

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Sincere Williams

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Tumultuous 2020* Oral History project

Interview # T20-A-L-2022-013

Sincere Williams, a high school senior in March 2020 and community organizer, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Tumultuous 2020* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Saturday, March 19, 2022      Location: Peoria, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Amanda Riggenbach, project manager ALPLM

Transcription by: \_\_\_\_\_

Edited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Transcript being  
processed.

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Time: 2:02 / 2.03 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on August 4, 2022

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

## Abstract

### Sincere Williams, *Tumultuous 2020*, T20-A-L-2022-013

**Biographical Information/Overview of Interview:** Sincere Williams was born in Orlando, Florida, in 2002. When he was seven years old, his family moved to Peoria, Illinois, where much of their extended family resided. Williams describes fond memories growing up in Peoria and going to the Dream Center Peoria's summer camps. His middle school experiences were difficult because he was bullied incessantly. He attended four different middle schools because of this. His experience at Richwoods High School was much more positive and he became involved in a variety of clubs and organizations, including the spring musical and the Minority Academic Advancement Project (MAAP). At the start of his senior year, he was president of MAAP and involved in ten other organizations. He was set to graduate and had applied to music conservatories to pursue a future in performance.

Williams outlines the start of his senior year and his vision for his future post-graduation. It was during the fall of 2019 that he took a government class. His teacher's lessons had such a strong impact on Williams that his goals shifted and he was inclined to pursue law. His work with MAAP also brought out a burgeoning passion for activism. When the COVID-19 pandemic brought about remote learning, Williams felt relief. For him, the loss of prom and other landmark events for high school seniors were not devastating. Rather, the lockdown allowed him to find a routine. By the time Williams graduated, he was eagerly anticipating his final summer with his peers and friends. However, the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, galvanized Williams and his friends. They organized a protest for May 29 and were shocked at the turnout of over 1,100 people. This inspired the group of young people to organize, and they became known as Young Revolution. Williams describes the attention they received from the media, city leadership and officials, and even Governor JB Pritzker. Williams outlines throughout the rest of the interview his experiences through the rest of the summer of 2020 and his experience with college as the COVID-19 pandemic continued on. Williams details his return to Peoria in the spring of 2021 and the way his experiences throughout 2020 shaped his current career path and goals.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** Peoria, Illinois; Richwoods High School; Minority Academic Advancement Project; MAAP; activism; Young Revolution; George Floyd; COVID-19 pandemic; COVID-19; *Tumultuous 2020*; *Tumultuous 2020* oral history

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