

# **FLAGSTAFF'S LIVED BLACK EXPERIENCE: A FORGOTTEN PEOPLE FORGING A PATH FORWARD**

A Strategic Plan

Presented to

The Flagstaff City Council

**Presented by**

**The Lived Black Experience CommUnity Coalition**

# FORWARD

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## ***Where does the story of Black Flagstaff begin?***

The answer to this seemingly simple question is complicated by decades of lost or forgotten history, conflicting narratives, and a marked lack of engagement with the stories of Black Flagstaffians whose legacies speak of the enduring capacity for hope, the richest pursuits of positive change and cultural unity among the poorest citizenry and oft-forgotten neighborhoods. Perhaps the story begins with the belief—passed from generation to generation—that through the familial bonds of community, historical wrongs could be, if not altogether fixed, at least lessened in their varying degrees of damage. It is a tale that begins on foot, on railways, and on the “blues” pathways that merge at these majestic crossroads. And so, in striving to tell the story of a lived Black experience in a land of bewildering beauty and intractable conflict, we have been brought together through a calling to these sacred lands.

In the title of this project, and this plan, we refer to Flagstaff's Black community as a “Forgotten People” in recognition of a humanity that is too often cast into the shadows of Flagstaff's fabled history. This plan begins the acknowledgement and recognition of the work of those who have gone before, those who continue to work with us now, and those who will prevail long after we have passed. Because we come from many places and are called to settle here, we partake in what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. termed the “Beloved Community”: one in which society is transformed by acting on the principles of justice, inclusion, equal opportunity, and love in the midst of travail: How we can sing a song of freedom in a strange land.

We recognize that this place we call home sits at the base of the Sacred Peaks, on homelands shepherded by more than 12 Tribal Nations and Indigenous Peoples throughout this region. We honor them, their legacies, their traditions, and their past, current, and future generations who will forever call this place home.

We recognize that this dream we carry of beloved community rests on the shoulders of Black women and men who populated the historic Southside Community of Flagstaff, who worked the lumberyards and various industries through which Flagstaff historically thrived, and who continue to toil for recognition, memory, and unity.

We thank all who have partnered with us in this project, and honor those who came before, who stand in solidarity with us now, and those who will carry this torch forward into the brighter future we all dream for Flagstaff.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Section	Page
<b>Forward</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
How Will the Strategic Plan Be Used	5
History of the Lived Black Experience Community Coalition	5
Community Approach	6
Applying an Historical Lens: The Black Community of Flagstaff	7
<b>Chapter 2: Flagstaff's Lived Black Experience: A Forgotten</b>	
<b>People Forging a Path Forward</b>	<b>9</b>
Framework for Town Hall Narratives	10
Key Dates and Topics	10
Social and Criminal Justice	12
Representation and Preservation	18
Youth Issues and Concerns	28
Economic Inclusion and Impact	35
Race, Space and Segregation	42
Mental and Behavioral Health	49
Insights from Lived Black Experience Focus Groups	56
<b>Chapter 3: Goals, Policies, and Strategic Priorities</b>	<b>66</b>
City Council Mission	67
City Council Vision	67
Goals Overview	67
Policies Overview	68
Strategic Overview	70
<b>Appendix A: Glossary</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Appendix B: Strategic Plan Contributors</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Appendix C: Supplemental Materials</b>	<b>86</b>

# **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### INTRODUCTION

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This project, titled “Flagstaff’s Lived Black Experience: A Forgotten People Forging a Path Forward,” is a strategic plan that is intended to become adopted within the framework of the City of Flagstaff’s ongoing development plans, policies, and procedures. A strategic plan provides essential direction, through the critical examination of the past; equal engagement with the present status of the community, systems, and structures under focus; and the development of thoughtful, purpose-driven goals, policies, and strategies for the future.

#### How will the Strategic Plan be used?

The strategic plan is the work of the Flagstaff Lived Black Experience Community Coalition, which operates under a mission to be a catalyst for change in the recognition, honoring, and ongoing development of the Flagstaff Black community, in order to create a better, more holistic, and more fully inclusive Flagstaff community for all. This plan carries forth the vision of cultivating a Black community in Flagstaff that is known, valued, and fully integrated into the cultural and economic development of the City and Northern Arizona region.

