



**Gina Gipson, JD**, is a first-generation college and law school graduate. Likewise, she is the daughter of a mother with a high school education and a father that never obtained his high school diploma but who was a successful entrepreneur running a hauling business in Philadelphia for decades. As such, **Gina Gipson** was both passionate about higher education and understood the importance of entrepreneurship.

**Ms. Gipson** was often perplexed by the amount of minority high school students (particularly African-American, Hispanic & Latino) she came in contact with who had opted not to pursue a college education or those that made an attempt and entered college but fell short of the expectations based on non-academic abilities (life skills).

With the increasing number of such scenarios repeatedly being presented to her, **Ms. Gipson** took action in 2007 and established Make Your Name Great, Inc. in Atlanta, GA. The goals were to, motivate and provide to minority high school students who were preparing themselves for higher education and to blend in life skill development including but not limited to study skills, time management, networking, public speaking, conflict resolution and social, emotional and mental wellness.

With a vision in her heart, pen and pad in hand and a few key supporters, **Ms. Gipson** launched the first MYNG Institute (After-school Program) in January 2008 in the West End Public Library Community Room. By mid-year, students were also enrolled in the first MYNG Summer Academy which was held at the Westside Branch YMCA, in June 2008, who subsequently became a longtime supporter of MYNG. Two years later, her vision brought MYNG back to her hometown of Philadelphia, PA, where the second chapter was established. July 2010, MYNG welcomed high school students to Summer Academy Philadelphia.

In 2011, **Ms. Gipson** relocated to her hometown of Philadelphia, PA, which became the new headquarters for MYNG. Over the next few years, MYNG began establishing relationships with high school guidance counselors, church youth groups and other college readiness programs across the city. This greatly increased the reach of MYNG and solicited business sponsorship across the city and **Gina Gipson** became the “go to” lady for not only college prep, but life skill development workshops with young people. Though the program had seen growth throughout the city, **Ms. Gipson** wanted to find a way to garner business support from other cities to help grow the MYNG brand and the student reach.

In 2015 **Ms. Gipson** took the traditional Summer Academy program and created the Summer Academy Tour. She established MYNG Ambassador Roles in various cities and with their help in addition to Atlanta, GA and Philadelphia, PA Summer Academy was launched in Buffalo, NY, Dothan, AL, and Miami, FL. In 2016, San Francisco and Los Angeles, CA were added to the roster and Summer 2021, Oakland, CA will join the tour.

As MYNG continues to grow, **Gina Gipson** wants the organization to raise leaders not just in the community, but throughout the world. "Make Your Name Great" is a term that she believes their students will come to recognize as a reality and not as a possibility.

**“Working to Make the Names of Youth Great”**

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