

## **Monique Wingard**

Monique Wingard is a media literacy scholar and educator whose research focuses on how adolescent girls develop critical thinking skills and navigate digital spaces.

Monique's commitment to service began in Dayton, Ohio, where she accompanied her grandmother on community-building efforts with the Southwest Priority Board. Deeply influenced by her grandmother's dedication to public service and intrigued by the power of widely distributed media as a tool for social change, she pursued a degree in Public Affairs Journalism from The Ohio State University, where she served as a Page with the Ohio House of Representatives and later as an intern on Capitol Hill with the Washington, D.C. Bureau of Tribune Broadcasting. Upon graduation, she received an Emerging Leader Citation from The Office of Student Life.

Her career has spanned traditional media, government service, and digital innovation. She worked at CBS Radio-Atlanta, served as a Fellow with the Ohio Senate's Legislative Service Commission under Senator Eric H. Kearney, and later joined McDonald's Corporation as part of its first corporate digital team. She earned a master's degree in Media Management from Ohio University, where she served as local anchor for PRI's The Takeaway on WOUB's television and radio stations. At 1871 Chicago, one of the nation's top innovation hubs, she worked on the communications team at the forefront of the startup economy. She later bolstered the digital media strategy of Urban Ministries Inc. (UMI), playing an integral role in the organization's continued transformation and global sales. In 2017, she founded SAVVY Consulting & Communications, helping women-led organizations strengthen their digital strategy and lead with clarity.

Monique has taught at Howard University, Cleveland State University, Ohio University, and Kent State University. Her courses include Principles of Social Media, Media and the Creative Process, Professional Communication, and Principles of Speech.

Her research and teaching emphasize a "pedagogy over panic" philosophy—equipping students with critical thinking skills rather than simply warning them away from technology. Her academic work examines how young people develop media literacy and news literacy skills, with particular attention to misinformation, representation, and ethical online engagement. She has presented at the Broadcast Education Association Annual Convention, the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) 50th Annual Convention, McCormick Theological Seminary, and on panels at Google Headquarters in Chicago, Northwestern University, and the University of Chicago. She organizes and presents annually at Ohio Tech Day: Welcome to the Future of Education at Cleveland Public Library's Main Campus, a statewide initiative to raise awareness about technology's role in Ohio's economy and to inspire the next generation of tech leaders.

Her writing has appeared in EBONY, Blavity, The New Territory Magazine, Code M Magazine, and WTTW-Chicago/PBS.

Throughout this journey, Monique has never lost her commitment to giving back. She previously served as Community Outreach Lead for Black Girls Code Chicago, an organization dedicated to increasing the number of women of color in the digital space by empowering girls to become innovators in STEM fields, leaders in their communities, and builders of their own futures through exposure to computer science and technology. The driving force behind her work is leading by example and encouraging young women to confidently pursue their academic and professional aspirations—especially those who are drawn to the creative and communications side of technology and can see the myriad of opportunities in the STEAM industries, from graphic designer and copy editor to digital media guru.

She holds an M.A. in Media Management from Ohio University, a B.A. in Public Affairs Journalism from The Ohio State University, and an M.S. in Social Science Administration from Case Western Reserve University. She is a member of Cleveland Bridge Builders Class of 2026, serves on the board of Girls on the Run Northeast Ohio, and was appointed by Ohio Governor Mike DeWine to serve as a Board Trustee at Kent State University. She is pursuing a Ph.D. in Communication and Information at Kent State University, where she serves as a Graduate Teaching Assistant in the School of Media and Journalism.

Monique is a long-time bibliophile with a collection of over 200 vinyl albums, a devoted aunt, "Xennial" (not Millennial), and unwavering Ohio State Football fan.