

MEMORANDUM

To: Dean Danielle Holley-Walker
From: Justin Hansford, Executive Director, Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center
Billi Wilkerson, Managing Director, Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center
Date: June 28, 2021
Re: End of Year Report on the Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center

Following is the end-of-year report for the Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center (“Center”). This report addresses the activities of the Center over the 2020/2021 academic year while (I) responding to the Howard University School of Law Strategic Plan (“Strategic Plan”); (II) highlighting the advocacy, organizing and scholarship goals of the Center’s strategic plan; (III) where appropriate, outlining the challenges faced by the Center; and (IV) highlighting the Center’s goals for the upcoming year.

Of special note is that, according to the Manager of Donor Relations and Stewardship, The Center received **\$2,120,448.40** in donations and pledges for the fiscal year as of 2020-2021, far exceeding the fundraising goal set last year of \$200,000. The Center also re-launched its new webpage <https://thurgoodmarshallcenter.howard.edu/>

I. The Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center’s Work in the Context of the Howard University School of Law Strategic Plan

The Center engages students through its connection to activities with the Clinic, with student workers, with summer interns, student volunteers, and pro bono counsel. Activities are relevant to the following priorities and goals:

a. *Priority 1, Goal #2: Enhancing the overall curriculum in the area of experiential learning (Academic Program)*

Clinic Activities.¹ The Civil Rights and Movement Lawyering Clinics taught 40 new students over the 2020/2021 academic year. The Clinics focused on exposing students to various forms of legal advocacy through both civil rights and human rights lenses. This year, cases included issues of police brutality, racial justice, rights of protestors, human rights, movement lawyering, and First Amendment rights. Student advocacy work included:

1. October 2020 - Students in the movement lawyering clinic co-drafted a summary white paper and co-hosted the final session of the Reimagining Police Stops workshop series. The Center collaborated with Georgetown Law’s Innovative Policing Program (IPP)² and The Lab@DC.³

¹ For more information on see the Clinical End of the Year Report

² *Innovative Police Program*, Georgetown Law, <https://www.law.georgetown.edu/innovative-policing-program/>.

³ *Georgetown Law Joins Partners The Lab@DC and Howard University For Final Day of Workshop Series to Reimagine Police Stops* (Oct. 21, 2020), <https://www.law.georgetown.edu/news/georgetown-law-joins-partners-the-lab-dc-and-howard-university-for-final-day-of-workshop-series-to-reimagine-police-stops/>.

2. October - December 2020 - Students in the movement lawyering clinic partnered with Life After Release, a movement-based group led by formerly incarcerated women, to advocate for criminal justice reform in Prince George's ("PG") County.
3. October 2020 - Testified before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights about police brutality in the wake of George Floyd's murder (the commission has now publicly condemned the police brutality in this case).⁴
4. November 2020 - the students in the Movement Lawyering Clinic drafted an affidavit in support of a lawsuit in the United Kingdom that is seeking to prevent the export of arms to the United States that would be used improperly.
5. December 2020 - The Movement Lawyering Clinic at Howard University School of Law released a fact-finding report titled Inside PG County Bond Hearings, detailing civil rights concerns they uncovered while observing bond hearings in Prince George's County, MD. Over the course of three months, law students in the Clinic collectively observed approximately 100 hours of bond hearings. Through these hearings, students discovered several troubling trends relating to due process rights, judicial ethics and conduct, and over-criminalization.⁵
6. February 26, 2021 - OHCHR Submission - Students in the movement lawyering clinic submitted a letter to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on behalf of Mike Brown's family foundation (Michael O.D. Brown "We Love Our Sons & Daughters" Foundation) on the "Promotion and protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of Africans and people of African descent against excessive use of force and other human rights violations by law enforcement officers."⁶
7. March 2021 - Re-Imagining Police Stops Workshop Series - Students participated in the October 2020 series to end violent police stops. Following the workshop series, the Clinic and the Center have continued ongoing work to develop policy recommendations in response to the views presented at the series.⁷
8. May 2021 - Students in the Movement Lawyering Clinic drafted a white paper - "*A Growing Dilemma: How Police Brutality Affects Mental Health in Black Communities*" to be revised, edited and published in the coming academic year.⁸
9. May 2021 - Dakota Pipeline Demonstration - the Center and the Civil Rights Clinic submitted a brief to the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals in support of Marcus Mitchell regarding his constitutional rights at the Dakota Access Pipeline in 2017 in support of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe.⁹

⁴ *Coalition of Human Rights and Social Justice Groups, Alongside Families of Victims of Police Violence, Set to Testify on Structural Racism and Police Brutality in the United States* (Oct. 6, 2021), <https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2020/10/06/2104557/0/en/Coalition-of-Human-Rights-and-Social-Justice-Groups-Alongside-Families-of-Victims-of-Police-Violence-Set-to-Testify-on-Structural-Racism-and-Police-Brutality-in-the-United-States.html> (On October 7, 2020 Justin Hansford testified on behalf of victims of police violence).

