

## Ronald Hummons

Ronald Hummons grew up on the rough streets of Over-the-Rhine in downtown Cincinnati. He attended Woodward High School where he dropped out in the 11th grade. His childhood, charged with poverty and abuse, led to his loneliness and eventual alienation from his peers. At age eleven, he ran away from his adopted father's house to live with his biological father. His real father was a drug addict addicted to heroin and cocaine. Influenced by his father, Hummons learned the street life in order to survive. Hummons wound up in prison by the time he was twenty-four where he served almost 7 years.



In prison, he sketched clothing designs to ward off frustration and boredom. Because of his offense, felonious assault, Hummons found it difficult to find a job after he was released from prison. He ended up homeless and desperate. While living on the streets, he made the decision to launch his clothing line. Ronald Hummons spent weeks in the Government and Business Department of the Cincinnati Library, researching business plans, patents, and distribution. He also attended classes offered by the Small Business Association. He wrote and sent out over 100 letters to investors; and eventually, several responded to his request and helped Hummons manufacture his first clothing samples in China. His clothing line, now known as Grapevine Collection, has released numerous lines including the C-town Apparel, OHIO HOME APPAREL and Dimepiece. "I left home with nothing but a vision," Hummons says. "I remember I laid on park benches and the alleys [near] the Elm Street Clinic with just my drawings, my Bible and a dream." -quoted in City Beat, "It's the Shoe," by Nichelle Bolden.

In 2015 Ronald would face the biggest tragedy he's ever experienced. Ronald's son Trepierre lost his battle to manic depression and committed suicide by cop. Ronald used this painful experience to educate himself on mental illness. He received his certification through N.A.M.I (National Association of Mental Illness) and a certification in Behavioral Disorders in D.C. Ronald had developed an app called #STRIKEBACK that will help people suffering from depression have tools at their fingertips to fightback against depression and suicidal thoughts.

Trepierre's story was more than suicide by cop. The tragedy didn't begin on June 19<sup>th</sup> 2015<sup>th</sup>, it started when Trepierre was 11 years old crying to a Child Protective Service caseworker to let him go with his dad while his mom and mom's boyfriend were being investigated for child abuse. The courts and CPS forced young Tre to grow up in a toxic environment filled with domestic violence, physical abuse, drugs abuse, and molestation by the hands of his mom and later to be husband. Now Ronald is speaking about the CPS to prison pipeline that has had a huge impact on young African American children.

Inspired by his son's death Ronald has written a bill called the Tre'P Law which will place an automatic protection order on kids whose parents or guardian are under investigation by Child Protective Services.

Ronald Hummons is available for speaking engagements. Ronald's speaking platform topics are:

- Mental Health
- Child Abuse
- Entrepreneurism
- Character Development
- Suicide Prevention
- Effects of Childhood Trauma