Through engagement with the Black community, and other community partners, this strategic plan developed as a means of inviting the forgotten Black community back to the table when it comes to Flagstaff’s development. As was stated by one participant in a community forum, and often echoed throughout the gathering of insights and input from the community: “The lived Black experience is the lived experience.” By embracing and engaging the Lived Black Experience, we endeavor to assist Flagstaff in developing, as per the vision of the City of Flagstaff, a “safe, diverse, just, vibrant, and innovative community with a unique character and quality of life for all.”

#### History of the Lived Black Experience Community Coalition

In June of 2020, the Southside Community Association, Coconino County African Diaspora Advisory Council (ADAC, formerly the African American Advisory Council), Northern Arizona University Ethnic Studies Program, and other community agencies and organizations partnered to commemorate Juneteenth with a virtual celebration. The commemoration event featured what was to become the first in an ongoing series of community lectures on the lived Black experience, and was celebrated within the community as a unique first exposure for many to the Black culture and community of Flagstaff. As a result, a group of like-minded community members joined in collaborative efforts to begin a series of biweekly community dialogs, streamed virtually, regarding various aspects of seldom-taught events and experiences in Black history.

It was in the midst of preparations for the Juneteenth event that the nation was rocked by the news of the killing of George Floyd, when a police officer knelt on his neck for a total of 8 minutes and 46 seconds. As nationwide protests and discourse began, so, too, did the conversation of Black lives take on new significance in Flagstaff. With protests coming to the streets of Flagstaff, and various groups speaking on behalf of the Black community of Flagstaff,

the same group of community members who took up the mantle of educating Flagstaff on various aspects of the Black experience took their endeavors a step further in creating the Lived Black Experience CommUnity Coalition. Seeing an opportunity to engage in the national elevation of Black voices, the Coalition reached out to the City of Flagstaff to pursue a partnership with the City in investing in the Africa American/Black community. Through this project and partnership, the LBEC Coalition invited Flagstaff to continue its legacy as a trailblazer in initiatives and programs furthering the quality of life for both city residents and others throughout the state. With initial outreach in June, and a formal budgetary proposal considered in late July, the City engaged the coalition to undertake this project working toward a strategic framework for truth, justice, and racial reconciliation.

### Community Approach

In undertaking this strategic plan project, the LBEC Coalition engaged public participation with the following goals:

- To identify key issues of concern of the public and investigate and understand the needs and perspectives of Flagstaff community members
- To elicit the input, expertise, and knowledge of community leaders and gatekeepers
- To ensure inclusive dialog with various aspects of the Flagstaff community, actively listening to and facilitating difficult yet meaningful conversations
- To ensure that the community of impact—that is, the Flagstaff Black community—was engaged and involved throughout all phases of strategic planning and project design
- To collaboratively work with both community members and City staff and representatives to craft a plan encompassing all engaged voices and perspectives.

The title term “Flagstaff’s Forgotten People” was the result of numerous community conversations in which members of the historic and current Black community of Flagstaff expressed feelings of invisibility, disenfranchisement, disengagement, and being “hidden” from the ongoing development of Flagstaff. As the project began, the following community actions were engaged:

- The Coalition, led by the Southside Community Association, formalized partnership with community agencies including (alphabetically): City of Flagstaff, Coconino County African Diaspora Advisory Council, First Missionary Baptist Church, Flagstaff NAACP, Harbert AME Church, NAU’s Ethnic Studies Program, Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc., Riverside Church of God in Christ, Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc., and Springhill Baptist Church.
- Beginning in mid- to late-August 2020 the community was informed, through the Murdoch Community Center, of upcoming community forums (initially referred to as “town halls”), the process under which the strategic plan would be developed, and the need for community engagement in seeking insights and recommended actions.
- From mid-September through early-October 2020, community forums and focus groups were held to solicit community history, experience, and feedback.
- Community organizations, student groups, and other agencies were invited to provide feedback both by phone, participation in dialoging events, and via email at [flagstafflivedblack@gmail.com](mailto:flagstafflivedblack@gmail.com).

- Feedback from community forums, focus groups, and other community conversations was compiled and drafted into a comprehensive strategic plan, for presentation to City Council in early November 2020.

### Applying an Historical Lens: The Black Community of Flagstaff

There is a saying in the Akan language of West Africa: “SANKOFA ... Se wo were fi na wosan kofa a yenki.” The phrase literally translated states, “It is not taboo to go back and fetch what you forgot,” or, “Do not be afraid to go back for what was forgotten to bring it with you.” The story of this strategic plan is incomplete without the history of the Black community whose legacy, struggle, and truth we bring forward from the past to carry us through our present and into the future of Flagstaff.

