

## MEMO

To: Danielle Holley, Dean of Howard University School of Law  
From: Justin Hansford, Executive Director, Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center  
Date: April 15, 2023 (DRAFT – Final Due by end of the Fiscal Year)  
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 2022/2023 academic year while (1) responding to the Howard University School of Law Strategic Plan (“Strategic Plan”); (2) highlighting the advocacy, organizing and scholarship goals of the Center’s strategic plan; (3) where appropriate, outlining the challenges faced by the Center; and (4) highlighting the Center’s goals for the upcoming year.

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

The TMCRC activities are relevant to the following priorities and goals:

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

**The Center’s Support of Clinic Activities.** The staff in the center work closely with clinic students to support their projects. This includes facilitation of interactions with clients, and publication of student driven work product. The staff also routinely provides mentorship and counseling to students interested in civil rights and human rights careers.

The Movement Lawyering Clinic enrolled 13 students in Fall 2022 and 9 students in Spring 2023. The clinic exposed students to various forms of legal advocacy through a movement lawyering lens. This year’s cases included issues of police brutality on both domestic and international levels, equal access to education and bans against critical race theory, environmental justice issues, reparations, criminal justice reform, and First Amendment issues.

The students in the Fall Movement Lawyering Clinic were Kayla Gardner, David Carter, Ashtyn DeWalt, Talia Thomas, Precious Patterson, Dominique Hall, Jarrius Adams, Amma Boateng, Kierra Booker, Charkera Ervin, Samantha Jeffrey, Jessa Royer, and Ashley Washaya (Panache). Students in the Spring Movement Lawyering Clinic were Caelah Chavis, Dasia Moore, Kajwane Roland, Layton Rodwell, Leandre Alexandre, Nandi Bryan, Precious Patterson, Ayanna Watkins, and Sage Stewart.

The pedagogical goal of the Clinic is to train students in movement lawyering practice. This includes legal and strategic considerations relevant for 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.

The Center also collaborated with the Howard Energy & Environmental Law Society (HEELS), the Howard University Education Rights Center (ERC), Civil Rights Clinic, the African Law Students Association, and other student organizations on campus to work on various cases and projects.

**Externship.** For the first time, the Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center participated in the law school's Externship Program. Two students, Harun Al-Hijaz (Shaq) and Awa Nyambi, gained real life Movement Lawyering and non-profit leadership experience.

Student Attorney Harun (Shaq) Al-Hijaz – connected with the campaign to exonerate Marcus Garvey and published an OpEd [article](#) in CNN news, co-authored by Professor Justin Hansford.

Student Attorney Awa Nyambi – connected Awa's experience in corporate finance with his interest in civil rights to support fundraising activities. He created a fundraising email which went out to alumni, as well as helped to update our Thurgood Marshall center website.

**Thurgood Marshall Center Internship Program.** The Center supervised several unpaid undergraduate interns and one student worker during the summer of 2022. Each semester, a grant from the Rockefeller foundation allowed for two students per semester to support the Center with research and other projects.

Students from American University and the University of Denver also served as externs, and students from Harvard, UCLA, and other law schools volunteered to work on small projects with the Center. Interns worked on all the projects for the Center over the summer, fall and spring semesters. Interns work for a minimum of 120 hours and commit to at least 6 weeks of service. The internship and volunteer opportunities provide a pipeline for undergraduate students to be exposed to meaningful legal work.

HU Undergraduate pipeline – Approximately 100 combined students volunteered for our events and activities over the fiscal year. Jy'Mir Starks stands above the crowd because of his hard work and commitment. After he completed his internship and volunteer hours, with a total

of over 500 hours served, he continued to help on a project-by-project basis. Aside from Jy’Mir, over a dozen students interned at the Center, including Georgetown University students Youma Al-Medani Al-and Rushil Vashee. With support from the San Francisco Human Rights Commission, University of San Francisco junior Shennel Jeffries worked approx 25 hours per week during the Spring semester. During the 2022 summer session, BA to JD students attended lectures and classes with Justin Hansford and J. Orlando Johnson. Many of those students interned with the Center at the end of their classes. They also attended a Juneteenth event that was hosted and organized by the Center and the International Student House.

Rockefeller Foundation funded Howard law school interns – Through the environmental justice program grant, two students per semester were budgeted for stipends – one student assigned to work with the Center’s priorities, the other assigned to work with the environmental justice center priorities. The two Howard law students who have served as interns, Kayla Gardner and Charkera Ervin, both will provide reports on their projects that will be submitted by the end of the semester.

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

A goal of the Center is to remain student-centered in its programming. The Center space is organized to encourage students to meet with other students and to interact with the Center staff. The following are specific initiatives that the Center undertook to enhance the overall student experience at Howard Law:

##### **I. Thurgood Marshall Center Book Club**

Students, staff and community partners participated in a series of book club sessions discussing:

- a. **Rage of Innocence** – To highlight the roll out of Georgetown University Law Center Juvenile Justice Clinic Director Professor Kristin Henning’s book, *The Rage of Innocence*, and her Dean’s Lecture, J. Orlando Johnson facilitated two discussions on the book in mid-October. To assist with the Book Club, Professor Henning donated several copies of her book to the Center. In addition to students, staff and faculty, students from the BA to JD programs also attended and participated. The author also spoke at an event hosted by the law school during the fall semester.
- b. **40 Million Dollar Slave** – Dr. Alex Evans presented and facilitated a discussion on the book *Forty Million Dollar Slaves* by William C. Rhoden. The presentation covered the general concepts in the book such as the Jockey

Syndrome and highlighted the progression of the Black athlete in the United States from Jack Johnson to Michael Jordan. Our discussion was joined by sports activism anthropologist Gabby M. H. Yearwood, and NBA Agent Angelica McDonald. We were able to discuss women's place in sports activism in 2022 and beyond, as well as the potential impact of Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) in college sports for HBCUs. This presentation and discussion served as a critical entry point for exploration into an area of interest that is now within my scholarly agenda, the impact of HBCUs, athletics, and NIL.