⁵ *New Report Finds Troubling Facts About Prince George's County Bond Hearings*, <http://law.howard.edu/content/new-report-finds-troubling-facts-about-prince-george%E2%80%99s-county-bond-hearings> (last visited June 7, 2021).

⁶ See Twitter, https://twitter.com/HU_TMCRC/status/1365338990178689029 (last visited June 9, 2021).

⁷ *Commission to reimagine police in District grapples with effort to defund* (March 21, 2021), https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/police-reform-washington-defund/2021/03/21/7e88e9f6-88a2-11eb-bfdf-4d36dab83a6d_story.html (The Center has been drafting recommendations following the workshop series during both the fall and spring semester in collaboration with The Lab @ DC. In April, a draft of the recommendations were shared with The Lab @ DC for comment and review. The recommendations will be published later this year.

⁸ "*A Growing Dilemma: How Police Brutality Affects Mental Health in Black Communities*" report is available upon request, on file with the Center.

⁹ *Marcus Mitchell v. Morton County Sheriff Kyle Kirchmeirer, et al.* Case No. 1:19 - CV149 Filed on May 24, 2021 in the U.S Court of Appeals for the 8th Circuit <https://thurgoodmarshallcenter.howard.edu/sites/theCenter.howard.edu/files/2021-05/Mitchell%20Brief%20as%20Filed.pdf>.

10. May 2021 - First Step Act (Crack Cocaine Disparity) - In May, 2021, the Center and the Civil Rights Clinic submitted a brief to the US Supreme Court in support of Ezralee Kelley regarding the proper scope of resentencing under Section 404(b) of the First Step Act of 2018.¹⁰

Students worked with faculty and experienced attorneys to review the trial court records, prepare memoranda, consult with clients, research and write briefs, memoranda, and human rights reports, and prepare and conduct oral argument and testimony when applicable. The pedagogical goal is for students and faculty to critically examine the analytical and linguistic challenges of effective advocacy, the legal and strategic considerations of lawyering in support of social movements in the civil and human rights context, the ethical and professional obligations of client representation, and the social and political implications of advocacy for civil and human rights. For the duration of the academic year, the global pandemic impacted in-person meetings, trainings, and events.¹¹ The team had to adjust to the logistics of working from home.

Student Engagement Activities and Campus Events. The Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center provided several quality experiences to the general student body through its events, collaborations and activities. The Center engages with students directly through work opportunities, volunteer opportunities, pro bono legal services, events and in other capacities. This engagement enhances the overall curriculum in the area of experiential learning. Activities that enhanced the overall experiential learning curriculum included:

1. September 3, 2020 - Webinar Honoring the historic International Human Rights Lawyer Gay McDougall
2. October 3, 2020 - April 9, 2021 - Justice Initiative events included training sessions attended by over 300 students and lawyers focusing on legal education, legal theory, critical race theory, systemic lawyering, and life as a systemic lawyer.¹²
3. October 10, 2020 - Early Vote Initiative Launched - Encouraged Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to get out and vote early through a social media campaign.¹³
4. January 8, 2021 - *Howard Law Town Hall Meeting: Attack on The Capitol: Where do we go from here?* The Center held a Howard Town Hall meeting hosted by Professor Justin Hansford, Professor Lisa Crooms Robinson, and Professor Adam Kurland to discuss the Jan. 6, 2020 attack on the United States Capitol by white supremacists and supporters of Donald Trump and the implications of the riot in relation for what it means for Black and Brown communities.
5. April 10, 2021 - *Reparations 2021 Conference*. Howard students and faculty helped to plan, promote and participate in the national strategy event discussing reparations advocacy, attended by participants from around the country
6. June 18, 2021- "*A Global Conversation on Reparations.*" Presented on Juneteenth 2021, the program includes African American human rights lawyers from the United States, Jamaica, and

¹⁰More information is available later in this report. See, Section II, Part 1: Advocacy, Amicus Briefs; To view the brief, visit: <https://thurgoodmarshallcenter.howard.edu/sites/tmrc.howard.edu/files/2021-05/EzraleeJKelleyVUnitedStates.pdf>.

¹¹ March 2020 until August 2021, the University was limited in capacity and function due to the global pandemic.

¹²Justice Initiative (JI) events are listed in Section b. Priority 2, Goal #2. For the short list of JI series of events, see Appendix I. A full 72 page report is available upon request.

¹³ HBCU Vote Early Twitter and Social Media campaign, see Twitter,

https://twitter.com/search?q=hbcu%20vote%20thurgood%20marshall%20&src=typed_query; see also, Report about the Center's partnerships, Twitter, https://twitter.com/nba_vld/status/1295495874769031172?s=21.

the United States, who detailed international human rights legal advocacy in support of reparations that has taken place over the last few decades around the world. Participants from multiple continents participated, as well as Howard University School of Law Students.

