

TIME OF
RECKONING

TOR

**PHASE II: LISTENING
TO ACCOUNTABILITY**

ABOUT TIME OF RECKONING

Time of Reckoning was a series of community engagement sessions grounded in healing justice focusing on the criminal justice system and its collateral consequences on Black families in Minnesota.

The series consisted of five critical community healing and policy action engagements that aimed to illustrate to the nation what community-centered policy change can look like.

Convened by the community and co-chaired by Dr. Brittany Lewis of Research in Action (RIA) and Dr. Joi Lewis of Joi Unlimited and Healing Justice Foundation, this work was spurred by the murder of Mr. George Floyd at the hands

of the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD). This process is an opportunity for true “radical re-imagining” of what is possible within our collective efforts to advance racial justice.

Starting in December 2020 and culminating with a town hall and policy action roundtable in June 2021, the series invited local policy makers with power and influence to implement the solutions and recommendations brought forth by the community through this process. The goals included

TIME OF RECKONING GOALS:

Support local Black led organizations, advocates, and community leaders to heal, reimagine, define, and develop a shared strategy for Black led social change through a criminal justice lens that is intersectional.

Ensure community sets the agenda, defines the problem, and identifies solutions.

Reimagine the relationship between the state, philanthropy, and the community.

Host a policy action roundtable that invites local power brokers to the table to partner with the community in the execution of that work with resources.

KEY SOLUTIONS AND ACTIONS RAISED BY COMMUNITY:

GIVE COMMUNITY CONTROL:

Having more individuals from the community in positions of political power and a part of interventions and resources intended to benefit the community.

INVEST:

Rethinking how to invest in individuals and community resources to support wealth development and access to meaningful resources.

DIVEST:

Moving resources away from policies that undermine healing and justice in the Black community.

ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY:

Ensuring all levels of organizations and systems have accountability measures in place.

GROUND IN HEALING JUSTICE:

Recenter the role of healing inside of change to transform, intervene, and respond to generational trauma and violence in movements, communities, and lives (Page and Raffo, US Social Forum, Detroit).

TIME OF RECKONING

PHASE II: EXECUTION

The purpose of this report is to share not just what we've heard, but what we're doing. Informed by community-led solutions, Time of Reckoning leaders are actively working with policymakers to change systems from the inside-out. Traditionally, our policymakers and philanthropic institutions have worked independently of the communities they serve. It's going to take both systemic transformation as well as community accountability to bring about the full result of the reckoning we are working towards.



ACCOUNTABILITY IN ACTION

Throughout September, October, November and December of 2021, Time of Reckoning policy strategist, Anika Bowie, engaged in monthly interviews with policymakers who committed to a series of listening sessions led by the Black community and delivered commitments at the virtual policy action roundtable in June 2021. In these interviews, Bowie used the policy action road map to guide the areas of policy action and take collaborative steps towards accountability. Each interview assessed the confines of the commitments each policymaker made, what roadblocks they foresee, what partnerships, coalitions, or resources are needed to achieve their collective goals, and what support they might seek from policy action or healing justice experts.

WHERE THERE'S MOMENTUM

While systemic change takes time, we're seeing early momentum driven by Time of Reckoning community engagements and the prioritization of community needs. These policies and initiatives are underway and aligned with direct asks from the community.

AG Keith Ellison suing Havenbrook Homes for the neglect of over 200 homes in North Minneapolis

The MN Department of Corrections offers free college programs to low level incarcerated individuals in partnership with Ujamma, Bridges, and Metro State.

Hennepin County and Village Arms host a child protection task force to reunify black children to their families.

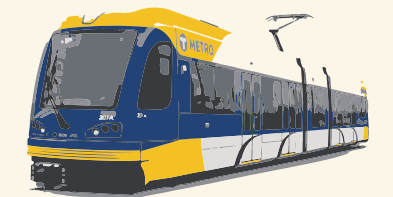


The MN Department of Corrections started offering free phone calls for incarcerated individuals to their love ones



The MN Department of Education is funding Black Men Teach to recruit more black teachers.