## II. **Thurgood Marshall Center's collaboration with the Center for Women, Gender and Global Leadership**

- a. The center co-hosted an event entitled "Finding Tamika" that discussed racial disparities that occur when Black women and girls become missing. (See, Howard University Law School Hosts Finding Tamika, A conversation on missing Black women, [The Dig](#), November 2022.

## III. **Thurgood Marshall Center's Emergence in the Environmental Justice Movement** created new opportunities to enhance the student experience.

The Center collaborated with HEELS students on a variety of programs and projects. Professor Carlton Waterhouse and the Environmental Justice Center continued their hiatus, which created an opportunity to support students interested in energy and environmental law, especially at its intersection with justice and human rights. With the help of Howard University law students, we co-sponsored an event with Georgetown Law School's Environmental Law Clinic and People Over Plastic where law students listened to the accounts of community members from Baltimore, Houston, and Jackson.

**Maggie Ellinger-Locke** joined the Center as a movement lawyer and environmental justice staff attorney at the end of 2022. Since that time she has been providing legal and organizing support to communities and activists in the movement. This work involves joining coalitions, providing legal research and analysis to those on the frontlines, and extensive communications support. For example, Maggie is lending support to protesters in Atlanta fighting against the building of Cop City, a police-training facility that is proposed to be built in the largest urban forest in the country. Many of the activists involved are facing charges under Georgia's newly updated [state domestic terrorism](#) law. To assist defense counsel, Maggie wrote a memorandum outlining potential constitutional challenges to it.

Maggie has been spending time working with activists in [Brown Grove, Virginia](#), where the grocery store Wegman's is seeking to build a large distribution center. Maggie has been an active coalition member, helping to provide legal analysis and framing around ongoing litigation. Maggie has been engaged in similar work with activists in Jackson, Mississippi, who are organizing around the ongoing water crisis. The Center is currently considering its options for engagement around this matter, and we may become involved in litigation, research support, collecting community comments, and/or other deliverables.

An additional key area of work for Maggie is with the food justice and food sovereignty movement. She recently accepted a position as a board member for [Roots for Life](#), a DC-based nonprofit seeking to tackle food insecurity in Wards 7 and 8. Maggie was also a featured speaker at a Food Justice panel presented by the student group HEELS. Maggie is involved in other nonprofit board engagement as a movement lawyer with the National Lawyers Guild, where she has several leadership positions. Maggie also serves as the Center's lead for the Protect Dissent Network, which is working to curb the spread of state-level anti-protest legislation. And she is involved in supporting the launch of Taproot Earth's [Just Transition Lawyering Network](#).

Communications work makes up a substantial portion of Maggie's docket. Earlier this year she and Justin Hansford published an [op-ed about the police murder of Tyre Nichols](#) in *The Hill*, calling for the end of police in traffic stops. She also recently spoke at a symposium on movement lawyering at American University Washington College of Law. Later this spring, AU's *Human Rights Brief* will publish an article she wrote; it describes Maggie's experiences as a movement lawyer in the Ferguson Uprising. And because of her work in Ferguson, Maggie is honored to support the mother of Michael Brown today, serving as point person for the Center's merits brief on his unjust killing to the Inter-American Human Rights Commission. The brief will be filed this summer.

Finally, Maggie organized and moderated an Earth Day panel focused on contemporary topics within the environmental justice movement. The goal of the panel was to bring together movement lawyers and organizers to talk about their work in some of the most important social justice struggles of the moment. The panel featured Renada Harris from Brown Grove Virginia; Lorena Quiorz from Jackson, Mississippi; Kamau Franklin from Cop City resistance; Professor

Carlton Waterhouse; Patrice Simms of EarthJustice; and Asia McNeil-Womack, EJ trial attorney at DOJ.

By facilitating law students, staff, and faculty involvement in community events through 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.

**IV. Student Engagement in Social Justice Advocacy.** Student interns collaborated in multiple movement spaces and campaigns, including *The Movement to Abolish Mass Incarceration*; *the campaign to exonerate Marcus Garvey*; *The Movement for Reparations*; and *The Black Lives Matter Movement against police brutality*. Students in the Movement Lawyering Clinic were separated into groups – for example, the Criminal Justice Group, the Education Justice Group and the Reparations Group.

- a. **Summer Class with BA TO JD Students** - Professor Hansford invited J. Orlando Johnson to support the JD/BA students during the summer session. He facilitated class discussions over the summer on the history and negative impact of Anti-CRT legislation and the school-to-prison pipeline with our undergraduate BA to JD Students. Each student was assigned a chapter of a book prior to class and was required to provide a presentation of that chapter in front of the class. A class discussion followed each presentation which provided students an opportunity to ask questions and share how the subject matter of each chapter is relevant in society and their own lives. There were eleven or more students.

**V. Development and Fundraising activities.** The Center raised over \$200,000 this fiscal year, successfully filled all of its open positions, and utilized the extended grant from The Rockefeller Foundation to fill the staff attorney position.

**VI. Community Collaboration.** The Center has provided platforms for students to interact with lawyers and law students from around the nation as part of a community of those working on social justice and the law.