Thurgood Marshall Center Summer Internship Program.¹⁴

The Center supervised six full-time interns over the summer of 2020, and three over the course of 2021. Three of the interns were fully-funded using Center funds and three of the interns were funded through the Summer Systems Institute at Harvard Law School. All six interns worked collaboratively and under the supervision of the Center with guidance from Justin Hansford and Tasnim Motala on projects including responses to the George Floyd protests, the COVID-19 pandemic, and other human rights and civil rights issues.

The Center's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Following the release of the report on the COVID-19 pandemic:¹⁵

- a. Tasnim Motala and a student intern filed compassionate release motion¹⁶ June 2020. The case involved FCI Fort Dix, a federal prison in New Jersey. Our client was a grandfather with pre-existing conditions that left him particularly vulnerable to negative complications that could result from contracting COVID-19.
- b. Summer interns at the Center worked alongside the grassroots organization Gasping for Justice, as well as multiple public defenders throughout PG County, and submitted an advocacy letter to the PG County State's Attorney urging the office to take necessary steps to mitigate the harm caused by COVID-19 to incarcerated individuals detained inside the PG County Jail and address the inadequate measures taken by public officials to protect incarcerated individuals from the virus.

Center's Response to the George Floyd Protests¹⁷

By facilitating law student, staff, and faculty involvement in the George Floyd protests through legal observer training and other coordination activities, the Center contributed greatly to the law school's capacity to adhere to its mission of serving as a leader of social justice in the law school context. Here are the highlights:

¹⁴ Summer interns' activities are incorporated into the list of center and clinic activities. A full list of interns and activities is available upon request.

¹⁵ See *The Contradiction of Colorblind COVID-19 relief*, <https://thurgoodmarshallcenter.howard.edu/issues/contradiction-color-blind-covid-19-relief> (last visited June 7, 2021).

¹⁶ Memorandum in Support of Motion to Reduce Sentencing, <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1JRivWPhBzhGHUlyNfwuu-nFkZspBXXqoZz9LNhlig6E/edit> (a student attorney and a teaching fellow worked on the motion to request release from prison during the height of the COVID pandemic).

¹⁷ The Center's responses to the George Floyd protests were included in the 2019/2020 Annual report.

- c. June 2020 - Submitted a successful FOIA request with the DC government that revealed that 66% of all arrests during the Black Lives Matter protests were of people of color.
- d. In June 2020, students drafted and sent letters to members of the United Nations Human Rights Council urging members to take action regarding systemic racism within law enforcement.¹⁸
- e. July 2020 - Drafted a letter urging DC officials to drop the charges against Black Lives Matters protesters, which disproportionately impacted Black and Brown individuals.
- f. July 2020 - Reviewed police union contracts for the Police Union Contract Project in an effort to increase accountability for police misconduct
- g. Hosted multiple legal observer training for over 200 lawyers/students to support protesters.¹⁹
- h. Posted updates on social media, including Twitter and Instagram.²⁰

b. Priority 2, Goal #2: Enhance the Overall Student Experience

A goal of the Center is to remain student-centered in its programming. During the pandemic, the Center engaged with students virtually while expanding and improving its programming. The following specific initiatives the Center undertook to enhance the overall student experience at Howard Law:

Justice Initiative

The Center’s partnership with Harvard Law’s Systemic Justice Project expanded into a year-long pilot program that enhanced the overall student experience for 1Ls, 2Ls, and 3Ls as well as recent graduates and PreL’s. During the Summer of 2020, the pandemic forced institutions across the country to reimagine internships. The Center partnered with Harvard Law’s Systemic Justice Project to offer summer programming. Several Howard Law students participated in the SJP program. On the heels of the success of the summer program, the partnership launched a one-year pilot campaign exploring the various ways lawyers, law students, faculty, activists and organizations can collaborate to address systemic social justice issues. The pilot began October 3, 2020 and ended on April 9, 2021.

1. October 3, 2020 - April 9, 2021. JI provided over 30 hours of training that included trauma-informed lawyering, mindfulness, and dealing with psycho-somatic responses to clients in need of support, legal theory, critical race theory, curriculum evaluation, and much more. Howard Law students became deeply engaged in the program. Guest speakers included Kimberly Crenshaw, Dr. Cornel West, Cheryl Harris, K-Sue Park, Purvi Shaw and many others.
2. January 6 Capitol Riot Response Session. Co-facilitated a discussion amongst law students, practicing attorneys, activists and law school faculty in response to the storming of the Capitol on

¹⁸ See https://thurgoodmarsh-5hu8960.slack.com/files/U014LCMT9PH/F015PDJ9G1Z/original_letter_.docx

¹⁹ *At NYC Protests, A New Collective Of Black Legal Observers*, <https://www.law360.com/articles/1287917/at-nyc-protests-a-new-collective-of-black-legal-observers> (HUSL alum Nnamdia Gooding and Sirica McInosh participated in BLOC- Black Legal Observer training before supporting protests in New York City).