Hennepin County drafting first RFP for Reparations Consultant Team.



Met Council the blue line committed to hiring non-law enforcement people and investing dollars to hire Black people with a human-centered approach to de-escalating issues on the light rail

EARLY WINS

Where we're seeing the most radical movement is where individuals are willing to use their power for change in the criminal justice system. Policymakers who are choosing bravery over the status quo are making a measurable impact with lasting effects.



Ramsey County Attorney John Choi announced in September 2021 that he will no longer prosecute felony cases resulting from minor traffic stops for violations like broken tail lights or expired tabs. This is a bold stance for a prosecutor to announce publicly and has the ability to change police behavior and unnecessary escalations and fatalities.



In September of 2022, Research in Action (RIA) partnered with Attorney John Choi, Ramsey County, and the Bail Reform Working Group (BRWG) to change the booking and pre-trial process and reduce the amount of time people spend in jail waiting for charges to be filed. Through that effort RIA collaborated with the Ramsey County Bail Reform Work Group (BRWG) to listen and learn from community experiences with Ramsey County's pretrial system. The goal of the BRWG is to eliminate the harm communities experience by the for-profit cash bail system while improving public safety and court appearances.



MN Department of Human Rights Commissioner Rebecca Lucero released their findings, a legal document, identifying a culture of racial discrimination in the Minneapolis Police Department in violation of the Minnesota Human Rights Act. As a result, the Minnesota Department of Human Rights is working with the City of Minneapolis to develop a consent decree, a court-enforceable agreement that identifies specific changes to be made and timelines for those changes to occur, to address racial discrimination in policing in Minneapolis.

STRATEGIC MOVEMENT

We know the importance of not just listening to community, but putting the Time of Reckoning engagement sessions into action. While we've been working with policymakers over the last year to hold them accountable to their promises, we understand the time it takes to make systemic overhauls at the policy level. Research in Action, the Healing Justice Foundation, Joi Unlimited, and many of the Black leaders that made up the TOR Core Team have been moving the needle on the commitments we made to community members.

These programs are in need of sustainable funding, support, and resources to fully realize racial justice in our communities:

GROW THE HEALING ECOSYSTEM

The Healing Justice Foundation With a focus on healing from historic and present day trauma, the Healing Justice Foundation (HJF) team is solidifying our commitment to building a healing ecosystem, using The RedCross as an organizing metaphor. HJF is working with other Black-led organizations, institutions, and allies committed to liberation, justice and healing for the Black Community to address the psychological and material first aid needed in times of urgent and acute crisis, to build our version of a Red Cross for Black Liberation. HJF wants to better understand unmet community needs during incidents of violence perpetrated by the state and other oppression induced traumas like COVID-19. We honor the need for a collaborative and connected restorative response grounded in Black liberation. The Healing Justice Foundation in collaboration with Joi Unlimited is also expanding opportunities for Healing and Radical Self-Care training to support folks through trauma induced oppression as well as sustainable economic support for Black healers and mental health providers for the Black community. This early work is in partnership with The Pohlad Foundation; however, we need many more philanthropic partners and institutions to support this critical work.

RESEARCH IN ACTION

The Minnesota Justice Research Center (MNJRC) is seeking resources to support its partnership with Research in Action (RIA) to advance its police accountability strategy. After spearheading an administrative rules change for the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Board, which governs Peace Officer licenses in Minnesota, MNJRC seeks support in activating the community. We anticipate statewide resistance to a series of new rules, including prohibiting officers from associating with White Supremacist groups. MNJRC is looking to partner with RIA to educate the community on the importance of providing public comment, provide training on how to use the public comment toolkit, lead data collection and analysis at the statewide public hearing on the new rules change, and collaborate with MNJRC to design a community response and action agenda to the final judgment on the new rules change.