- a. **Professor Hansford's Community Engagement** - Professor Hansford continues to interact with members of the social justice community nationwide. Here are a few of his instances of community collaboration:
  - i. Spring Semester 2023:
    1. Tavis Smiley KBLA, Conversation about Marcus Garvey
    2. The Inaugural Howard Law Broady Symposium on Structural Inequality; Panelist

3. CNN, Civil Rights Investigation launched in the death of Tyre Nichols, interview with Laura “Death of Tyre Nichols- Police Chief: “Bias Might be a Factor” in Death of Nichols
  4. SiriusXM Radio, The Michael Smerconich Program, CNN; Follow up San Francisco Reparation announcement
  5. Guest Lecture at NYU School of Law Human Right Class
  6. 2023 Black History Month Event "Africa for Africans" Historic Social Justice Panel
  7. University podcast Just Lawyered, Tufts University
  8. UNA-USA Global Engagement Summit Panelist, United Nations
  9. Berkeley Law School Human Rights Clinic
  10. The University of Chicago IOP Seminar
  11. Student-led Critical Race Theory Conference, Albany Law School, Keynote
  12. G.O.L.D. Program, Panelist
  13. USAID Blacks In Government, Panelist
  14. Title: “Global Change from Local Levels: Grounding and Growing,” Steering Committee of the U.S. Human Rights City Alliance; Speaker
- b. **The Police Free Schools Coalition** – This coalition was designed around a campaign to remove police officers from the public school system in Washington, DC. This effort was initiated as part of the efforts to dismantle and disrupt the school to prison pipeline.
- b. **The African American Redress Network (VA Coalition)** The U.S. African American Redress Network continued to team up with Columbia University to spotlight the numerous local reparations initiatives across the nation and be a resource in support of such efforts. The Center hosted the Reparations 2022 conference with Dr. Linda Mann, (Columbia University), Virginie Ladisch (ICTJ) and Robin Rue Simmons (First Repair). Students had the opportunity to work on this project as members of the clinic, student interns, and/or volunteers.
- c. **The African American Policy Forum (AAPF)** – Kimberle Crenshaw’s organization sponsored students who participated in the CRT Summer School courses, one of which was taught by our own Justin Hansford. In the spring, AAPF and Law4Black Lives co-hosted a CRT webinar with J. Orlando Johnson, and Charkera Ervin as panelists and Billi Wilkerson as moderator.
- d. **Georgetown University Environmental Justice Clinic, Racial Equity in Education Law and Juvenile Justice Clinics** – Georgetown’s Environmental Justice Clinic collaborated with the Center on the People Over Plastic initiatives. Georgetown’s Racial Equity in Education Law (REEL) and Juvenile Justice Clinic collaborated with the Center and the Black Swan Academy in our education law initiatives.
- e. **The Justice Initiative** - The Systemic Justice Project at *Harvard Law School* and the Center continued a third year with “The Justice Initiative” with 10,

three-hour programming sessions. Dozens of lawyers from around the country and more than 200 law students from more than 50 U.S. law schools participated including Howard Law students.

## **VII. Social Justice Programs, and Events.**

Throughout the year, the Center hosted a number of social justice focused events and programs. The Center has made consistent efforts to establish itself as a thought leader on civil rights and human rights issues. The Center staff has produced scholarship, articles, and op-eds, spoken at conferences, and made media appearances over the past year.

These efforts have served to raise the Center's profile as a leader, a trusted source for ideas and opinions and a go-to space for human and civil rights-focused events and programs.

In addition to monthly meetings and planning sessions, events included:

- Summer 2022
  - Justin Hansford participated in the White House Counsel's Series on Building the Next Generation of Public Interest Lawyers
  - The Center participated in an interview on NBC4 with Dean Holley reflecting on the nomination of Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown-Jackson.
  - The Center attended a community stakeholder meeting between Cardozo Education Campus and XQ Institute.
  
- Fall 2022
  - October - Orlando Johnson was a guest lecturer at Georgetown University with Professor Janel George; Dr. M. Alex Evans presented at the Society of American Law Teachers (SALT) Conference at Loyola University Chicago School of Law and attended the Faculty Development Workshop for Junior Scholars;
  - November - The Center co-hosted the Finding Tamika event on racial disparity when Black girls go missing; Billi Wilkerson supported Africatown, AL Lantern Walk;
  - December - Students in the clinic presented at a national Symposium on Reparations in Evanston Illinois; they also presented at two UN Side Events in Geneva Switzerland. (Include tweet from the ambassador to the United Nations Human rights council).Dr. M. Alex Evans attended the World Congress of Constitutional Law;
  
- Spring 2023

- February - Marcus Garvey Panel; Critical Race Theory Webinar with African American Policy Forum (AAPF) and Law4BlackLives; Justin Hansford presented in Chicago; Maggie Ellinger-Locke presented talk on Movement Lawyering at American University; and Marques Banks presented a talk in Michigan on race and policing.
- March - Community Org visit - Jackson, MS - HBCU Tour; Orlando Johnson was a guest lecturer at the Race, Equity and Education Law (REEL) Clinic at Georgetown University with Professor Janel George; and Billi Wilkerson presented at the Universities Studying Slavery Conference in North Carolina.
- April - Environmental Justice Panel; Clinic SDG Presentations in San Francisco, Dayton, Cleveland, and New Orleans; Orlando Johnson attended in Black Swan Academy's Black Youth Agenda Town Hall, supporting the youth panelists.

