

# CRYSTAL R. EMERY

Producer | Director | Author | Activist  
crystalremery.com



Crystal Emery is known for producing narratives aimed at creating a more equitable society. She is the Founder and CEO of URU The Right To Be, Inc., a nonprofit content production company that addresses issues at the intersection of humanities, arts, and sciences. Emery is a member of the Producers Guild of America and New York Women in Film and Television, and was selected in 2019 as an AAAS IF/THEN Ambassador. She has designed and produced several groundbreaking Virtual Reality Learning Experiences.

Emery has been hailed as “inspiring” by the *Los Angeles Times* and as a “leader in science and technology” in the *Good Housekeeping* feature “50 over 50: Women Who Are Changing the World.” She has extensive publishing credits, both independently and with established publishers including in *TIME*, *Variety*, *Ms.Magazine.com*, *Rebecca Minkoff Superwoman* and *HuffPost*. Other published works include *Stat! An Action Plan for Replacing the Broken System of Recruitment and Retention of Underrepresented Minorities in Medicine with a New Paradigm*, published by the National Academy of Medicine; the unique biographical essay books *Against All Odds: Black Women in Medicine* and *Master Builders of the Modern World: Reimagining the Face of STEM*; and the first two volumes of her *Little Man* children’s book series.

Her body of work covers a broad range of topics, from diversity, inclusion and equity to children’s literature, sociopolitical issues and STEM. She has been a keynote speaker for distinguished institutions like the National Security Agency, National Institute of Health, National Organization on Disabilities, and RespectAbility. Recently, Crystal began production on “The Intersection of Crystal R. Emery”, a series of podcasts exploring Crystal’s life as a Black woman, filmmaker, writer, and a quadriplegic.

Her contributions have been recognized with numerous awards, including the Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust Leadership in Journalism Award, the BronzeLens Film Festival Spirit Award, the Trailblazer Award from NANBPWC and the United Nations as part of the International Year for People of African Descent, and the Yale University Seton Elm-Ivy Award.

She has appeared on TedX Beacon Street, where she spoke on the intersection of race, gender, and disability and participated as an expert panelist in the award-winning curated film series “Tell It Like It Is: Black Independence in New York 1968-1986” at the Lincoln Center. Emery served as a consultant to the Connecticut Health Foundation’s Dental Initiative and to former New Haven Public Schools superintendent Dr. Reginald Mayo. She currently sits on the City of

New Haven's mayoral Blue Ribbon Reading Commission, serving as co-chair of its Birth-Grade 3 Early Childhood Subcommittee.

In 2016, Emery's film "Black Women in Medicine" cleared all Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences requirements necessary to qualify for an Academy Award nomination in the "Best Documentary" category. "Black Women in Medicine" went on to international screenings in Ethiopia and Germany in 2018 as part of the American Film Showcase, which is considered the premier American film diplomacy program in the world.

In 2015, Emery conceived, designed and launched *Changing the Face of STEM*, an innovative national educational and workforce development initiative. In 2017, Emery, in conjunction with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, introduced *Changing the Face of STEM* at the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) in Washington, D.C. URU returned to the NAS for its third engagement on June 10, 2019, where Emery unveiled the "You Can't Be What You Can't See" Virtual Reality Project, aimed at closing the identification gap for young marginalized students within the STEM realm. IN 2019, Crystal lead URU in a successful effort to become a programmatic partner of 100Kin10, an organization formed in response to President Obama's call during his 2011 State of the Union address to train 100,000 new STEM teachers in a decade.

Emery believes that perseverance, faith, and trusting in a power greater than oneself comprise the road to success. She continues to shape a successful, fulfilling personal and professional life while triumphing over two chronic diseases as a quadriplegic.

Emery received her B.A. from the University of Connecticut, her M.A. in Media Studies from The New School of Public Engagement, and an honorary Doctorate of Letters from UConn in 2018, on which occasion she gave the Commencement Address to an audience of over 20,000. In so doing, she became the first Black female speaker at UConn's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the first commencement speaker to receive two standing ovations.