ZION BAPTIST CHURCH

Zion Baptist Church has continued its commitment to serving community members and has expanded to include healing work in the community. Zion, led by Pastor Brian Herron, has become a hub for community meetings, partnerships and programming that prayerfully advances the cause of Black people.

CHALLENGES AHEAD & COMMUNITY-LED SOLUTIONS

Change does not come without challenges. Many of the policymakers whose budgets are controlled in the legislature identified common limitations due to budget, internal resistance, and the political climate. Although we recognize these expressed challenges are perpetual issues, we would like to raise up some concrete solutions that can support not just our policy makers, but our community in getting the results that they deserve.



MONEY & RESOURCES

“Lack of money and resources. We can do a lot more if we had more resources.”

“We get lots of money from lots of different sources but the devil of trying to figure out who can get it and how to get it out the door is nightmarish. And I’m not asking for a relaxation of the rules because I’m very nervous about spending public dollars and not knowing where they’re going or how they’re being spent.”

-John Harrington, DPS Commissioner

PROPOSED SOLUTION:

USE POLITICAL POWER

With a State budget surplus, there are a lot of resources that are not getting to the communities that need them most. We need more funding for community advocacy which invests in BIPOC leaders specifically to encourage policymakers to divest dollars from harmful policies and invest in communities who have been intentionally stripped of resources for centuries. We need philanthropic partners to use their political power to lift up the programs that are demonstrating positive results and advocate for sustainable funding that invest in BIPOC leadership and growth.

RESISTANCE TO CHANGE:

Those who like the system the way it is have no desire. They resist them. It was a challenge to build a coalition. Local partners. Not black people. Political challenges. Trust in the community.
-Steve Grove

PROPOSED SOLUTION:

SUPPORT CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE

We've seen what happens when leaders use their power. When Ramsey County Attorney John Choi decided to no longer prosecute minor traffic stops, he attempted to change behaviors in policing and reduce harm. We need more internal champions in government who can change their corner of the political and funding universe and take a stand when others will not. Attorney John Choi has brought the community to the table for listening, learning, and iteration, and more organizations can learn from this emergent strategy.

POLITICAL CLIMATE:

*"A different agency was trying to get something passed and literally at the end of the session, the senate said they would not agree to anything with the word Equity in it."
-Maureen Ramirez, DEED*

PROPOSED SOLUTION: GIVE COMMUNITY CONTROL OVER ACCOUNTABILITY METHODS

Community has consistently called for accountability and more control. Initiatives like the one led by the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Board and Research in Action (RIA) have the opportunity to change the way law enforcement are vetted, trained, and held accountable. Funding partnerships such as these and political advocacy for organizations that support community-led accountability methods will sustain this work not just in the criminal justice system but across all systems that impact Black families.

OUR TEAM

(FROM LEFT TO RIGHT)

CO-CHAIRS

Dr. Joi Lewis
Dr. Brittany Lewis

CORE TEAM

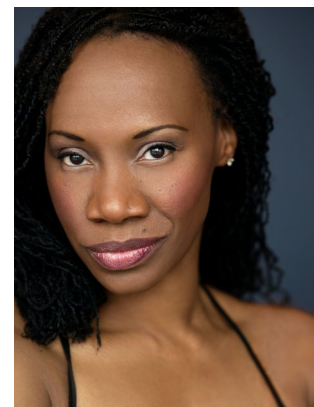
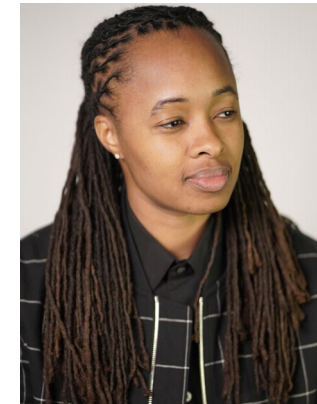
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AN INVITATION

The Healing Justice Foundation and Research in Action are inviting funders to stay engaged and help move the work forward with sustainable resources and support.

THANK YOU TO OUR EXISTING PARTNERS