**VIII. Priority 3, Goals #1 to #4: Support teaching excellence and innovation that prepares students to be effective and ethical lawyers, foster the production of high-quality scholarship that reaches a wide audience and promotes the public good, foster a vibrant and engaged community of teachers, scholars, and social justice community servants, and foster the production of social justice projects that promote the public good.**

A special feature of the Center is the law teaching fellowship for less experienced attorneys who want to teach and support social justice scholarship and projects. In 2022-23, this fellowship was under the guidance of Professor Justin Hanford, who helped to engage in teaching, scholarship, and Center-based service in the categories:

1. **Teaching.** Consistent with the law school's strategic goal of supporting teaching efforts that maximize students' efficacy as lawyers-in-training, Dr. M. Alex Evans taught students in the Movement Lawyering Clinic. He led the group work on Education Justice in the Fall and in the Spring, he challenged students to expand with the Cardozo Education Campus and Rise HBCU group projects.
2. **Scholarship.** Consistent with the goal of producing high-quality scholarship that reaches a wide audience, Dr. M. Alex Evans and Orlando Johnson supported the production of scholarship and legal writing for the Center.
3. **Service.** Consistent with the goal of producing social justice projects that promote the public good, the teaching fellows actively contributed to the Center's programming.

## **Teaching Fellow, Dr. M. Alex Evans**

### **Teaching.**

Dr. M. Alex Evans is currently developing his law teaching skills as a Teaching Fellow in the Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center, in the Movement Lawyering Clinic. He has demonstrated skills in blending theory and practice by teaching students practical lawyering skills. He has worked with clinic students to assist Cardozo Education Campus, a local public school, in their school redesign efforts to create a School of Business model where each student will create an LLC prior to graduation. To properly advise the client, Dr. M. Alex Evans worked with Clinic students by utilizing a qualitative research design consisting of focus groups and interviews of students, faculty, and staff, in addition to observing the school and participating in school events.

Cardozo Education Campus has a prevalent school-to-prison nexus that routinely responds to ordinary student behaviors with punitive treatment. Thus, Cardozo EC has a significant number of students entangled within the criminal legal system. Thus, the Clinic proposed a novel approach to urban schooling by recommending a School of Social Entrepreneurship model grounded in restorative justice practices and a culturally relevant social justice-centered curricula to address the holistic needs—particularly mental health—of the students, school, and community at-large. Next semester we will continue to engage in coalition building with the community, local organizations, and social entrepreneurs to support the client in building this innovative model.

Dr. M. Alex Evans utilized this Fellowship as an opportunity to incorporate experiential learning in his pedagogical practice. Through his merging movement and community lawyering methods, Clinic students were able to engage in a community-centered research study from start to finish. Each student completed weekly journal entries and maintained field notes to track and reflect upon their growth in the areas of teamwork, interpersonal, language, communication, and client engagement skills throughout the semester.

Dr. M. Alex Evans has examined both the inner workings and subject-matter of the Center and the Clinic. He learned more about specific areas of the criminal legal system like solitary confinement and felony murder, the reparations movement, and the work of the United Nations by attending meetings, listening in on discussions, reading student reflections, project rounds, and final presentations.

### **Scholarship.**

*Howard Law Faculty Meeting Presentation – Washington, DC*

Dr. M. Alex Evans made his first presentation of his work-in-progress Healing Narratives and Black Freedom and Joy. In his first time presenting to the HUSL faculty, he was able to network with the HUSL faculty and staff. He is forever grateful for the outpouring of love and support in the room as the presentation turned into a lively open discussion around various issues of Black liberation and healing.

*Society of American Law Teachers (SALT) Conference & Faculty Development Workshop for Junior Scholars: Loyola University Chicago School of Law – Chicago, IL*

The SALT conference is a space where progressive law scholars meet, as they provide genuine, personable, and helpful feedback. Dr. M. Alex Evans met and connected with over twenty people. He looks forward to returning to this conference and volunteering on a committee. During his presentation he was able to receive valuable feedback on the conceptual frame of Healing Narratives and he found that the topic of healing through writing, scholarship, and teaching was on the minds of progressive law professors across the nation.

*World Congress of Constitutional Law: University of Johannesburg*

The Opening Ceremony performances by the University of Johannesburg Choir and Dance Team were phenomenal. The opening plenary was on Poverty, Discrimination and Constitutions, and the keynote by Chief Justice Raymond Zondo addressed South African labor laws as applied to workers' rights to form unions. Dr. M. Alex Evans was deeply influenced by two paper presentations on Race, Gender, and Constitutions. The first presentation addressed the concept of power of minorities, where the majority was understood to be a grouped source of power. Nomfundo Priscah Ramalekana, a Lecturer from the University of Cape Town engaged in a comparative analysis of the South African constitution and the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the United States Constitution. She asserted that the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment was not constructed in a manner to give rights to formerly freed Black folks, but it was crafted in such a way to maintain white folks grip on power and white supremacy. The second paper presentation was by Sandra Fredman, Professor of Law at Oxford University. Prof. Fredman presented on care and constitutionality. While her presentation focused primarily on the care of early childhood and elderly, Dr. M. Alex Evans recognizes that the concept of care and constitutionality can be implemented in legal pedagogical approaches to ensure that future lawyers recognize that law and care must be implemented with fidelity.