²⁰ *Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center News – June 2020*, <http://law.howard.edu/content/thurgood-marshall-civil-rights-center-news—june-2020> (law student protesters were featured in a news story that was reposted by HUSL).

January 6th. The conversation provided an opportunity for those who wanted to share their thoughts and reflections to attend and join the conversation, including Kendra Albert, Deanna Pantin Parrish, Titilayo Rasaki, and Saru Matambanadzo. Over 100 students participated in the event.

AARN - The African American Redress Network

The African American Redress Network (AARN) is a project which seeks to advance the movement for reparations for African American communities through research, education, and technical assistance to local grassroots organizations. AARN is a collaborative project between the Institute for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia University, and the Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center. It engages experts, researchers, grassroots organizers, and other individuals working across the country to advance the movement for reparations for African Americans. To properly study the gross wrongs of enslavement, dispossession, and institutionalized anti-Black violence, AARN utilizes a human rights framework. Building off of United Nations General Assembly [Resolution 60/147](#) and [guidance by the International Commission of Jurists](#).

AARN continued its programming during the pandemic.²¹ The African American Racial Redress Network is an innovative model for scholars and advocates to further groundbreaking work in activism and to promote redress for U.S. historical racial injustices by undertaking and facilitating interdisciplinary research, capacity-building, education, and advocacy. The project is a collaboration between Columbia University's Institute for the Study of Human Rights and Howard University's Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center.

1. **Programs and Activities.** After a successful pilot project documented more than 100 local efforts to redress historical racist incidents along the Atlantic Coast,²² the AARN expanded its efforts in 2021.²³ Initial research performed by ISHR identified over 350 local redress initiatives aimed to confront the legacies of slavery, lynching, and racism. The network launched a new website with an interactive map on Juneteenth 2020.²⁴

The Network currently consists of over 200 members from 30 states and includes activists, scholars, and artists working in the field of redress. Members represent a diversity of institutions and approaches for pursuing racial justice, including remembrance projects, government-sponsored reparation ordinances, land

²¹ Twitter, <https://twitter.com/columbiafaculty/status/1326965737366282240?s=21> (Twitter post related to collaboration between the Center at Howard and ISHR at Columbia, "Universities, Communities, and Racial Redress") (last visited June 7, 2021); See also, *Seed Grant Award: Universities, Communities and Racial Redress*, <https://provost.columbia.edu/content/seed-grant-award-universities-communities-and-racial-redress> (last visited June 7, 2021).

²² *The IACHR expresses strong condemnation for George Floyd's murder, repudiates structural racism, systemic violence against Afro-Americans, impunity and the disproportionate use of police force, and urges measures to guarantee equality and non-discrimination in the United States* (June 8, 2020), https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2020/129.asp (From June 2020 - April 2021, the impact of the AARN grew exponentially).

²³ African American Redress Center, <https://redressnetwork.org/resource-center/> (last visited June 7, 2021) (AARN created a state contact list, a literature reference list, a summary of government redress efforts, a list of national organizations, and a reparation toolkit).

²⁴ To view the interactive map, see African American Redress Center, <https://redressnetwork.org/redress-map/> (last visited June 7, 2021).

preservations, and museums.

2. **Reparations 2021 Conference.** In the Spring semester, the Center partnered with Columbia University to host AARN's first convening of the year.

Reparations 2021 brought together grassroots organizers, government representatives, researchers, and students to discuss local reparations efforts in the U.S. and consider ways to build strong partnerships moving forward. The conference created a space for individuals and organizations to learn from one another and grow in their efforts to secure racial justice at the local level. Afternoon working sessions provided an opportunity to share and collaborate on local redress efforts. The breakout groups focused on Politics, Legislation, & Litigation; Advocacy & Organizing; Research & Documentation; and Education & Awareness Raising.

3. **Launched a New Website:** <https://redressnetwork.org/>

Human and Civil Rights Strategy Sessions.

- a. Five Strategy Sessions with United Nations and human rights advocates.
- b. Bi-weekly working Sessions with think tanks and strategic working groups on First Amendment protections. .

c. Priority 2, Goal #3: Increase Mentoring and Advising for all Students

Currently, the Center informally and collaboratively offers support to students through mentoring, providing career advice and assistance, and volunteering and participating in special events.

1. Justice Initiative's Career Forum - In January 2021, Justice Initiative hosted an event where former Harvard Law School director of public interest career advising (Alexa Shabecoff) collaborated with experts to create a unique opportunity for law students to undergo intensive public interest job search skills training. Participants included: Carmia N. Caesar (Howard University Law School, Assistant Dean of Career Services); Renay Frankel (Northeastern University Law School, Associate Director for Public Interest and Government at NUSL's Center for Co-op & Career Development); Rochelle McCain (University of Pittsburgh Law School, Executive Director, Professional Development Office); Catherine Pattanayak (Harvard Law School, Assistant Dean for Public Service); and Melanie Rowen (Berkeley Law School, Associate Director for Public Interest/Public Sector Programs).²⁵

²⁵ Full report is available upon request.

