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people, like – wait, so you cross the street, and then you kept on going, and then you crossed back later? Was that really necessary? Was the view really that much nicer over there? I'm noticing how people stereotype "we can't trust you, because you're wearing baggy clothes" or something.

**Q:** How does that make you feel?

**Hartley:** It enrages me.

**McCall:** Basically I feel like even if I'm in a professional outfit, that still doesn't change my skin color. People are still going to look at me like I'm a black guy.

**Hartley:** I think it depends on the generation, too, that that's a fact. I was working since I was a freshman in high school – because it was a must, is a must – and I'm coming from home, 99th and Gateway, the Chase Bank, cashing my check, worked 80 hours plus. I'm about to miss my Max on my way to work. I'm slightly dressed up – it was Friday; it was casual. I had on regular slacks, dress shoes and a dress shirt. I started jogging for my Max, and all of a sudden, a couple women look at me and just clutch their purses. I wanted to stop and be like, "I don't need your money." I was about to be late for work, but it's like, "You guys are a waste of time. You really just tried to clutch your purse like I was going to run up and grab it? Look at how I'm dressed. Do you really think I need that from you?" That's just a consistent thing, like you'll get on a bus and sit somewhere and someone will get up and move. It doesn't bother me. I'm an introvert anyway. I don't want to be around you, you know, but it's the thought of it happening to other people that may care. It makes me pissed off.

**McCall:** Or going into a restaurant. I've been in multiple restaurants where I'm walking in by myself and there's all white people sitting down having dinner, but I walk in and all the heads turn toward me like I'm not supposed to be here, but I'm just ordering my food.

**Q:** Is there anything you'd like to tell white Portland?

**Hartley:** If the motto is "Keep Portland Weird," then how come when you see someone different from you, you assume something bad, or you don't like it? If Portland is supposed to be weird, then everything should be accepted, not looked down upon or treated a certain way. Because everything applies to weird, so weird is normal in Portland. Why does Portland portray something it doesn't truly believe?

**Black:** We need to be consistent with our morals. At one time we push for a black man to be able to marry a white woman, but then when it's two men – there's a pause. We say people need all these civil liberties: I can't just kill you, I can't just search you, I can't make you work for free, but as soon as one of you guys gets incarcerated? Death penalty; I can make you work for slave wages. We're not really consistent. Why is it



Stephon Hartley shares what he learned from leading discussions about race and family stability with his peers at the Summer Youth Summit. He's joined on stage at the Summer Youth Experience graduation in September by fellow graduates Malik Farrakhan and Joshua Davis.

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**"I know as a young black male, I was taught not to trust the police, never to talk to the police; police are bad. I feel like the crime would go down if police are interacting and building these relationships at young ages instead of just always being found in our communities when they're looking for problems that they believe we are causing."**

STEPHON HARTLEY, 19

OK when you're a prisoner? And yeah, it's black people now, but it could totally flip, and now white people are incarcerated, and they're going through the same thing, and they'll be like, "This is unjust." We're still human.

**Davis:** One thing I've noticed with a lot of my friends, is like, something I try to tell people is: Don't ignore it just because it doesn't apply. Because if it's someone being treated wrongly, it does apply to you. I can't remember if it was Martin Luther King who said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." So if it's affecting someone else, it's going to come around and affect you. It might be blacks one day, but soon, it might be everybody.

**Q:** What should we do about the issues facing young black men in Portland?

**McCall:** What I think is youth intervention program. Different from a mentor program – having someone older come talk to you about how you should be better in life – but hearing from somebody you know, that you've seen grow up with you. It's a different perspective.

**Hartley:** I was a part of the Community Centers Initiative here in Portland, and we basically made it free at two different community centers in East Portland and in Northeast Portland for low-income families to have the availability to put their children in the programs. What I tried to do with the children that were there, because we had over 1,300 kids just sign up at one community center, which pushed us to open another community center free, is have the



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WILANDRAE MCCALL, 18

police, in some capacity, be there interacting with the kids, building those relationships at early stages, because I know as a young black male, I was taught not to trust the police, never to talk to the police; police are bad. I feel like the crime would go down if police are interacting and building these relationships at young ages instead of just always being found in our communities when they're looking for problems that they believe we are causing.

**Davis:** This is kind of broad. I'm still thinking about it. But we talk about wanting everybody to be treated the same, or treated with equity. Have that be a start. If you want everyone to be the same and have the same opportunities, treat them the same. Give them the same opportunities, but don't assume they can't take the same challenges. If you grow up feeling like you're different, that's what you're going to act like. Everybody

wants to think they control themselves, but pretty much what people tell you you are, if you hear it enough, you believe it. We hear people say we're at risk; we start to believe it.

*"We're going to dream a little," Murphy said. He asked the young men to envision a world where the statistics he listed at the beginning of the discussion didn't exist. Describe what that might look like."*

**Hartley:** That is pretty hard to envision for me because of everything I've been through. But I guess if it ever did happen, I would see less African-Americans having depression problems because they don't know how to identify themselves. I would

see the whole racial aspect of any type of application taken away. I would see more black males actually taking care of their families and, you know, in the family instead of out somewhere, just leaving the mother to fend for the family. I'm going to leave it at that because I can't really see that.

**Black:** (Wesley began by describing a scenario where someone he knew reached out to him and others in his circle of friends to say goodbye because he believed someone was coming to visit him in a violent manner. Wesley and his friends wanted to help their friend and thought the only option was to go to his home.)

No one called the cops – not a single soul thought to call the police. I was on the Xbox, and I was talking to some friends that actually knew him, and they were like, "Hey, why don't you call the cops?" And I was pretty emotional at the time, I was like, "If I call the cops, they're going to come kill him and the person that's coming to get him."

But in this dream, we'd all have called the cops.

**Davis:** For me, a lot of my friends live in Beaverton, and when I go over there with my friends to hang out, I'm cool, but sometimes, like taking the bus and stuff, I get a little nervous. When I'm with my family and we drive over there, on two separate occasions – we have a minivan, and there's seven of us in our family – we've been tailed by the police; like just tailed. And sometimes when I go over there, I get nervous. What if I'm walking and someone just like – they have no ill intentions, nothing against me personally, but just because of a stereotype, they call the police? It could be something where I end up getting arrested or end up being dead. I dream of a world where I never have that fear.