African Americans first made their way into Arizonan history with the enumeration of two freed Blacks in an Arizona Territory census recorded in the early 1860s, and from this period onward made names for themselves as business owners, laborers, tradesmen and women, and entrepreneurs. Buffalo Soldiers, members of the 1866 establishment of the U.S. Colored Troops, found themselves encamped throughout northern Arizona, including service among the first to oversee, patrol, and protect early national parks. During the Great Migration of the 1940s and 1950s, at the terminus of World War II as America struck forth into a post-war era of new progress and brighter opportunities, African Americans from the rural South migrated westward in search of economic opportunity, new prospects of employment, and the dream of upward mobility. Many would continue onward to California, but some found the promise of all the above dreams fulfilled in Northern Arizona. In seeking escape from the racial discrimination of the Jim Crow South, many African Americans settled into new opportunities with the BSNF Railroad and lumber industry.

In Flagstaff, Black migrants found that despite leaving the racially oppressive South, gainful employment did not mean freedom from racial prejudices. Travel restrictions, including segregated trains and unwelcoming automotive transport, resulted in the publication of the *Negro Motorist Green Book*, more commonly known simply as the *Green Book*, in which localized listings provided documented safe havens for Black travelers; among these locations were several historic Flagstaff establishments, including the Du Beau's Motel Inn, El Rancho Flagstaff, the Nackard Inn, the Park Plaza Motel, Pearl Polk, Vandevier Lodge & Dining Room, and the Yucca Greyhound Café. Black workers found that even the picturesque mountain town of Flagstaff placed stringent limitations on the movement of Black people, resulting in the segregated community south of the tracks now known as Southside. According to historian Jack Reid, in a 2016 publication titled “‘I Wanted to Get Up and Move’: The Arizona Lumber Industry and the Great Migration,” while Flagstaff was “less overtly segregated than southern communities,” there remained a “clear separation between white and minority homes and businesses.” (Reid, *Forest History Today*, 10) Housing was sparse, yet the Black community that formed found a way to craft and cultivate community and, as George Lipsitz puts it in his book *How Racism Takes Place*, “[turn] segregation into congregation.” (Lipsitz, 51)

With the near doubling of Flagstaff's population in the 1940s, the emergence of Flagstaff's distinct cultural communities defied the both spoken and unspoken rules that segregation put upon them. As Flagstaff transformed from a small mountain town to a college environment supporting research and medical services arising out of World War II and the nuclear energy

industries, segregation entrenched itself within the Black, Native, and LatinX/HispaniX communities of Flagstaff, forcing these racial and ethnic communities to strive for visibility and success against the odds. With the railroad tracks serving as a natural buffer between the white-dominant North of Flagstaff and the multicultural South, neighborhoods became areas of comfort and commercial prosperity for Flagstaff's citizens of color, and welcoming sites for interracial dialogue and engagement. Segregation was law in 1909's Flagstaff, including in schools; the Dunbar School—named for Black poet, essayist, and playwright Paul Laurence Dunbar—served as Flagstaff's first segregated school, opening its doors in 1927. Prior to the opening of the Dunbar School, Black students received schooling at Emerson Middle School. Living history reflects on the period of segregation in Flagstaff as both limiting and enriching for the Black community; while limitations to movements were strictly adhered to, the Southside managed to develop as a thriving center for Black commerce, industry, and spiritual practices in Flagstaff. Black community members owned barbershops, beauty salons, cafes, shops, and establishments such as the Black Elks Club and El Rancho Grande. Names such as Sims, Williams, Hickman, Chapman, Dorsey, et cetera were recognized with the shared distinction of Flagstaff landmark names such as Babbitt, Weatherford, and Riordan.

Yet as the City continued to grow, the Southside faced economic decline. The termination of the lumber industry, and the relegation of Black workers to menial labor and service work, made dim the once sparkling vision of westward migration. As opportunities began to stall, so, too, did the progression of the Black community of Flagstaff. The historic location of the Dunbar School, now known as the Murdoch Community Center, stands as a living testament to the transition. When in 1954 the Flagstaff Unified School District ended de facto segregation, the Dunbar School was closed. Despite the historical lens of the positives of desegregation, it remains a strong symbol of de facto and de jure segregation's ill-effect on Black communities that with the closure of the Dunbar School came the first in a series of blows to the established Black community of Flagstaff. From the mid-1950s to the 1970s the abandoned building was allowed to fall into disrepair, until it was purchased and rehabilitated as the Murdoch Center (named in honor of Cleo Murdoch, principal of the Dunbar School from 1927 to 1940, when her post was taken by another Flagstaff icon, Wilson Riles). The Murdoch Center serves as one of few lasting monuments to the presence of Flagstaff's Black community, a symbol of the Flagstaff Black Lived Experience, and an enduring beacon of the hope that those early Black migrants brought with them to Northern Arizona for a place where they, too, could thrive in America.