*Works-in-Progress for Dr. M. Alex Evans: Articles, Essays, and Outlines*

- Black Geographies and the Law
  - Articles, Essays, and Outlines

- Beyond School Cops: Black Mama Pedagogy & The Discipline of Black Youth
  - Carceral Schools: Black Geographies of Confinement, Surveillance, and Policing in Schools
  - The Prophetic Voice of Hip Hop and CRT in the Law: A Modern-Day Abolitionist’s End to the School-to-Prison Nexus
    - Narratives as Social Justice Advocacy: Movement Lawyering and Hip Hop Pedagogy
- International Education Justice
  - Articles, Essays, and Outlines
    - Global Black Liberation Merger: Generational Healing for the Black Liberation and Black Lives Matter Movements
    - Healing Narratives: Assata Shakur’s Quest for Black Freedom and Joy
- Social Entrepreneurship in the Legal Academy
  - Articles, Essays, and Outlines
    - HBCU Athletes Are the Future: NIL is Just the Beginning
    - HBCU Collectives: Why Not Us? (Dear Ole NCC)
    - Social Enterprises and The Legal Academy: Demosprudence & HBCU Law Schools (Working title)
      - Autoethnographic Project: Cardozo Education Campus, Rise HBCU, Narrative as Social Justice Advocacy

**Service.** Dr. M. Alex Evans’ work supports the international education justice movement, and the movement to strengthen Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) through merging social entrepreneurship and movement lawyering.

### **Dr. M. Alex Evans - Three Core Projects (2023-2024)**

**Overall Core Project Objectives:** To address priorities, goals, and objectives outlined throughout this EOY Report

#### **#1 - International Education Justice**

**Project Objective:** This project incorporates all three priorities. Our goal is to enhance the overall curriculum in the area of experiential learning and to enhance the overall student experience by challenging them to engage in the conversation of sustainability as it pertains to justice systems and people of African descent globally.

- Continue Research Laying the Theoretical and Practical Foundation for International Education Justice
  - Incorporates teaching, scholarship, and service through public advocacy, promoting general awareness, and producing scholarship
  - What movements does this project overlap with?
    - Education Justice, Disability Justice, International Human Rights, Reparations
      - Primary Topics: Punishment Free Schools, Critical Race Theory,
- Review the Movement Lawyering Clinic Sustainable Development Goals Project
- Conceptual/Theoretical Framing
  - Research for the purpose of contributing to theoretical and practical discourse involving a justice-centered approach to the law.
    - i.e. Comparative analysis of the pertinent sections of the South African Constitution and the U.S. Constitution
  - Builds on the pioneering work of Prof. Harold McDougall & Prof. Justin Hansford
    - *McDougall, Harold A., The Rebellious Law Professor: Combining Cause and Reflective Lawyering (November 16, 2015). Journal of Legal Education, Volume 65, Number 2 (November 2015), Howard Law Research Paper No. 15-8, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2691678>*
    - *Hansford, Justin and Jagannath, Meena, Ferguson to Geneva: Using the Human Rights Framework to Push Forward a Vision for Racial Justice in the United States after Ferguson (April 24, 2015). Hastings Race and Poverty Law Journal, Vol. 12, p. 101, Summer 2015, Saint Louis U. Legal Studies Research Paper No. 2015-5, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2598743>*
    - *Hansford, Justin, Demosprudence on Trial: Ethics for Movement Lawyers, in Ferguson and Beyond. Fordham Law Review, Vol. 85, No. 101, 2017, Saint Louis U. Legal Studies Research Paper No. 2017-1, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2935302>*

### **Resources on International Education Justice**

- [Sustainability and Race: A Q&A with Helen Bond, PhD](#)
- [Sustainable Development Solutions Network \(SDSN\)-USA](#)
- “Acknowledging Black America in the Discussion for Sustainable Development Goals: HBCUs Leading the Way.”
  - [Howard University Law Students Travel to Geneva for United Nations Annual Meeting](#)

- [Howard Law Students Present Research At United Nations Conference](#)
- [Howard Law students assess United Nations' progress on sustainable development goals](#)
- [Youth Social Entrepreneurship and the 2030 Agenda | United Nations](#)
- [Promoting Access to Children's Mental Health through School-Community Collaboration](#)

## **#2 Review of Justice Initiative (JI) Program Curriculum**

**Project Objectives:** With this project, our goal is to conduct a curriculum review of JI in order to better support teaching excellence and innovation that prepares students to be effective and ethical lawyers. Through this project, we aim to foster the production of high-quality scholarship that reaches a wide audience and promotes the public good. Lastly, the goal of this project is to foster a vibrant and engaged community of teachers, scholars, and social justice community servants by reviewing our current curriculum which incorporates our third priority for the center.

### **Curriculum Review**

- Review approximately 90 hours of JI Virtual Sessions
  - Program: three years, ten 3-hour sessions per year.
- *Goals:* (1) Review Accessibility & (2) Maximize Engagement and Efficiency

### **Resources Justice Initiative (JI)**

- [Justice Initiative](#)
- Legg, Michael, UNSW Law Mini-Curriculum Review Report on Technology and the Law School Curriculum (November 2, 2017). UNSW Law Research Paper No. 17-90, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3091423> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3091423>

## **#3 HBCU Advocacy Coalition Building**

**Project Objective:** This project highlights the importance of *student engagement in social justice advocacy*, as it embraces student-centered experiential learning. This project enhances the overall curriculum by centering the needs of HBCU communities at-large. We will work to enhance the *overall student experience* through cultivating a culturally responsive learning environment.

This project supports our efforts to promote teaching excellence and innovation, alongside engaged community members in the production of social justice projects that promote the public good. This work will continue to raise the Center’s global profile as the go-to space for human and civil rights-focused events and programs. Utilizing narrative as social justice advocacy—an innovative pedagogical tool— allows for students and faculty to critically examine the analytical and linguistic challenges of effective advocacy for HBCUs and their respective communities. Collaborations could include existing relationships with programs and universities. Research and Scholarship investment opportunities have also been identified.

