

For immediate release
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Contact: Kimberly Allen
kimberly@904ward.org
(904) 710-4984

904WARD Releases First of Eight Retrospectives of Racial Equity Data
Nearly 100 Years of Research Shows — “We Don’t Need Another Study”

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — 904WARD, a community organization advancing racial equity in Jacksonville since 2015, today released the first in an 8-part series of reports looking back at decades of disparities and failed efforts to address them.

904WARD, with a mission to create racial healing and equity through deep conversations and learning, trusting relationships, and collective action, will issue weekly reports through February and March. After today’s introductory report, the series will cover trends, victories, challenges and recommendations in seven different domains:

- Education
- Health
- Housing
- Justice and the legal system
- Employment
- Media
- Politics and civic engagement

“When 904WARD started conceptualizing a progress report about Race in Jacksonville, we kept coming back to the same point — we do not need another study. Our community has researched this subject for more than 70 years,” said Dr. Kimberly Allen, CEO of 904WARD. “We know what the gaps are. We know where the challenges exist. We know where there is opportunity. Little has changed. Efforts advance, groups are formed, yet the outcome remains the same — Jacksonville’s Black and Brown people are consistently underrepresented in spheres of prosperity and overrepresented in spheres of struggle and risk.”

Instead, the series is designed to compile and streamline 75 years of research to form a baseline for community understanding of racial inequity in Jacksonville, past and present, and set a foundation for advocating for the structural and community changes that are needed to make Jacksonville a place where everyone can thrive, regardless of the color of their skin. 904WARD will work with its diverse and expanding base of volunteers to prioritize and co-create solutions, define success, identify partners, and advocate for changes needed to bring about those solutions.

The retrospective of reports, dating back to the 1940’s, was commissioned by The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida in 2020. It builds on earlier work done as part of Project Breakthrough: Changing the Story of Race in Jacksonville—an effort led by The Community Foundation, OneJax, the Jacksonville Human Rights Commission and the Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community beginning in 2006.

“The Community Foundation is pleased to be a supporter of 904WARD’s work to dismantle systemic racism in our community. Fact checking through the lens of race is an important first step. More will be required when the truth is clearly told and understood,” noted Judge Brian J. Davis, chair-elect of the Board of Trustees of The Community Foundation. “The Community Foundation’s hope is that others will support and join 904WARD’s efforts to achieve racial equity in Jacksonville.”

904WARD began in 2015 with a small, diverse group of friends who came together to talk openly, challenge and support each other, and take action together to build a more inclusive Jacksonville. Since then, the movement has grown to a network of thousands of volunteers who are committed to creating a community of inclusion for all. Programming includes:

- The Jacksonville Community Remembrance Project, which aims to truthfully acknowledge and remember the city and the country’s history of racial terror lynching.
- The Race Cards, a tool for thousands of people to take part in productive, authentic discussions about race through a deck of conversation-starting cards prompting participants to share personal experiences and visualize their own role in racial equity.
- A wide range of events bringing together hundreds of people — virtually and in person — to discuss issues of racial justice and search for solutions.
- Advocacy for policies and priorities that will make Jacksonville a diverse, inclusive, and equitable community.

The data and all subsequent reports can be found at 904WARD.org.

About 904WARD

904WARD creates racial healing and equity through deep conversations and learning, trusting relationships, and collective action. Our vision is an end to racism in Jacksonville so all people thrive. To learn more and sign up to get involved, visit 904WARD.org.