



VALENCIA GUNDER

Valencia Gunder is an eco-prenuer at EcoTech Vision, a Green Business Incubator in Liberty City, where she assists with community engagement with helping inform the community of opportunities of green jobs and free coding classes that are offered in her community. A Miami native of Bahamian descent, Gunder is the founder and executive director of Make the Homeless Smile Miami and Atlanta, whose mission is to provide resources, education, jobs, and housing to combat poverty and homelessness. Since its founding in 2014, MTHS has provided over 9,000 meals to the homeless.

Gunder has hosted and organized several different community initiatives and events in Liberty City including the Annual "I Am Woman" Women's Expo, and the annual "Hood Week" festival at the Belafonte-The Advisory Committee of Liberty City Youth (TACOLCY) Center, of which Gunder is a board member. She has also partnered with the CLEO Institution with leading the conversation around climate awareness in Liberty City, leading community forums that allow residents and local political figures to discuss concerns about sea level rise, emergency preparedness, and climate gentrification.

In July 2016, Gunder publically campaigned for an investigation into the shooting of Charles Kinsey, the unarmed caretaker of an autistic child, by the North Miami Police Department. Personal tragedy has recently driven Gunder to become an anti-gun violence activist. Her goddaughter, Jada Page, was shot and killed in northwest Miami-Dade County in August 2016. Since that time, Gunder has organized rallies calling for the identification of Jada's killers and an end to senseless gun violence in the community. In 2016, Legacy Miami Magazine recognized Gunder as one of its "40 Under 40 Black Leaders of Today and Tomorrow."