### **Resources on HBCU Advocacy Coalition Building**

- [Youth Social Entrepreneurship and the 2030 Agenda | United Nations](#)
- Ball, Alina, Social Enterprise Lawyering (July 15, 2020). 88 UMKC L. REV. 803 (2020), UC Hastings Research Paper Forthcoming, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3685029>
- Herrera, Luz E. and Trubek, Louise G., The Emerging Legal Architecture for Social Justice (November 1, 2019). New York University Review of Law & Social Change, Vol. 44, Iss. 3, pp. 355-398, 2020, Texas A&M University School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper No. 19-62, Univ. of Wisconsin Legal Studies Research Paper No. 1586, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3481985> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3481985>

### **Research Fellow, Attorney J. Orlando Johnson**

This fellowship was created specifically for the purpose of addressing the school-to-prison pipeline. The [school-to-prison pipeline](#) can be defined as the connection between strict and arbitrary school policies and the incarceration of Black youth. Using the movement lawyering methodology, I sought to identify non-profit organizations and other entities committed to combating the school-to-prison pipeline in areas where Black youth are most impacted. Once identified, the Center will then collaborate to formulate policies and initiatives that will combat the school-to-prison pipeline. We began locally, with Georgetown University Law Center’s [Juvenile Justice Clinic & Initiative](#) (Juvenile Justice Clinic) and [Race Equity in Education Law and Policy Clinic](#) (REEL Clinic), and the [Black Swan Academy](#).

**Adultification Op-Ed** - Adultification is a social phenomenon where youth, many times Black youth, are either seen as much older than their actual age or are treated as if they are much older. This phenomenon became the focus of the [Op-ed](#). Black youth need a [racially informed curriculum](#) that is informed by the *impact* systemic racism and socioeconomic inequality has on Black youth. The OpEd was submitted to Professor Hansford, but has yet to be published.

**Movement Lawyering Clinic Criminal Justice Group** - As part of the role as fellow, I led the Criminal Justice subgroup of the Movement Lawyering Clinic. I attended meetings with the Group shared with [Zealous](#), the American Civil Liberties Union ([ACLU New Mexico](#)), and Maryland's Office of the Public Defender. The projects that the Group worked on ranged from cash bail reform to advocacy for those wrongfully convicted of felony murder charges, to an effort to reform solitary confinement conditions in New Mexico. I reviewed the Group's research notes and draft documents. I also facilitated group meetings with clinic students to help formulate their projects and provide feedback on their progress.

**Police Free Schools Coalition** - This campaign to remove police officers from D.C. Public Schools (DCPS) included Black Swan Academy, the Clinics from Georgetown Law Center, ACLU, Advancement Project and the Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center. The aim of this effort is to replace them with a class of personnel that would include counselors, psychiatrists, and violence interrupters for [three reasons](#): (1) the role of counselor is best carried out by an actual counselors, not police officers; (2) schools that invest more in mental health services have higher retention amongst students and lower arrest rates; and (3) removing police officers from schools will allow school administrators to have more control over their own school disciplinary policy. The goal to place counselors and psychiatrists in DCPS was formulated in collaboration with the Black Swan Academy. Through their coalition efforts in 2020, police officers were to be [removed from DCPS by 2025](#) based on changes to the D.C. budget.

**School Safety Enhancement Amendment Act of 2023** - The Black Swan Academy hosted a Police Free Schools Retreat. On behalf of the Center and I provided contributions and feedback to drafting a Police Free Schools Bill. Among the organizations represented were: the ACLU D.C., the Advancement Project; D.C. 's Children's Law Center; Georgetown Law Center's Juvenile Justice Clinic and Initiative and Race Equity in Education Law and Policy Center (REEL Policy Center); and Washington Lawyers Committee. From December to March, I continued to attend online meetings with other Police Free Schools members two to three times a month to revise the language of the Bill and offer feedback for drafters to take into consideration as they continued to refine the Bill. The Coalition worked with D.C. council members who were opposed to a bill introduced by Trayvon White's bill that would reinstate police officers in D.C. schools. The Coalition began drafting a bill in opposition to introduce the School Safety Enhancement Amendment Act of 2023. In this effort I was tasked with taking the research I had put behind the Toolkit to draft a job description for "school safety coordinator" positions, that would be implemented under the Act to hire and facilitate school safety personnel at different schools throughout D.C.

**Guest Lecturer at Georgetown Law Center** - In October and March, I participated in Professor Janel George's REEL Policy seminar, where I provided information to Georgetown law students on how Black students are impacted by exclusionary and carceral-oriented school policy. During the March seminar, I also provided a timeline on the School Safety Enhancement Act and its implementation.

**CRT Hotline** - To combat Anti-CRT legislation the Center developed a CRT Hotline in collaboration with African American Policy Forum (AAPF) to carry out their [#TruthBeToldCampaign](#). I set out to identify mediators in select states who would commit to representing teachers who call the Hotline. Following meetings with the Southern Poverty Law Center and the Georgia Youth Justice Coalition, in which I [presented](#) an explanation of our efforts thus far, it became apparent that the Center has to identify *mediators* in select states who will connect the Center with teachers impacted by Anti-CRT legislation. Mediators are necessary as they would help build the confidence that teachers would have in the CRT Hotline to mitigate the harm the new legislation has caused. Unfortunately, when the CRT Hotline was no longer receiving calls, I struggled in identifying leads for mediators in select states where the Hotline would be most needed. The CRT Hotline can still be a useful resource for teachers who have lost their livelihood, but there may be more efficient alternatives available. For the time being the focus should shift to developing relationships with mediators that align with Center's goals and objectives and gathering information on how Anti-CRT legislation has taken shape in different states.

