

Every birth
has a story...

... but why is no
one telling ours?



Black to the Beginning

MEDIA KIT
2023

OUR MISSION

Black to the Beginning exists to disrupt the legacy of secrecy, stigma, shame and silence about Black Adoption.

OUR VISION

We envision a world where centering and amplifying Black Adoption Experiences transforms Black families for generations.

OUR PURPOSE

Black to the Beginning's purpose is to amplify and change the narrative of Black Adoption through education, media and storytelling.

WHAT MAKES US DIFFERENT?

Most conversations about adoption are from the perspective of parents, typically White adoptive parents.

With Black to the Beginning, we center the voices and experiences of Black families and Black adult adoptees.

My story has many chapters...

It is why I wrestle with the question, “Tell me about yourself” or “What do you do?” Most times, I pause, as the response is complex. Over the past four decades, I have operated in many multifaceted, distinguishable universes - all of which have connected for a greater purpose. Simply, but uniquely put, I am a Professional Storycatcher. This title describes who I have innately been since birth.

The name “Samantha,” means “God Heard ” or “Listener.” Ironically, I have been an empathetic engager of people and their stories from the sandbox, to the playground, as the Class VP (all 4 years) of High school, or riding the “L.” As my education and career expanded, I reimagined and refined my talent for listening. It manifested into many areas such as becoming a licensed therapist, social entrepreneur, University professor and administrator, Executive Coach, Consultant and Leadership Development Expert. Having this gift to “catch” the stories of others has allowed me to navigate each of these roles in mastery form. I believe that I can’t truly be of service, until I first listen to and absorb one’s story. However, not even this born talent would keep me from the inevitable “gut punch” I experienced when I had to “listen” to my own life’s plot twist.

At age 26, my mother divulged to me that I was adopted, which completely shifted my life’s narrative. As the person once described as someone with the ability to create clarity within a kaleidoscope, I had to be that resource for myself. Yes, I’m a strong willed Capricorn that embraced the challenge, but If I’m being honest, nothing prepared me for the unending journey of being Black and adopted. This is why the creation of Black to the Beginning has been so integral to my own personal healing.

Black to the Beginning is only one of many of the Story Catching platforms I create and contribute to. Currently, I am the Associate Director of Leadership Development at the Harry L. Davis Center for Leadership (University of Chicago Booth School of Business). I am also a course designer and Instructor for the University of Chicago Graham School. I round out my work as the owner and Principal of a leadership coaching and consulting firm that focuses on living and leading authentically in all domains of life. My motto is “Do you...but better!”

Dr. Sam resides in Chicago and is a mother of two souls that are powerful reminders of unconditional love. She enjoys a good, “Taco Tuesday,” a bottle of wine (even the cheap kind), kiki’ing with sister-friends, and trotting the globe. Each day she is inspired to live life to the fullest and trust the process. In 2007, she was recognized as an “Unsung Hero” by Ebony Magazine and Pine-Sol, has received numerous awards for her commitment to female youth empowerment, and has been institutionally acknowledged for her outstanding service to students and the learning community.

MEET DR. SAM



MEET SANDRIA

How did I go from writing my first short story in crayon to living inside the biggest plot twist of my life (and trust me, God has written me into some BIG ones these first 40 years of life)?

I knew from an early age that books, words, and stories would always be my saving grace. I remember when my parents separated and the lights got turned off in our house after my father moved out.

Me and my mother would walk to the library and she'd let me check out a stack of books. There wasn't any time for me to be sad; I was too busy reading and making up my own stories.

Like many little book lovers of the early 80's, I was a school spelling bee winning-Chicago Young Authors writing-Scholastic Book Fair anticipating-Book It! Pizza Hut personal pan pizza eating scholar.

By the time I arrived on the campus of U of I, I didn't know what I wanted to do with my life. I minored in English and received my B.S. in Advertising. My post-college professional career has been....interesting.

I've been an editor, advertising account executive, freelance writer, blogger, corporate communications AVP, and an entrepreneur.

In between all of this I've been a theater and film actress, award-winning natural hair model, radio personality, event curator, and certified yoga teacher - just to name a few! As my friends often like to remind me, "Sandria is a whole mood!" I can't argue.

As a creative I like to take the scenic route in life and I love a good backstory. I believe everything I've lived through and the tools I've picked up along the way - particularly the sudden death of my mother in 2011, a 20 year practice of journaling and being a student of yoga - helped prepare me for April 2, 2018 and the call that would change my life.

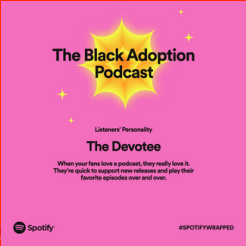
On the Monday following Easter Sunday and April Fool's Day, standing in my kitchen, I finally made the call to my aunt that I'd been putting off for months. "Is it true that I'm adopted?" Her confirmation set in motion a search not only for my backstory, but the untold stories of other Black adoptees.





