

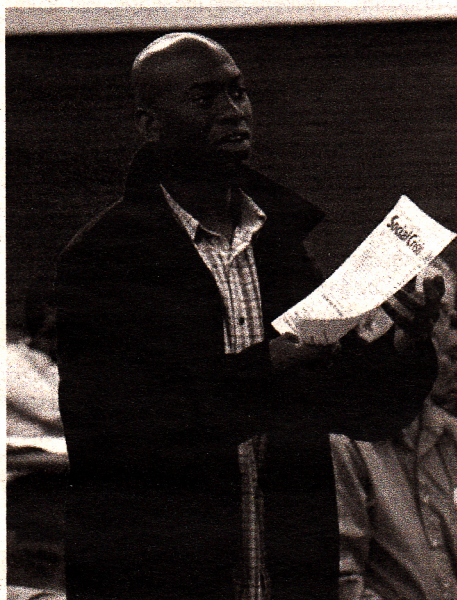
Two murders in Detroit

RIP Dimitrez Griffin, Coko Williams

BY JASON A. MICHAEL

At press time, *Between The Lines* is still gathering information on two separate killings that occurred over the past week in Detroit.

Dimetrez Griffin, 37, was found beaten to death in his apartment at the Leland Hotel March 28.



Dimitrez Griffin was found beaten to death March 28. Photo courtesy of Griffin family.

"My son was always very respectful to everybody," said Dorothy Cotton. "He always gave everybody a chance. That's why it hurts me so that they beat him like he did, because he wasn't a violent person at all."

Linda Noble first met Griffin more than a decade ago, when he came into the Horizon's Project.

"He was just a wonderful young man," she recalled. "He had a lot of bright ideas that he wanted to do. It took him a minute to get acclimated to what was happening with his life at that time. He had just been recently diagnosed when he was brought into my program."

The two kept in touch through the years

as Griffin went on to work with Mpowerment Detroit and become a leader with the Black Male Xchange. Griffin, friends say, was extremely socially conscience and had a love of the arts. He had recently formed his own company, DRG Productions.

"He wanted to break into the music industry," said friend Reggie Dior. "He wanted to be a producer. He was writing music with people."

Whether writing a song or a speech for a youth group, Griffin just wanted to be heard and to help.

"He was just a wonderful young man who was trying to make his mark in the world," Noble said. "He was trying to help and be an advocate for other young MSMs to help them be proud of who they were."

Visitation for Griffin will be this Friday at the Pye Funeral Home on the west side. Funeral services will be Saturday morning at God's House of Prayer, located at 12929 Joy Rd. in Detroit.

A suspect in this killing is believed to be in custody.

Coko Williams

A 35-year-old transgender woman, Coko Williams, was found shot to death in the 100 block of Parkhurst Street in Palmer Park, near the intersection of Woodward Avenue and McNichols (Six Mile) Road at about 5:30 a.m. Tuesday morning.

"We are saddened to hear of yet another life ended too soon," said Nusrat Ventimiglia, director of victim's services for Equality Michigan, in a statement. "Our thoughts go out to Ms. Williams' family and friends who have suffered a great loss. We urge anyone with information about Coko's killing to contact the Detroit Police."

Friends recalled Williams as a loner.

"She was really a sweet, quiet girl," said Dada, who had known Williams for the past 15 years and told BTL that she sometimes worked as a hair stylist. "She was never shady or nasty. She wasn't that type of girl at all. She was always respectful of herself and to other people. It's sad for her to go out the way she did."