



Indian Social Workers Association of Illinois

Press Release Statement

The Indian Social Workers Association of Illinois (ISWAI) is proud to announce that **Jahmal Cole** has been confirmed as the recipient of the inaugural **ISWAI Social Impact Award 2025**.

Jahmal Cole is a distinguished Chicago-based activist, author, and the Founder and CEO of My Block My Hood My City (M3), a transformative social impact organization established in 2013. Through his visionary leadership, Mr. Cole has consistently addressed the root causes of violence—poverty, isolation, and lack of opportunity—by expanding educational exposure for youth and fostering community-driven solutions that empower residents across Chicago.

His contributions have earned widespread recognition, including multiple honors as Chicago Reader Activist of the Year, Chicago Magazine’s Chicagoan of the Year, Chicago Defender Men of Excellence Honoree, and the American Red Cross Community Impact Hero Award. His life and work are also chronicled in the acclaimed documentary A Tiny Ripple of Hope.

Mr. Cole holds two honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degrees—from Adler University for his philanthropic leadership and from DePaul University for his lifelong dedication to serving Chicago’s youth and communities. Most recently, in one of his final acts in office, President Joseph R. Biden Jr. awarded him the President’s Volunteer Service Lifetime Achievement Award, recognizing his enduring commitment to civic engagement and community empowerment.

The Award will be presented on February 6th during the ISWAI Annual Gala. Through this award, ISWAI honors Jahmal Cole’s extraordinary leadership, compassion, and unwavering dedication to social justice, reflecting the transformative power of community-centered social action and ISWAI’s mission to advance equity, dignity, and collective well-being.

Linson Thomas
President

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Indian Social Workers Association of Illinois (Established 1999)

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