

# First 15 Black creatives named for One School portfolio programme

The One Club for Creativity has announced the first-ever group of 15 talented students accepted to attend ONE School, a free portfolio programme for young Black creatives.



Students were selected based on their raw creativity, passion and commitment so as not to discourage those with no prior knowledge of advertising.

## Diverse set of talents and perspectives

The inaugural class for One School East, starting on 8 September, are Trey Alston, Van Leigh Armer, Trey Bradley, Elizabeth Culton, Nicole Francois, Laura Eley, Asia Irvin, Mutaurwa Mapondera, Tarahgee Morris, Jamal Parker, Bárbara Polance, Temiloluwa Thomas, Tyler West, Miko White and Jasmine Williams.

True to the school's mission to bring new Black talent into the industry, the first class represents a wide array of creative backgrounds, including a spoken-word performer, textile artist, animators, photographers, writers, an AI developer and UX designer, videographer, music journalist and teacher.

Professional Development programming.

“Looking through all the applications confirmed to me just how much Black creative talent is out there that we, as an industry, miss out on because we rely on the same pipelines year after year,” said Davis-Lyons, “While it wasn’t easy to get to 15, the class we have represents such a diverse set of talents and perspectives, I can’t wait to see what they come up with over the next 16 weeks.”

## Next wave of creatives shaping the future

Some of the students described their reasons for applying and their hopes for the programme.

“One School is giving Black creatives like myself a platform to showcase our talent and be challenged at the level of our potential,” said Van Leigh Armer, a 27-year-old photographer.

“ *The programme can be a true testament that you can live and thrive as a Black creative without compromise.* ”

“ *As an Afro-Latina Dominicana from the Bronx, NY – the birthplace of hip hop - I have a unique point of view and a much-needed perspective to offer the industry. I’m excited to be a part of the next wave of creatives who will shape the future of the way we all view the world.* ”

Barbara Polanco, a 26-year-old stylist and music video director, added,

Applications are still open for One School West, the deadline is 30 August 2020. That programme will be run by LA-based executive creative director Ez Blaine, ECD at ChowNow who has previously held creative positions at Apple, R/GA, AKQA, TBWA\Chiat Day and Wieden+Kennedy London.

## Free online school

One School grew out of a June LinkedIn post by Davis-Lyons lamenting the high-cost barrier of US portfolio schools for young creatives of colour, and his pledge to find a way to rectify the situation. The post was seen by Bob Isherwood, head of The One Club’s Professional Development department, who reached out to Davis-Lyons and started the collaborative process to make One School a reality.

The free online school will run two nights a week for 16 weeks, twice per year (Fall and Spring), with students getting 10 briefs over the course covering everything from OOH to Innovation and Data-Driven Storytelling. Due to the hands-on mentoring aspect of the programme, enrollment in the course is currently limited to 15 students for each fall and spring session on each coast who have not previously attended an ad school.

Briefs will be written by Black strategists and taught by a majority of Black tutors and lecturers, and students will be paired with Black mentors in the industry. The programme also goes beyond simply teaching students how to put a book together by also teaching them how to navigate the industry while Black.

The industry has quickly gotten behind the programme, with sponsorship support and donation of creative tools for students to use.

More information about One School and application details for West Coast classes can be found [here](https://www.bizcommunity.com).