- d. Priority 3, Goals #1 - #4 Faculty: Support teaching excellence and innovation that prepared students to be effective ethical lawyers.*

Justice Hansford, Law Professor

While serving as the Executive Director of the Center and supervising attorney for the Movement Lawyering Clinic, Professor Justin Hansford ensured that the activities and educational experiences for the clinical students were enriched by the Center's project and initiatives. While establishing the Center as a thought leader in civil and human rights, the clinical students often collaborated on the Center's projects, with the distinction that the clinical work focused on pedagogical objectives for the students, while the center's work focused on output for the benefit of the community.

Tasnim Motala, Teaching Fellow

While serving as a Teaching Fellow of the center and supervising attorney for the Movement Lawyering Clinic, Tasnim Motala supervised numerous Howard Law students over various Center projects and trained the students to fight against police brutality, mass incarceration, and unconstitutional prison conditions. Along with her students, Tasnim spoke before international human rights tribunals and state and federal courts, as well as worked with community groups, to advocate for their causes. While serving as a Teaching Fellow with the Center through present date, Tasnim has, and continues to, serve as an invaluable mentor to her students.

Faculty Collaboration

1. Carlton Waterhouse²⁶ - Professor Waterhouse collaborated with the Center on its work on reparations and the intersection between environmental law, protest law and civil rights.
2. Gregg Carr²⁷ - Professor Carr teaches at both the law school and main university. Dr. Carr serves on the steering committee for the AARN and advises the Center. He also promotes events to students in his classes.
3. Robin Konrad²⁸ - Professor Konrad collaborated with the Center on issues relating to mass incarceration and compassionate release.

²⁶ To learn more about Carlton Waterhouse visit: <http://law.howard.edu/faculty-staff/carlton-waterhouse> (last visited June 7, 2021).

²⁷ To learn more about Gregg Carr: <https://gs.howard.edu/content/greg-e-carr> (last visited June 7, 2021).

²⁸ To learn more about Robin Konrad: <https://habeasinstitute.org/robinkonrad> (last visited June 7, 2021).

4. Bahiyyah Muhammad²⁹ - Professor Muhammad collaborates with the Center in its work on prison censorship and rights of prisoners.
5. Lisa Crooms Robinson - Professor Crooms Robinson collaborates with the Center on issues related to constitutional law and policy. She also helped with discussions in the aftermath of the January 6th Riot on Capitol Hill.
6. Adam Kurland - Professor Kurland collaborated with the Center on issues related to criminal justice. He has assisted with multiple amicus briefs submitted by the Center to the Supreme Court.
7. Tiffany Wright - Adjunct Professor and Supervising Attorney for the Howard University Civil Rights Clinic

e. Priority 4, Goals #3: - Enhance our JD Student's Exposure to International Law

1. **Promotion of the UN Decade for People of African Descent.** The UN Decade or the International Decade for People of African Descent (IDPAD) refers to a multi-year commitment from the United Nations to address improving the condition of people of African descent throughout the diaspora. Following the Mid Decade Summit that the Center hosted at Howard University School of Law, our team was included in the planning sessions in 2020 and 2021. Despite the pandemic, the connections built during the summit continued to foster growth and opportunities for the team at Howard to continue to engage via Zoom in strategic planning meetings.
2. **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Kerry McLean.** Kerry McLean is a prominent international human rights attorney who has been an advocate for the rights of people of African descent.³⁰ The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights collaborated with the Center to provide objectives for this work.
3. **Commission of Inquiry advocacy** - In response to a call for inputs pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 43/1, the Center submitted a letter on behalf of the Michael O.D. Brown “We Love Our Sons and Daughters” Foundation. The Center advocates for the recognition of reparative measures directly focusing on the mental health impact of police violence as critical to the High Commissioner’s call for reparations. The Center’s recommendations include establishing a commission to investigate the effects of police violence on black mental health and creating a national fund that subsidizes or completely covers the cost of mental health counseling for victims and other affected community members. The OHCHR resolution calls for the “Promotion and protection of the

²⁹ To learn more about Bahiyyah Muhammad: <https://gs.howard.edu/content/bahiyyah-muhammad> (last visited June 7, 2021).

³⁰ *Isn't Freedom from Police Brutality a Human Right?* (March 15, 2021), <https://www.laprogressive.com/freedom-from-police-brutality/> (quoting Kerry McLean).

human rights and fundamental freedoms of Africans and of people of African descent against excessive use of force and other human rights violations by law enforcement officers.”³¹

4. **Advocacy at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)**

- a. **Hearings.** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, hearings and public sessions were held remotely. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) called a public hearing and on October 2, 2020, the Center, in collaboration with the Center for Justice & Accountability, submitted a letter to the acting executive secretary of the IACHR highlighting harms related to police violence, the need for reparations, intergenerational trauma, and remedies.³²
- b. **Petition.** Drafted a petition in collaboration with RFK Human Rights on behalf of Michael Brown and Lezley McSpadden for violations of international human rights law to be submitted to the Commission.³³ The petition will be submitted within the coming months. Due to the COVID pandemic, submissions and interactions were via Zoom.

