

I'm Sandra Turner-Handy. I am a mother of six, a grandmother of nine and one great grandchild born and raised in the City of Detroit, and I am a community activist. The thing that most influenced me growing up was not a person, but an event. And it was the 1967 riots or rebellion, as they now call it. I can remember being on 12th Street as a kid and being allowed to walk without... I didn't have to have a parent with me because everybody knew who you were... they knew where you belonged... so you were good. And we had every store imaginable, the candy store, the ice cream shop, the supermarket, the restaurants, everything was right there in walking distance. And I can remember as a kid, as I watched it burning, it was a disbursement of community.

I had a little bit of stint of where I was working for a politician. So I began to really see the workings of a city. Raising my youngest son in a community where there was no playground – that was probably the most impactful thing for me, cause I always had to take him outside of the community. And that caused me to begin to work with young people at Denby High School, because these students were... as soon as I turn 18, I'm leaving the city... there's nothing here for me. And I literally cried with their rendition of their city... don't come here... you're gonna get raped, robbed, shot. It's about drugs. You know, I'm leaving... and it was like, my God, what have we created for our young people? So I begun working with the young people to transform their community. I do not expect the City of Detroit or my community to look the way of once looked. But I do expect it to be a city where people want to live, where they're safe, that's clean, that's healthy. I mean, the future to me is a not a rebound city, but a recreation of a city. And that's the future that I see.