**Oklahoma Amicus Brief** - In January, I looked to revive the Center's efforts to combat anti-CRT legislation by identifying a court case that challenged the constitutionality of a state's anti-CRT legislation and began drafting an amicus brief that would aid in that litigation. Professor Hansford recommended that I should draft an amicus brief and assigned students from the Movement Lawyering Clinic to assist me in this effort. Professor Hansford and I decided that Oklahoma will be the best state to file an amicus in because of its history with Black Wall Street and because it was the first state that had a lawsuit filed regarding its anti-CRT state statute. I assigned each student a topic to do extensive research on and I supervised their research at least two or three times each month. At this point the students are drafting their final drafts for the semester, while I am reviewing their research notes and drafting for the amicus brief.

**Anti-CRT Webinar** - On February 16, 2023, I participated on a webinar panel along with the African American Policy Forum and Law 4 Black Lives to discuss the censorship of African American history and the impact that anti-CRT legislation has had on different states throughout the nation.

**Georgetown Law Center's Juvenile Justice Clinic & Initiative** - Throughout the Fellowship, I have developed relationships with Georgetown University Law Center Professors Kristin Henning and Eduardo Ferrer during the roll out for *The Rage of Innocence* and in meetings where the Center and the Juvenile Justice Clinic worked together to develop a collaborative project. Staff from the Center and I both attended and participated in Professor Henning's Dean's Lecture at Howard University School of Law. Following the Dean's Lecture, I presented Professor Henning a gift on behalf of the Dean's office. Subsequently Professor Hansford and I were invited to speak at a virtual seminar hosted by Georgetown Law Center's Racial Justice Fellowship program for public defenders who work on juvenile justice issues.

## **Senior Fellow, Attorney Marques Banks**

**Police Charter Work** - The defunding of law enforcement has emerged as a salient and contentious issue in recent times as communities' endeavor to redress the deeply entrenched racial injustices and inequities present in law enforcement. The fundamental concept underlying the defund movement is to transfer resources from police departments to other social programs that are geared towards preventing crime and enhancing public safety. However, in certain municipalities, charters can impede the effective redirection of funds from policing due to the imposition of stipulations concerning law enforcement expenditures or personnel hiring. Hence, municipalities may find themselves unable to curtail police budgets despite the desire to do so, due to the legal mandate of maintaining a specified number of officers or allocating a specific percentage of the budget to policing.

In Michigan, there are currently two active campaigns - Accountability for Dearborn and LINC Up in Grand Rapids - that are striving to challenge city charters that constrain the reallocation of police funding. To support these campaigns, I have engaged with representatives from both organizations to explore strategies that can aid their advocacy efforts. Specifically, they are seeking legal, policy, and research recommendations that can bolster their campaigns. I am currently conducting research to identify effective strategies that can challenge these charters and facilitate the redirection of funds towards programs that promote public safety and equity.

**Prisoners' Rights Project** – I have been working to enhance their organization's intake system for prisoners' rights by establishing a framework for processing the mail received from incarcerated individuals seeking legal assistance. This effort involves building partnerships with other advocates in this area and collaborating with civil rights groups to explore possibilities for working together. By creating a more effective intake system and establishing relationships with other organizations, the individual aims to improve their organization's ability to provide legal aid and support to incarcerated individuals seeking justice.

**IACHR Mike Brown and Rekia Boyd Case** - Currently, I am working on two cases that are scheduled to be presented before the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights. These cases, namely the Mike Brown Case and the Rekia Boyd Case, center on the investigation of human rights violations perpetrated by the police and legal systems in each instance. My work on these cases involves developing and submitting a brief that is due in July, which will provide a detailed analysis of the facts, laws, and international human rights standards relevant to each case. By advocating for the protection of human rights and the delivery of justice in these cases, I aim to bring greater attention to the

pervasive issues of police brutality and systemic racism in the United States.

**Police Stop and Frisk** - My current work involves addressing the systemic abuse of stop and frisk tactics employed by the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) in Washington D.C. Stop and frisk has historically been associated with racial profiling and has been used disproportionately against Black and Latino communities, causing significant harm and trauma. To combat this issue, I am collaborating with the Stop Police Terror Project, which has launched a campaign to end stop and frisk practices in D.C. Our work involves analyzing data from the MPD's stop and frisk reports to identify patterns of abuse and discrimination. Through our efforts, we hope to raise awareness about the harmful impacts of stop and frisk on communities of color and to promote more equitable policing practices that prioritize public safety while respecting human rights.

**Specialized Units** - Following the murder of Tyre Nichols and the subsequent disbandment of the Scorpion Unit, I have undertaken a project that involves compiling a comprehensive report on specialized units in various police departments. The report aims to provide a detailed analysis of these units' functions, operating procedures, and their impact on communities of color. It is critical to undertake this work, as it highlights the challenges posed by specialized police units, which often operate outside the purview of traditional policing structures, and may lack adequate oversight and accountability mechanisms.

**Police Out of Traffic** - Recently, I contributed to the publication of the Police out of Traffic report by the Center, which aimed to address the pervasive issue of police involvement in traffic enforcement. Building on this work, I am currently collaborating with the DC Police out of Transportation Coalition to support their efforts in promoting more effective and equitable transportation policies in the city. This work involves providing policy recommendations, legal strategies, and other forms of support to advance the coalition's campaign. By working together, we aim to reduce the harmful impacts of policing in transportation and promote more equitable practices that prioritize public safety while respecting human rights.

### **Media and Social Media Engagement**

With Media Exposure for the Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center, Professor Hansford set the pace for establishing the Center as a thought leader in civil and human rights. Throughout the year he did several speaking engagements, media interviews, and op-eds that served to elevate the Center's profile.