5. **“A Global Conversation on Reparations.”** Presented on Juneteenth 2021, the program includes African American human rights lawyers from the United States, Jamaica, and the United States, who detailed international human rights legal advocacy in support of reparations that has taken place over the last few decades around the world. Participants from multiple continents participated, as well as Howard University School of Law Students.

6. **Using the International Human Rights Framework for Domestic Advocacy.**

Students at the Center were exposed to international human rights law as a tool for addressing structural racism, and their work reflects this perspective, whether that involved working on issues of police violence, as was done in the petition to the UN High Commissioner on behalf of the Mike Brown’s family foundation, mass incarceration, as in revising the report on book banning in prisons to address violations from both a First Amendment and international human rights perspective,

³¹ *Oral update by the High Commissioner for Human Rights on implementation of A/HRC/RES/43/1: Promotion and protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of Africans and of people of African descent against excessive use of force and other human rights violations by law enforcement officers* (March 19, 2021),

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=26921&LangID=E>.

³² US Human Rights Network (Oct. 6, 2020), <https://ushrnetwork.org/uploads/Documents/the-Center-and-CJA-Submission-on-Reparations-For-Police-Violence.pdf> (letter which includes the names of Movement Lawyering Clinic Student Attorneys).

³³ *The IACHR expresses strong condemnation for George Floyd's murder, repudiates structural racism, systemic violence against Afro-Americans, impunity and the disproportionate use of police force, and urges measures to guarantee equality and non-discrimination in the United States*, (June 8, 2020), https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2020/129.asp.

or reparations, whether it involves our partnership with the United Nations, or the Institute for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia University.³⁴

II. Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center advocacy, organizing and scholarship

Advocacy:

1. **Pro Bono Partnerships.** The Center engaged with several law firms and established agreements for providing pro bono support. The list of law firms included [Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP](#), [Arent Fox](#), and Foley & Lardner.

- a. **Amicus Briefs.** The *Kelley v. United States* amicus brief was submitted to the Supreme Court of the United States in hopes that the court would grant certiorari. The brief advocates that federal courts should broadly interpret the First Step Act when reviewing resentencing petitions for crack cocaine offenses.

The *Mitchell v. Kirchmeier* Amicus Brief was submitted to the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals in support of Marcus Mitchell, who brought claims alleging violations of his First, Fourth, and Fourteenth Amendment rights related to law enforcement's use of excessive force against him during his participation in the Dakota Access Pipeline demonstrations in 2017.

- b. **Legal Support for Evanston, Illinois Reparations Initiative.** Along with the Columbia University Institute for the Study of Human Rights and the African American Redress Network, the Center drafted a letter in support of the Evanston City Council's resolution promoting economic justice by setting aside \$10 million generated from cannabis sales to fund housing and economic development programs for the city's Black residents.³⁵

³⁴ The Institute for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia University, in their 2020 annual report states, "The assessment of these initiatives were framed within the international human rights law frameworks as defined by Resolution 60/147 and the International Commission of Jurists to include restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction, and guarantees of non-repetition. Existing public redress efforts within the network fall mostly under the category of *satisfaction*, namely apologies, truth-seeking initiatives through historical research and preservation, and commemorations and monuments that shift the historical narrative."

³⁵ *Letter to Evanston City Council Regarding Reparations Measure* (March 22, 2021), <https://thurgoodmarshallcenter.howard.edu/sites/tmcr.howard.edu/files/2021-05/Letter%20re%20Evanston%20II.%2003.22.2021.pdf>; *See also*, Twitter, https://twitter.com/hu_tmcr?lang=en (last visited June 7, 2021); Twitter, https://twitter.com/hu_the_center/status/1374404015186866183?s=21; Twitter, https://twitter.com/hu_tmcr/status/1374404015186866183?s=21 (stating, "The Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center stands with Evanston City Council. We are proud to be in continued support of their