## **CHAPTER 2:**

# **FLAGSTAFF'S LIVED BLACK EXPERIENCE:**

## **A FORGOTTEN PEOPLE FORGING A PATH FORWARD**

## FRAMEWORK FOR TOWN HALL NARRATIVES

In July of 2020, a newly formed coalition of Black community leaders, known as the Lived Black Experience CommUnity Coalition, approached the Flagstaff City Council with a proposal to collaborate on a series of forums (initially identified as “town halls”) focused on learning more about the many issues facing the Black community of Flagstaff, and addressing the rising sense of “invisibility” within this community. In August 2020, the City of Flagstaff officially partnered with the LBEC Coalition to fund the development of a series of programs aimed at creating an open dialog with the Black community of Flagstaff, and the broader Flagstaff community, in order to make positive impact within the Flagstaff Black community. The goal of these forums was to inspire conversation, collaboration, and an eventual community action policy to both address the concerns of the Black community and work toward the betterment and benefit of all of Flagstaff.

The LBEC Coalition, coordinating from a home base of the historic Murdoch Center, worked strategically to develop a series of forums and conduct various forms of outreach throughout the community to encourage attendance. The team’s outreach efforts included flyer, social media, and direct communications to various community partners; these partners included organizations such as the Flagstaff branch of the NAACP, the Coconino County African Diaspora Advisory Council and Tri-Diversity Councils, the Flagstaff Unified School District, the Southside Community Association, NAU’s Ethnic Studies Program, the four historically Black churches in Flagstaff, and individual contacts within City, County, and other community groups.

In addition to attending and participating in the community forums, community members were engaged by the following means:

- **Email** – community members were encouraged to reach out to provide ongoing feedback, questions, and dialog via email at [FlagstaffLivedBlack@gmail.com](mailto:FlagstaffLivedBlack@gmail.com)
- **Focus Groups** – small focus groups were held throughout the City to engage with community members more intimately, including the historic Black churches, community organizations, the Kuttz barbershop and college, and a series of weekend focus groups held at the historic Murdoch Community Center.
- **Educational Outreach** – Outreach was made to educational institutions including the Flagstaff Unified School District, Northern Arizona University, the NAU Black Student Union, and several panhellenic fraternity and sorority groups within the Flagstaff community

### Key Dates and Topics

The community forums were structured to include a welcome message, policy briefs reviewing and summarizing key issues identified within the Black community, a period of Questions and Answers with the policy brief authors, and facilitated discussions in small groups addressing various key questions identified ahead of and throughout the

conversations. The following represents the schedule of the forums, all of which took place as scheduled:

***Social & Criminal Justice – Pastor Gerald Richard***

Thursday, September 17<sup>th</sup>

5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

***Black Representation & Preservation – Rev. Bernadine Lewis***

Saturday, September 19<sup>th</sup>

4:30 – 6:00 p.m.

***Black Youth Perspectives & Concerns – Mr. Warren Brown***

Thursday, September 24<sup>th</sup>

5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

***Black Economic Inclusion & Impact – Ms. Khara House***

Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup>

4:30 – 6:00 p.m.

***Race, Space & Segregation – Dr. Ricardo Guthrie***

Thursday, October 1<sup>st</sup>

5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

***Mental & Behavioral Health – Mr. Jermaine Barkley***

Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>

4:30 – 6:00 p.m.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all town halls were held via Zoom; a final series of in-person town halls were offered on Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, with social distancing and masking required, at the historic Murdoch Community Center (203 E Brannen Ave).

# SOCIAL & CRIMINAL JUSTICE

## Pastor Gerald Richard



### ISSUE STATEMENT

WE UNDERSTAND that the broader social and criminal justice concerns of police brutality are not the central issues facing Black Flagstaff community members; however, statistical data bears out a clear discrepancy in Black **representation** within the Flagstaff criminal justice system. A lack of **diversity** and representation within the local criminal justice system reflects a disparity in how both Black and other community members of color both view and anticipate likely outcomes of interactions with this system.



