the Winter 2024 issue of Love Now Magazine!



# WORKSHOPS & ACTIVATIONS

Love Now Media's storytelling workshops create a space for people to see, hear, and listen to each other. Through customized, impact-focused programming, our empathy-centered workshops offer participants the opportunity to leverage personal storytelling to envision the future and take action.

## OUR EXTERNAL OFFERINGS INCLUDE:

- Experiential learning and narrative transformation workshops for corporate and non-profit clients, leading fellow newsmakers and/or corporate clients through our empathy-forward approach to storytelling and news
- Client-directed program development and facilitation for media entrepreneurs, storytelling efforts and/or fellowships
- Community journalism workshops, offered to the public, which provide creative space for writers in the Love Now Media ecosystem and an opportunity for prospective writers to engage with our love-ethic and each other



# KEY PARTNERSHIPS.

## accenture | LOVE ON LOCATION WITH ACCENTURE

Accenture is a company that helps other organizations to create tangible value through innovative solutions. Their reach encompasses a multitude of industries, including but not limited to health, public services, banking and more.

In February 2024, Love Now Media designed, staffed and facilitated a Love on Location workshop tailored to Accenture's specific requirements for meaningful interaction. Employees had been working from home, and this program was intended to encourage healthy in-office engagement between co-workers.

To start the day, CEO Jos Duncan-Asé shared the history of Love Now Media and our mission to foster wellness through powerful storytelling. Afterwards, an experiential storytelling booth was crafted to serve as a backdrop for employees to share their stories - framed in love - based on a randomly selected prompt exploring current events, employees' outlook on the future, and/or other heartfelt topics.

In all, twenty-three interviews were recorded and LNM provided an edited video, including highlights, for Accenture's full use in internal or external communications.





# KEY PARTNERSHIPS.

**WOMEN'S WAY** CONNECTS  
EMPOWERS  
INVESTS

## NARRATIVE TRANSFORMATION WITH WOMEN'S WAY

Love Now Media partnered with Women's Way, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of gender and racial equity, to provide program design and leadership services in support of their Gender Wealth Institute's Narrative Fellowship program.

The program, a six-month fellowship, was designed and facilitated as a customized adaptation of our Designing Love Storytelling Program, which uses narrative building techniques to help participants:

- *untap their personal stories*
- *investigate the design and history of social justice issues*
- *reimagine and redesign future systems and policies through a lens of love.*

The focus of this adaptation was to engage formerly incarcerated women to reimagine and redesign systemic change through a lens of love by exploring new systems and policy changes to support their vision of their future.

The Love Now Media team then produced a seven episode audio & video podcast with workshop participants, entitled **Beyond The Razor Wire Fence**. The podcast features fellowship participants alongside community leaders & policy advocates that work with those affected by the carceral system.

Following the engagement, we were elated to be able to feature the stories of Jamila W. Harris and Victoria Best in our Fall and Winter issues of Love Now Magazine.



# KEY PARTNERSHIPS.

## PMFE | MEDIA ENTREPRENEURSHIP WITH THE PHILADELPHIA MEDIA FOUNDERS EXCHANGE

The Philadelphia Media Founders Exchange is a community-grounded accelerator program supporting BIPOC media entrepreneurs through training, one-on-one coaching, and grantmaking.

The annual fellowship program focuses on the urgent need and opportunity to support and advance media entrepreneurs of color, ensuring that communities and their storytellers prosper and thrive. While participating in the program, entrepreneurs have admitted relishing the chance to work on the “good bones” of their organizations, “not just good stories.”

Love Now Media, represented by CEO Jos Duncan-Asé and Managing Director Nicole Blackson, designed and delivered a 16 week cohort curriculum that includes coaching, events and the distribution of grant funding to local journalists and media entrepreneurs. Through the completion of the program, participants are well positioned in the great Philadelphia news ecosystem as both creators of news and trusted, reliable sources for peer newsrooms.

This year, eight fellows from previous cohorts were selected to participate in an intermediate/advanced cohort for the first time, receiving \$50,000 to advance and sustain their burgeoning business. Our coaching model also expanded this cycle, engaging experts in grant funding, accounting & taxes and corporate sponsorships to provide support and coaching for participants.

A highlight of this year’s programming was the opportunity to gather with fellows and travel to Atlanta, GA for Daymond John’s Black Entrepreneur’s Day. Fellows were treated to a daylong program and networked with news professionals and other entrepreneurs from around the country.



# EVENTS

Through workshops, activations, and pop-ups, we've engaged thousands of Philadelphians seeking personal growth, community, and civic engagement experiences. We produce, present, and sponsor several events throughout the year, giving our audiences authentic and organic opportunities to connect with our work.