- c. **Reimagining Police Stops:** Drafted policy recommendations to re-imagine police stops in Washington, D.C. and nationally based on 2020 Workshop Series; research and discussion on providing mental health services for victims and families of victims of police brutality.
2. **Original Reports Published by Thurgood Marshall Center Students and Interns**
- a. [*A Growing Dilemma: How Police Brutality Affects Mental Health in Black Communities*](#)
 - b. [*The Contradiction of Colorblind Covid Relief*](#)
3. **Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center Media and Speaking Engagements:**
- a. CNBC Interview on Police Unions, [*Police Unions And The Fight To Reform Law Enforcement*](#), June 26, 2020
 - b. Insight Into Diversity, [*Law Schools Have Started a Criminal Justice Reform Movement*](#), June 24, 2020
 - c. The Root, The Problem with Police Unions, [*A World of Impunity: How Police Unions Block Meaningful Change and Exert Control*](#), July 9, 2020
 - d. WBUR, [*The Origins of the Extremist ‘Boogaloo’ Movement*](#), July 10, 2020
 - e. International Bar Association, [*Black Lives Matter: reviewing US systemic racism under CERD and CAT*](#), July 17, 2020
 - f. Howard Newsroom, [*Racial Justice Groups Urge Lawmakers to Address Structural Racism in Coronavirus Relief*](#), July 28, 2020
 - g. NBC4 Washington, [*Racial Justice Group Calls on Congress to Address Racism in COVID Relief*](#), August 6, 2020
 - h. National Bar Association Young Lawyers Division, Report About the Center, August 15, 2020
 - i. Thurgood Marshall Center, [*HBCU Vote Early*](#), October 10, 2020
 - j. Washington & Lee University School of Law, [*Keynote*](#), October 29, 2020, [*Twitter posts*](#)
 - k. Columbia Faculty Advancement, Universities, Communities, and Racial Redress, November 12, 2020
 - l. The Washington Informer, [*Georgia Election, D.C. Riots Hold Many Public Policy Teachable Moments*](#), January 13, 2021 January - The Washington Informer
 - m. Northeastern University CSSH Human Services, [*The 2021 Valerie Gordon Human Rights Lecture*](#), February 22, 2021
 - n. NBC News4 at 6, [*WRC-DC \(NBC\)*](#), March 29, 2021

reparations efforts with Columbia University’s Institute for the Study of Human Rights. Included is a letter from our Executive Director, Justin Hansford”) (last visited June 7, 2021).

- o. Institute for the Study of Human Rights, [Reparations 2021](#), April 10, 2021
- p. Forbes, [‘These Are Difficult Cases To Win’: Here’s What Legal Experts Think About Prosecution’s Case Against Derek Chauvin](#), April 12, 2021
- q. 94.1 KPFA, [The Derek Chauvin Trial, Racism & The Law](#), April 13, 2021 ([Radiolab](#)); BBC World Service Radio,
- r. UCCHRE, [Pedagogy and Projects Series: Teaching for Racial Justice with Justin Hansford](#), April 16, 2021
- s. WUSA9, *VERIFY: [What’s in the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act?](#)*, April 22, 2021
- t. Al Jazeera Media View, [Al Jazeera English Piece](#)
- u. VOA News, [George Floyd Protests Sparked Changes in Public, Private Sectors](#), May 19, 2021
- v. Global News, Global National, [Optimism and skepticism about progress on racial justice one year after George Floyd’s murder](#), May 25, 2021
- w. MPT, [Conversations for Change](#), May 27, 2021
- x. MSNBC, [The Country’s First Municipal Reparations Program is off to a Rocky Start](#), June 2, 2021
- y. NBC4, [Howard University Law Professor Discusses Derek Chauvin’s Sentence](#), June 25, 2021

Organizing:

1. Community Partnerships

- a. Michael O.D. Brown “We Love Our Sons & Daughters” Foundation
- b. American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
- c. Center for Constitutional Rights
- d. RFK Human Rights
- e. Law 4 Black Lives, DC
- f. Defending Rights and Dissent
- g. The Center for Media Justice
- h. National Lawyers’ Guild
- i. Gasping for Justice
- j. National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education

2. Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs)

- a. [MOU](#) with Foley & Lardner LLP
- b. [MOU](#) with The Leadership Conference Education Fund
- c. [MOU](#) with Arent FOX LLP
- d. [MOU](#) with Columbia University’s Institute for the Study of Human Rights African American Research Network
- e. [MOU](#)/ Fellowship Agreement with Orrick regarding Jade Gasek

- f. [MOU](#)/ Fellowship Agreement with Orrick regarding Ciarra Carr

III. Challenges to the Center

1. HR Systems. Our success has led to an increased capacity need for more agile and functional operations systems. Currently, the HR onboarding process is cumbersome and results in significant delays. For example, a student worker who began processing her documentation for payment during her summer employment did not receive her paycheck until November, putting her in an environment of great financial hardship. We hope that a program of reform of these systems can be instituted to make them more functional.

2. Financial Affairs. The Center hopes to continue to explore ways to increase the efficiency of financial affairs. This includes increasing fiscal transparency and engaging in reform in the procedures required for the processing of expenses. For example, an organizational partner was excited to work with the Center and who completed her consultant paperwork in January, and finished the project in February, did not receive payment until October. Another partner entered an agreement to complete a project with the United Nations Decade for People of African Descent in April of 2020 and has not received the payment contracted. These concerns are raised not out of impatience but because of the damage to the reputation of the center and the law school of these delays, a further concern in a fundraising intensive environment where the trust in the operations of our institution is a factor upon which we are evaluated.