### **Priority 4, goal #3: Enhance our J.D. students' exposure to International Law (Advanced Studies and Global Outreach)**

A core goal of the Center is to use both civil rights and human rights frameworks to address racial harms in a global context. Through its advocacy and the programs that it hosted, students were exposed to international human rights law as a tool for addressing structural racism and their work reflects this perspective. Students were also provided an opportunity to visit the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland in the Fall and the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights in Washington, DC in the Spring.

- a. **Inter-American Commission Hearings**
  - i. Hearing on Police Violence in the United States
  - ii. Hearing on Victims of Police Violence
- b. **United Nations**
  - i. CERD - Convention to End Racial Discrimination
  - ii. UNPFPAD - Presented SDG Report findings at a Side Event with the United Nations Permanent Forum for People of African Descent – The United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provided a framework for students to analyze data on racial disparities in 13 cities in the United States. Each student 1) selected a city to research; 2) organized a community meeting or town hall; 3) collaborated with coalition members and community organizers; and 4) reported findings to be presented at a side event in Geneva, Switzerland.
  - iii. UNARC - United Nations Anti-Racism Coalition
  - iv. UN Decade - Extended
- c. **International Human Rights Oriented Projects and Events.**
  - i. International Student House – Event in Dupont Circle
  - ii. Reparations Event with First Repair in Geneva, Switzerland

### **Looking ahead for THE THURGOOD MARSHALL CENTER**

1. The Center will continue to increase visibility and collaboration with the main campus, law firms and other organizations. In the upcoming year, the Center will document and share its reports, publications, and research findings.
2. The Center hopes to produce a report about its first five years, documenting not only the Center’s activities but the climate and context based on current events and changes in the world. J. Clay Smith, in his tenure at Howard Law provided an excellent example of historical documentation.

3. The Center will explore collaboration within the clinic, the law school and university broadly. The Center has been a bridge for several of the universities' centers and programs. The Ralph Bunche Center for International Affairs, the Center for Women, Gender and Global Leadership, the Center for African Studies and the general student population at Howard University.

## Upcoming activities

### I. Staff Transitions

A. Justin Hansford will take a Leave for Sabbatical beginning May 15, 2023 for one year. During that time each of the staff will be partnered with a member of the faculty or dean to provide guidance and administrative oversight. This creates an opportunity for enriched engagement with faculty.

1. [Black Audit Project](#)
2. [Race, Racism and American Law Textbook Release Convening](#)
3. **Global Reparations Legal Convening**
4. [National Conference of Black Lawyers Conference](#)

B. Orlando Johnson's one - year term is scheduled to end on May 9, 2023.

1. **List of projects to transition** - Orlando commented, "The relationships I have developed in combating the school-to-prison pipeline has granted the Center the opportunity to participate in the Police Free School Coalition of DC. Other organizations that are a part of this Coalition include: the Advancement Project; the ACLU; D.C's Children's Law Center; Georgetown Law, and the Black Swan Academy. The Center also can participate in other coalitions that combat arbitrary school exclusions led by the Juvenile Justice Clinic, the misdiagnosis of Black childhood development led by the D.C. Children's Law Center, or the impact systemic inequities has on Black youth through the Children's Defense Fund. These relationships will endure and inform the Center's work for years to come."
2. **Joint Collaboration with the Education Rights Center** - The Center has an existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Howard University School of Law's Education Rights Center (ERC). As of April 2023, the completed a final draft of a "[Goals of Joint Collaboration](#)" document is awaiting feedback from Professor Hansford, Professor Cunningham, and Dean Holley. Professor e. christi cunningham has returned an edited draft for the [MOU](#) to the Center in November. The Center looks forward to working with the ERC and Professor Cunningham. The challenge presented is how to best move forward in the absence of Orlando Johnson. Dr. M. Alex Evans' area of scholarship is also Educational Justice, which opens an opportunity for transition.

### **Conclusion**

In the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center engaged with students, faculty and staff to serve hundreds of individuals and communities through our programs, projects and events. The Center successfully raised over \$200,000 including grants from

Liberation Ventures. Additional grants from Open Society Foundation (OSF) and Kellogg Foundation are pending, as of the time of this report (April 2023). The grant to support the collaboration between the Environmental Justice Center was also extended until the end of the calendar year, 2023. By the end of the Fall semester, we successfully recruited and hired new staff to fill our grant funded staff attorney position. In the Spring semester, we completed filling our open positions with the addition of a senior Fellow, whose scholarship and activism focuses on the carceral system and police violence.

This year’s highlights included research and support of the felony murder rule; drafting of legislation to support mental health of the families of victims of police violence; collaborating with International Human Rights organizations to co-host two side events at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland; being awarded as the partner of the year for our work with Columbia University, (AARN) and First Repair supporting a series of national strategy sessions for leaders in the local movements for reparations; movement; continuing our work to support over 400 local community efforts to advance the redress of the harms of racial injustice; presenting at national and international conferences on racial justice in the United States and the application of international human rights frameworks; collaborating with Harvard Law School to provide free classes on justice; co-hosting workshops and discussions on the formation of the United Nations Permanent Forum on People of African Descent (UNPFPAD); and collaborating undergraduate programs on the main campus including the Center for Women, Gender, and Global Leadership and the Ralph J. Bunche International Affairs.

**Students & The Center**

|                 | Summer 22 | Fall 2022 | Spring 23 | Summer 23 | Total |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------|
| Clinic Students | N/A       | 13        | 9         | TBD       | 22    |
| Interns         | 4         | 4         | 3         | TBD       | 11    |
| Student Staff   | 1         | 2 (1 EJC) | 2 (1 EJC) | TBD       | 5     |
| Volunteers      | 20        | 69        | 5         | TBD       | 94    |

Over 100 students engaged with the Center’s human and civil rights work over the course of the year.