

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: 01/21/2021

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## **The Black Freedom Struggle in Grand Rapids, Michigan: *Revisiting the Past to Write the Future***

Grand Stand Pictures, LLC is looking to bring the Black Freedom Struggle in Grand Rapids to the big screen by announcing the full length Documentary Film "A City Within A City" based upon the book of the same name by Dr. Todd E. Robinson.

Robinson's book *A City Within a City* examines the civil rights movement in the North by concentrating on the struggles for equality in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He studies the issues surrounding school integration and bureaucratic reforms as well as the role of Black youth activism to detail the diversity of Black resistance. He focuses on respectability within the African-American community as a way of understanding how the movement was formed and held together.

And he elucidates the oppositional role of northern conservatives regarding racial progress. *A City Within a City* cogently argues that the post-war political reform transformed the city's racial geography, creating a racialized "city within a city," featuring a system of "managerial racism" designed to keep Blacks in perpetual second-class citizenship in inner-city areas.

This bold, provocative framework for understanding race relations in Grand Rapids has broader implications for illuminating the twentieth-century African-American urban experience in secondary cities. "While some outlets report that Grand Rapids is one of the best places in the country to raise a family, it is simultaneously described as one of the worst for African-Americans in the country," says Rodney Brown, one of the principles of Grand Stand Pictures, LLC. "As residents try to reconcile living in a city that is really two or three different cities at once, various reactions play out. Many try to wrest themselves free from being "managed," wondering why others seem to be participating in their own demoralization. Those enjoying privilege wonder how their good intentions can be so misunderstood."

Grand Stand Pictures, LLC in association with Grand Rapids Media Initiative & Film Incubator (GR-MiFi) has many plans, including The GR-MiFi Business Incubator, and an educational curriculum, which are being developed as additional sustainable components of the project.

Grand Stand Pictures is planning several events to invite full community participation in this project beginning in February 2021, including collection of stories, call for memorabilia, and crowdfunding opportunities.

**Social Media Handles:** #GrandStandPictures #BlackGrandRapids #ACWACFilm #GRMiFi