IV. Goals for the Coming Year

Create a 3 year strategic plan that captures increased capacity and access to resources. This planning process should include the dean's office, the board of advisors, faculty and staff from both the law school and the main campus, and student representatives to ensure that the center maximizes its potential as it begins expansion based on newfound capacity.

Retain newly acquired funders. Towards the end of the fiscal year, one of our first time funders, J.P. Morgan Chase, not only funded for a second time but increased their funding amount by nearly 50% based on the work product of the Center over the course of the year. One of the primary goals for this year is to retain at least 50% of the funders from the previous year.

Support the Launch of the John Carlos Sports and Social Justice Center and/or a Howard Voting Rights Center. The Center has been approached with the opportunity to partner with two multi-million dollar efforts to contribute to the law school. The John Carlos Sports and Social Justice Center is an effort to renovate a building to create a center to house the Thurgood Marshall Center and a center focusing on sports and social justice. The Howard Voting rights center is another multimillion dollar proposal spearheaded by the former President of Morehouse University and Harvard Law School partners. These two efforts could result in over 10 million dollars raised in support of center involved efforts, and could be integral in helping to establish an endowment for the center that is sustainable over the long term.

Appendix I

Justice Initiative Events - From October through April, events were held. Here is a list of speakers and events. A full description is available upon request.

10/3 - Session 1 (Legal Education)

10/17 - Session 2 (Legal Theory 1)

Khiara M. Bridges; Sara Matambanadzo; Etienne Toussaint

10/24 - Session 3 (Legal Theory 2)

Kimberle Crenshaw

11/7 - Session 4 (1L Curriculum)

Natasha Bannon; Ruby-Beth Buitekant; Sarah Sadlier

1/12 - Special Session in Response to Jan. 6 Riot on Capitol Hill

1/30 - Session 5 (CRT Part II)

Professor K-Sue Park; Cheryl Harris

2/6 - Session 6 (Systemic Lawyering)

Tara K. Ramchandani; Alec Karakatsanis; Christian Lassiter

2/20 - Session 7 (Systemic Lawyering)

Lisa Washington; Esme Caramello; Andrew Free; John Mathews; Alana Greer; Bianca Tylek

3/6 - Session 8 (Life as a Systemic Lawyer)

Whitney Benns; Deanna Pantin Parrish; Lindsey Whyte; Titilayo Rasaki; Phil Torrey; Joe Washington; Maya Ragsdale; Connie Cho

3/13 - Session 9 (Student-led Session)

Justin Hansford; Purvi Shah; Saru Matambanadzo; Cornel West

Appendix II

Howard University School of Law's mission is consistent with providing the professional leadership necessary to advocate and defend the rights of all, but particularly African-Americans and other minorities. The law school's mission is to:

1. Educate and enable students to develop their highest capabilities and skills as lawyers;
2. Engage as an institution in the active pursuit of solutions to domestic and international legal, social, economic and political problems that are of particular concern to minority groups; and
3. Imbue its students with dedication to excellence and commitment to the solutions to those problems.

To achieve its mission of academic excellence and social justice, the law school has adopted the following specific goals:

► Provide a collegial environment that encourages and supports legal research and scholarship by faculty members and students, not through a different course of instruction, but with a concentration in subjects having direct application to finding legal solutions to human and social problems in the United States and throughout the world.

► Continue the unique and distinctive place of the HUSL general legal education community, while serving the nation and global community, especially African Americans and other people of color.

► Develop administrators, faculty and staff members, students, and alumni who have a sincere appreciation of and commitment to the institution's civil rights legacy and acknowledge responsibility to serve the community at large.

► Provide a comprehensive and challenging course of study that enables our students to develop and to excel in the skills, values, and professionalism needed to become effective advocates and leaders. As an increasingly important part of this course of study, we have continued to expand our pedagogical methods, including experiential learning techniques and opportunities for students to interact with the legal community in the nation's capital. Those efforts serve to meaningfully augment and enrich our core educational objectives.

Howard University School of Law vision stems from our mission statement and goals. Our vision, in short, represents the implementation of our mission through our established goals. After establishing our mission statement, we have identified the following set of goals that will help us elaborate on a concise vision that flows with our mission statement. This elaboration forms the vision.

Holding fast to these commitments, this document represents a short-term plan to guide the School of Law over a period of five years. The vision was drafted in 2015/16.

Appendix III

Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs)

- a. [MOU](#) with Foley & Lardner LLP
- b. [MOU](#) with The Leadership Conference Education Fund
- c. [MOU](#) with Arent FOX LLP
- d. [MOU](#) with Columbia University's Institute for the Study of Human Rights African American Research Network
- e. [MOU](#)/ Fellowship Agreement with Orrick regarding Jade Gasek
- f. [MOU](#)/ Fellowship Agreement with Orrick regarding Ciarra Carr

Appendix IV

Preliminary Fiscal Report as of June 14, 2021³⁶

³⁶ The fiscal year ends on June 30, 2021 and the provided preliminary report is subject to change.