



Mr. Theodore Joseph (TJ) Crawford Clinical Social Worker and Coach

Theodore Joseph (TJ) Crawford, aka Coach Crawford, is a Hip Hop Generation, native born Chicagoan who has been intimately involved with the intricacies, power and production of Black Culture for more than two decades. After graduating from Morehouse College, the then hip hop emcee campaigned to bring a piece of Atlanta to Chicago, resulting in his being the City Manager responsible for the launch and ongoing management of mega-paper Rolling Out Chicago.

He founded the Hip Hop Political Action Committee in 2002, co-founded the National Hip Hop Political Convention in 2003, and produced the People for President Campaign and Mix CD for the 2004 presidential election. During that same year, TJ directed a civic engagement campaign that registered over 17,000 people within a 12 week time span. Subsequently, TJ chaired the Hip Hop Political Convention in Chicago, IL in 2006. From 2004 to 2009, he produced the THIS IS HIP HOP stage at the African Festival of the Arts, while also co-executive producing and co-hosting WVON's first Hip Hop Generation talk show, the MPR Report (Money. Power. Respect.)

In 2011, TJ created the founded and acted as the first Executive Director of Chicago VOTES. In 2013, he organized and led the team that wrote the curriculum for and launched Susan Taylor's National Cares Mentoring Movement's Harlan Rising, a high school based, group mentoring program. In 2018, after graduating with a Master's Degree in Social Work from Chicago State University, the moniker 'Coach Crawford' was born.

As a self-described 'brain coach', Coach Crawford is a clinical social worker servicing Black men and families on Chicago's South and West side. His passion for developing community and culturally competent approaches to mental health and community wellness led to the creation of Black Culture Week and the concept of Black Culture Wellness. Along with his work at the MAAFA Redemption Project at New Mt. Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church, Coach Crawford is the Director of the Garfield Park Rite To Wellness Collaborative, a collection of community stakeholders committed to building a healthy, wealthy and well Garfield Park.