Our 2024 engagements were aimed at cultivating brand visibility, building trust, and bringing educational experiences to our audiences. Most excitingly, we introduced Love Now Live, a series of performance-based engagements that added art, music and poetry to the myriad of event-based offerings.





## CULTIVATING BRAND VISIBILITY

### A PRESENCE AT PARTNER EVENTS

Highlights of these efforts include:

- **The Global Citizen MLK Day event**, where our team interviewed and interacted with attendees to better understand their vision of A More Loving Philly.
- **The Monument Lab Past is Presence Summit**, a gathering of leaders and community members organized around monument building, public memory and art. We were invited as a community partner, tabling and interviewing attendees about voting, civic engagement and public infrastructure.

• The national launch of **Brightness in Black**, a new initiative of StoryCorps, for which we are an anchoring partner. At their September launch, in Center City's Kimmel Center, we hosted a Love on Location installation and shared the Fall issue (with a cameo from our Fall cover, Kristal Bush). CEO and Publisher Jos Duncan-Ase also led a stirring panel discussion, moderated by Marc Lamont-Hill, on Black Joy, storytelling and Black Futures.



# CULTIVATING BRAND VISIBILITY

## COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIPS

In an effort to further our mission to amplify acts of love, Love Now Media sponsored and co-sponsored several local events in 2024.

Our sponsorships, which range from cash investments to free ad space and sponsored content, are intended to further the reach of community-minded organizations and promote access to love-based programming throughout Philadelphia.

A few sponsorships that we're particularly proud of are as follows:

- **PhillyCAM's** 15th Anniversary party and subsequent programming
- **Moving Legacy's "The Get Together,"** a full-day celebration of West African and African Diasporic dance
- The **African American Museum of Philadelphia's** Oratorical Contest



# CULTIVATING BRAND VISIBILITY

## **BUILDING TRUST & MOVEMENTS**

In Our Magazine imprint, as a fledgling brand, has provided us an extraordinary opportunity to build brand trust while movement building. What began as a quarterly release party, engaging writers and features alike to connect with our readership, has developed into a fully fledged performance offering called **Love Now Live**.

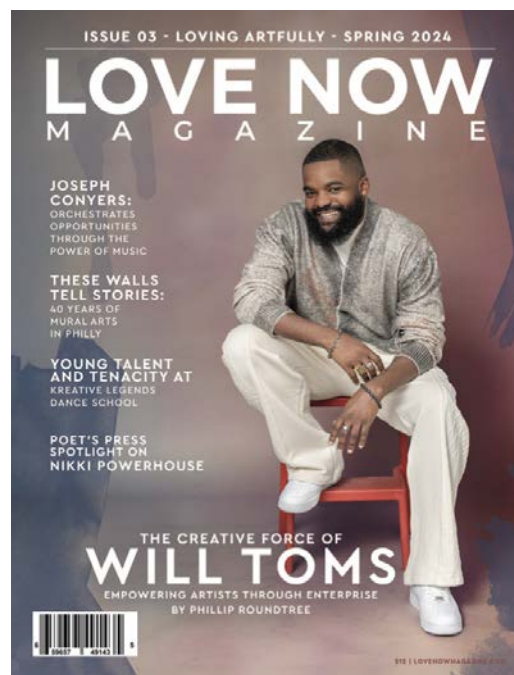
We've had almost 500 people attend our **Love Now Live** events this year, and the energy at each event is palpable. Guests of all ages join the festivities, meeting and making connections with magazine subjects and writers, singing and dancing when the night's programming comes to its inevitable close as a community

jam space. Long lines of people often seek out features sign magazines, and musicians and fans share the mic.

The event's growth is a sign of the trust built and offered by our magazine. Our audiences continue to grow and the caliber of artists remains spectacular. Folks who have met at our events go on to build partnerships - the cover of our Spring Issue, **Will Toms**, and our Summer Issue, **Bunmi Fernandez-West**, have gone on to plan efforts for collaboration between REC Philly and Odunde. **Neptune XXI**, the opening act for our Winter event, went on to collaborate with **AAries** on new music. Fundamentally, we use our magazine events to bring the publication's spirit of love to life.



# LOVE NOW LIVE: AT-A-GLANCE



## Spring 2024 | Loving Artfully

The issue's release party took place at the Bayou, marking the beginning of a year-long partnership with the local Black owned-business, and featured live performances from local artist Seraiah Nicole and poet Nikki Powerhouse.

To promote sales & our commitment to connect with our audience, our team held pop-up engagements at the Fox Street ShopRite and Monument Street Fresh Grocer locations. These pop-ups were made possible by our founding partnership with the Brown Family Super Stores, an early investor in Love Now Magazine and proud retailer.



## Summer 2024 | Family Love

We partnered with Odunde, the largest African-American street festival in the country, for our summer release party. We gathered in University City for music, African dance, and celebration.