### BACKGROUND

According to the United States Census Bureau Flagstaff's estimated population as of July 1, 2019 was 75,038 people. The following is the race and Hispanic origin breakdown:

- White alone 78%
- Black or African American alone 2.3%
- American Indian and Alaska Native alone 8.8%
- Asian alone 3.2%
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone 0.2%
- Two or more races 4.6%
- Hispanic or Latino 19.0%
- White alone, not Hispanic or Latino 64.2%

The number of African Americans arrested by the Flagstaff Police Department in 2019 was 4.0%, with the highest being in the areas of shoplifting (6%), disorderly conduct (4%) and aggravated assault (4%). Domestic violence was at 3%. All other offenses were 2% or less.

The number of officers is only 1.52 per 1,000 people, which is low. As of 2020, the Flagstaff Police Department reported zero Black officers or civilian personnel.

A recent presentation provided to the Flagstaff City Council discussed the potential for training for officers in the way of implicit bias, racial profiling, et cetera. Still outstanding is the question of what training civilians receive in these areas.

### CONTEXTUALIZATION

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To distinguish the terminology of this discourse, it is important to note the difference between the concepts of social justice and criminal justice. Social Justice, generally speaking, is the overarching principle of right and wrong in society; it is our broadly accepted societal definition of what is fair and unfair. Criminal Justice, a specific subset of Social Justice, is the specific principle of what is right and wrong, fair and unfair, according to the law. The two principles are intrinsically linked. What we are questioning in this dialog is whether the criminal justice system in Flagstaff has the tools, resources, and methodologies in place to fully address questions of **equity**, fairness, and justice within the African American community of Flagstaff. We recognize the engagement of the local criminal justice system with the African American community as an essential part of the ongoing, broader conversation of criminal justice within Flagstaff.

Recent conversations in Flagstaff regarding policing and engagement of the Black community with the local criminal justice system have focused on the nature of interactions with the police, budgetary concerns, salaries and wages, etc. Recently, the Flagstaff Unified School District Anti-Racism task force shared a potential goal of adding School Resource Officers as part of their efforts to ensure more positive interaction with African American children. However, further positive programming—i.e. a Police Athletic League, or other programs geared toward positive interactions with African American youth—have not yet been publicly presented.

The police are only one link in the criminal justice system. Statistics of the racial/ethnic breakdown of staff and similar breakdowns of the number of cases filed and prosecuted, the number of guilty and no contest pleas, and a statistical analysis of convictions by courts and juries are further focuses that might be engaged as the City continues this ongoing discussion. Demographics within the broader criminal justice system, including various prosecutors' offices and other local/county/state offices and attorneys and staff, the defense bar and their staff, and the judicial framework (judges, clerks, staff, etc) within Flagstaff and Coconino County courts are further insights that might weigh on our understanding of the full breadth of the criminal justice system's engagement with the African American community.

This is not a one-time-fix-all effort. This conversation will include a commitment to outlining a workable, flexible plan for the next 5-10 years. This includes a commitment from all levels of the community, from the top levels of city officials to the citizen level. The broader goal is to work to abolish systemic racism in Flagstaff's socio-economic and justice systems.

### KEY QUESTIONS

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- WHAT do you feel are the primary Social and Criminal Justice concerns facing the Black community of Flagstaff?

- WHAT direct experience(s) have you had with law enforcement or the criminal justice system in Flagstaff, if any?
- WHAT do you feel needs to change in order to ensure continued positive development of the Flagstaff community in this area?
- WHAT does change look like to you when it comes to Social and Criminal justice?

### Resources

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- Flagstaff Police Department Report to City Council (2020)
- National Registry of Exonerations Report, *Government Misconduct and Convicting the Innocent: The Role of Prosecutors, Police and Other Law Enforcement* (2020)
- United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division Report: Investigation of the Ferguson Police Department (2015)



## COMMUNITY FORUM OUTCOMES

There was a marked desire to see increased community engagement, including specific programs partnering the Police Department with the community and increased efforts from the Flagstaff Police Department to develop positive relationships within the community. Participants noted the importance of peace officers living in the community, and engaging with various community groups. The community emphasized the distinction between **defunding** and “**de-policing**,” with a communal trend toward a desire for de-policing.