THE PODCAST

The Black Adoption Podcast



AVAILABLE ON:

- Apple Podcasts
- Google Podcasts
- Spotify
- iHeart Radio
- Pandora
- Amazon Music & Audible
- Stitcher

The Black Adoption Podcast, produced by Black to the Beginning, is an unapologetic and culturally-relevant platform that honors and preserves the voices, memories and perspectives of Black people impacted by adoption. Steeped in the tradition of oral history, The Black Adoption Podcast's intimate conversations examine adoption's many intersections such as fertility, mental health, social justice, relationships, parenting and even popular culture like television and film.

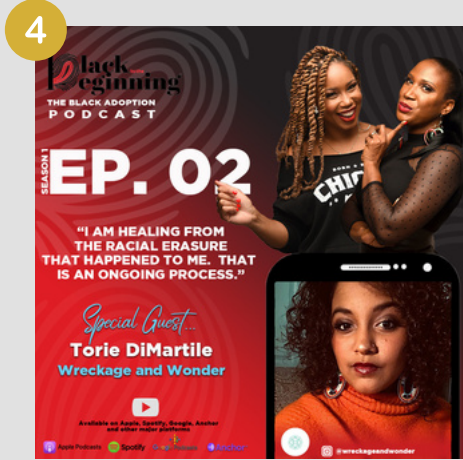
With each conversation, more healing happens for generations of Black families and #ForTheCulture!

50	EPISODES	15K+	PLAYS (ALL-TIME)	PODCAST STATISTICS
4	SEASONS	289	SPOTIFY FOLLOWERS	
				AS OF JUNE 16, 2023



The Black Adoption Podcast Top 5 Episodes

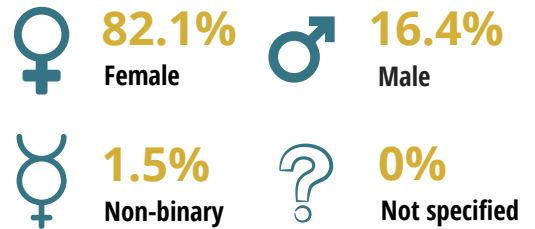
THE PODCAST



AUDIENCE DEMOGRAPHICS

- 89% United States

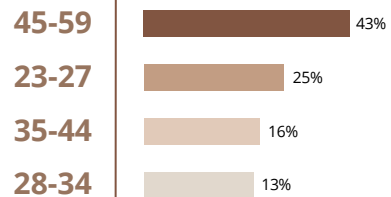
GENDER



PLATFORMS

- Apple Podcasts 72.5%
- Spotify 9.5%
- Audible 7.8%
- Amazon Music 3.2%
- Web Browser 2.5%
- Other 4.4%

AGE





February 21, 2023
CAN-TV "For the Culture"



November 10, 2022:
WGN "Daytime Chicago"



November 24, 2022:
Blackdoctor.org



November 18, 2021:
WVON 1690AM "The Kendall Moore Show"



September 2021:
Truth's Table



November 5, 2022:
Rolling Out



January 29, 2021:
Adler University



November 30, 2020:
"Windy City Live"



November 18, 2020:
Fox Soul "The Book of Sean"



PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS



"You have to listen to the podcast because it really encapsulates not only the Black adoption experience but the Black Chicago experience, the Black life experience..."

**Dr. Zada Johnson,
Anthropologist & Professor
at Northeastern Illinois
University**

"I was just really compelled by what Sam and Sandria have been able to do and really wanted to support the oral history work that they're doing, because what they're doing is research and they're helping people to explore their family stories."

**Marcia Walker-McWilliams, PhD,
Executive Director,
Black Metropolis Research
Consortium**

"Thank you so much for joining us at Pact Camp West. We have gotten so many responses from the participants who were thrilled with the provocative curriculum and we know that your insights and presentation was a big part of that. I so appreciate your commitment and support of BIPOC adoptees, foster youth and their parents. We are so lucky to have collaborators like you."

**Beth Hall, Executive Director,
Pact, An Adoption Alliance**



2023



"BLACK ADOPTION IN POP CULTURE"
(WORKSHOP PRESENTERS)



"IT TAKES A VILLAGE FOSTER CARE 101"
(PANELISTS)



2022



FEATURED SPEAKERS



KEYNOTE PANEL "ADOPTEE VOICES"
(PANELISTS)

SECRECY, STIGMA & SHAME IN BLACK (AND OTHER POC COMMUNITIES) ADOPTION—A CONVERSATION"
(WORKSHOP PRESENTERS)

2021



YES WE ADOPT BLACK VOICES AMPLIFIED SUMMIT 2021
"UNSUNG: THE H.E.R.O. IN BLACK ADOPTION"
ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION
(PRODUCERS & MODERATORS)

2020



YES WE ADOPT BLACK VOICES AMPLIFIED SUMMIT 2020
"ADOPTEES: IN THEIR VOICES" (PANELISTS) &
"AMPLIFYING OUR VOICES" (PANELISTS)



CONNECT



www.blacktothebeginning.com



info@blacktothebeginning.com



Black to the Beginning



@blacktothebeginning_



Black to the Beginning



@blackandadopted



@blacktothebeginning