We then joined the festivities, tabling at Odunde 2024 as a featured guest and sharing the magazine with all who attended.



## Fall 2024 | Freedom (Anniversary Issue)

We celebrated our first birthday at the Bayou, sister space to Booker's Restaurant and Bar, and were graced with wall-to-wall attendance. For this event, we transitioned our programming towards our first official Love Now Live, anchoring the magazine's release in performances and art.

We announced our partnership with StoryCorps at this event, inviting Chief Strategy Officer Chris Norris to announce StoryCorp's new Brightness in Black initiative as a bookend to his column for our fall issue.



## Winter 2024 | Healing

We held our final Love Now Live of the year at FringeBar, in Old City, and were graced with a headlining performance of AARIES' EP, YinkaYana.

The event was a celebration of healing and new beginnings, and we can't wait to see what 2025 has in store for Love Now Magazine.



## ENLIGHTENMENT & EDUCATION

We've used events to enlighten and educate ourselves and our community:

Our team attended the **Women's Way 3rd Annual Gender Wealth Summit** and the **Stoneleigh Foundation's 'Philadelphia's Gun Violence Crisis: Deepening the Conversation'**. Both events allowed for complex conversation on issues we've done in-depth reporting on: women's access to wealth and financial independence, which we considered in the podcast *'Beyond the Razor Wire Fence,'* and

solutions to the proliferation of gun violence in Philadelphia. We premiered our short film, *'Breaking Concrete,'* at the Stoneleigh Foundation event.

To build community and develop our awareness for culture, grounding our new offering of arts & event reviews, our team attended several plays together, including *'The Cost of Living'* and *'Hadestown'*. We laughed, cheered and cried with the stories - of love and of loss- that the artists shared with us.





# KEY PARTNERSHIPS.



We've been a joyful, founding community partner for the launch of StoryCorps' Brightness in Black initiative, an effort to collect stories of joy and positivity from Black communities all over the country. Through this partnership, we're especially proud to be able to contribute the story of Love Now Media and many artists, storytellers and community members to the archives of both the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and

## LIST OF EVENTS

---

### WINTER 2024

- MLK Day event (Global Citizen @ Girard College)
- Scribe Storyville Screening
- Team outing: The Cost of Living Play

### SPRING 2024

- Women's History Month: Meet the Forum Allies
- ShopRite pop-up
- AAMP Oratorical Contest
- Team outing: Hadestown
- Lenfest Constellation Program Closing Event
- 

### SUMMER 2024

- Black Queer Power in Corporate & Nonprofit Settings
- PMFE Revenue Summit
- Monument Lab Summit

### FALL 2024

- Brightness in Black launch event
- Women's Way 3rd Annual Gender Wealth Summit
- Spark Session: Youth Justice, Media Narratives, and Philadelphia
- United Way: Media Coverage of Black Non-profit Leaders
- Gun Violence Summit hosted by the Stoneleigh Foundation
- Klein Camp Workshop: Community Journalism in the Age of AI
- Black Entrepreneur's Day in Atlanta
- City University of New York AI Lecture Series

# ACHIEVEMENTS IN ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH



## EDITORIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

In 2024, we made substantive investments in our editorial infrastructure, aligned with overall goals to expand and deepen the reach and quality of our news coverage.

To begin the year, we invested in an extensive redesign and relaunch of our digital news presence at LoveNowMedia.com. Following the relaunch, we established and maintained weekly news coverage on issues relating to equity, social justice, local news and wellness.

In the spring, we deepened our investment with the hire of an Editorial Manager and Chief Storyteller. **Both roles have designated editorial functions:**

In addition to managing day to day editorial functions, the **Editorial Manager** oversees the acquisition, onboarding and experience of freelance and community contributors, developing the calibre of talent available to our newsroom. The Editorial Manager hosts monthly writer's meetups and regular story development/pitch meetings with local writers interested in working with Love Now Media.

The **Chief Storyteller** oversees internal and external storytelling efforts, overseeing editorial across digital and the magazine and supporting the CEO in telling the story of Love NOW Media to external partners, funders and our audience. With the hire of our Chief Storyteller, the company has been able to expand its editorial offerings to 2-3 weekly stories, re-establish its biweekly newsletter and build out communications and marketing strategies for the magazine and external collaborations.

In the fall, we expanded our communications team to include a part-time **Digital Storyteller**, rounding out the team with deep expertise in social media management and organic audience growth. Within one month of her hire, Love Now Media's Instagram page grew by over 1,500 followers and engagement across posts has grown exponentially.

Through these investments, the organization has seen incredible growth in the ways that our editorial products are offered and how they are distributed and received.



LOVE NOW  
MEDIA

**THANK YOU**

FOR YOUR SUPPORT!