

PRESS RELEASE

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AIGA KC, Pick Progress, Babes Helpin' Babes Team Up for 'Pick Posters' Series

KANSAS CITY, MO – AIGA Kansas City, Pick Progress and Babes Helpin' Babes are excited to announce Pick Posters, a poster series celebrating 30 days of Black design. The series will run online from Jan. 31 to March 1, culminating in an in-person panel discussion and poster show event March 2, from 6-8 p.m., at The AI Hub, 511 Delaware St., Suite 50, Kansas City, Mo.

For this project, AIGA KC invited more than 30 Black creatives from around the world to each design a poster representing Black empowerment phrases – like “Lift Every Voice” and “Melanin' Abundant” – from the original [Pick Progress project](http://pickprogressproject.com) (pickprogressproject.com). The phrases and specific project colors were selected to showcase the beauty and strength of Black culture. The poster series will feature designs by creatives from multiple countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Germany.

The panel event will include Kansas City Black creatives and a moderator discussing the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion in design and design spaces. This will be followed by a poster show, where posters from the Pick Posters project will be on display and available for bidding in a silent auction. This is a free event, however registration is required. Sign up to reserve a spot at givebutter.com/pick-posters-event.

Proceeds from sponsors, donations and the silent auction will be distributed directly to the poster creators to compensate them for their time and talent. In addition to the creatives, AIGA KC hopes to also raise funds that will help facilitate administrative necessities to keep Pick Poster's presence active – including the upkeep of the platform where each creative's poster and bio will be digitally housed – and to give back to the creative organizations in the Kansas City community that are partnering in this initiative. For those interested in sponsoring or donating to this project, please visit pickprogressproject.com/sponsorship/ or pickprogressproject.com/donate/.

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Pick Posters is an extension of Pick Progress, a project that launched in February 2020. It's a personal passion project by Kansas City designer and AIGA KC board member Chandler Johnson, which focuses on sharing stories of Black individuals and highlighting elements of Black culture. For the original project, Johnson created 31 different plastic afro-combs that reference phrases of Black empowerment and interviewed more than 30 individuals about their experiences being Black.

"I am excited to partner with AIGA Kansas City and Babes Helpin' Babes to build on the Pick Progress project and bring to life 'Pick Posters,'" Johnson said. "Despite the variety of awesomeness in this project, I first want Pick Posters to be a space of representation and a signal to show the design world that people of color are 'out here.' This series can aid in the conversations about systemic inclusion problems in design. I believe this is one small but mighty step in making changes to a space I love so much."

AIGA KC is one of the largest chapters of AIGA, the oldest and largest professional membership organization for design – with more than 70 chapters and more than 11,000 members. It advocates for a greater understanding of the value of design and designers in government, business and media. AIGA inspires designers and the public by sharing the most exciting design work and engaging in thoughtful, provocative discussions on pressing issues.

"Black creatives exist, but many design shops and advertising agencies have yet to show up in representation," said Ashley Tebbe, President of AIGA Kansas City. "I am in awe of the work and vision Chandler Johnson has provided for Pick Progress, as I am in the efforts of countless AIGA Kansas City board members who have helped to make it happen and the talented designers that have brought it to life. Diversity is essential to the creative community and AIGA Kansas City seeks a more representative future through active participation."

Babes Helpin' Babes (BHB) is the creative industry's go-to consultancy for illuminating and addressing problems of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). Working with both company leadership and employees, BHB facilitates uncomfortable conversations around DEI through moderated company-wide classes, coaching and consulting. And, while the majority of U.S. industries struggle with diversity, equity, and inclusion, the creative industry is where BHB's expertise and passion lies.

"Advertising agencies lack significant racial diversity, which should come as a shock to no one," said Abby Kallenbach, founder of Babes Helpin' Babes. "Pick Progress highlights the DEI issues that have long plagued our industry while shedding light on the unique experiences of Black creatives. I'm excited for the conversations that will come out this month and I hope it can act as a catalyst for reflection and change as companies continue to make necessary DEI changes."

Follow along with the Pick Posters series at pickprogressproject.com/about/pick-posters/.

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