When asked specifically what needs to change within the community to create positive, meaningful, long-lasting impact, several concepts were shared, including:

- Opportunities for rehabilitation versus “retribution”
- Questioning the process – focus on **restorative justice**
- Internal and community examinations of “who we give the benefit of the doubt to” (implicit biases)
- The “exercise of discretion” in the implementation of criminal charges; i.e. community members wanted more direction input in recommending against punitive criminal charges with greater emphasis on restorative justice
- Introducing young, underrepresented citizens to the law for the purposes of recruitment, increased diversity, and to ensure understanding of how to engage with the legal system
- Ensuring training within the criminal justice system in diversity, inclusion, implicit bias, etc.

The answer to creating meaningful change in this area can be broken down into three target areas:

1. Unlearning Racism: starting in the home, community, and institutions; this includes classrooms, workplaces, courts, jail and prison systems, etc.
2. Updating “relic-like” laws that perpetuate systems of **institutional racism**
3. Undergoing Ongoing, Mandatory Diversity Training for all employees

There was also a desire to see increased personal relationships with the Flagstaff Police Department and the Black community. It was noted by participants that because of individual relationships with the police in Flagstaff, in some cases, the perceived “edge” was less in encounters.

Participants called for recognition of the system beyond racism, defined by one participant as the “American caste system, in which the Black man [or woman] is the lowest class citizen.” Participants desired to see assurances that “there is value for people of color” within the community. Likewise, participants called for recognition of “**white psychology**,” defined as the disconnect that exists between what is in front of someone and what is conditioned through “institutional reinforcements.”



There was general consensus that the Black population of Flagstaff may be underrepresented numerically by Census and local data collections, but overrepresented in incidents of law enforcement interactions.

# REPRESENTATION & PRESERVATION Rev. Bernadine Lewis



### ISSUE STATEMENT

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DESPITE THE documented historical impact of Black communities on the cultural, economic and broader community development of Flagstaff, there are few to no statements, placards, or other displays recognizing these contributions. We recognize the importance of representation and preservation of Black culture and Black communal wisdom in both recognizing the fully contextualized history of Flagstaff and pursuing an ongoing diversity in the development of the Flagstaff community at large.

### BACKGROUND

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Through these town halls, the Coalition wants to move the Flagstaff Community from actively listening to supporting its Black representation and preservation with moral conviction, personal involvement, and the investment of tangible and financial resources.



Flagstaff, Arizona, not unlike most American towns, reflects a complex story of America's tangled understanding of its racial history. Compounded to this is also the challenge of persuading City leadership to invest in measures that support the representation, resilience, and historical preservation of Flagstaff's past, present, and future Black culture and lives. Given the disparity of Black wealth and political influence, we as African-diaspora people must move beyond the pain and frustration while still seeking to be seated at the table of equality. As we take our seats, we are still finding our voice to ask that our intellectual and artistic contributions and blood, sweat, and tears be fully validated and acknowledged as America's history. Also, today, we are asking this in the bitter memory of our African ancestors who were bought and sold here, and with whipped backs, toiled as free labor to build these United States of America.

Historically, a northern Arizona town's first census in 1860 counted twenty-one 'Freed Black Male[s] or Female[s].' Africana people have been in Flagstaff since the 1880s when men arrived here to work on the railroad. In the 1920s, a significant number of Black people would migrate to Flagstaff to work as lumberjacks. Black people came here to find better lives for their families. They found other work as miners, farmhands, housekeepers, cooks, shopkeepers, and ultimately, teachers, school administrators, and what was then referred to as secretaries.

The Black population has never been one of vast numbers. However, our presence in the Community was not what many of us describe today as being "invisible" in a population of seventy thousand residents.

The newly formed Lived Black Experience CommUnity Coalition are twelve members who currently reside or have resided in Flagstaff. Our mission to create discussions that educate, enlighten, and inform our acquaintances, friends, and neighbors of other ethnicities, but primarily of European -American descent, about our our-story and experiences while living black in Flagstaff.

### **Following are several key historical aspects of Flagstaff's Black/African-American community:**

African-Americans in Flagstaff have primarily lived the Southside and Pine Knoll areas. Many of the homes where Black people resided are still owned by the original family, but the owner no longer lives in Flagstaff.

Black representation and preservation cannot be discussed without mention of the Black church, which has always been the community center. The Black church has historically served as both the school site and place for social functions. During the week, the Black church has been the daycare center and preschool, and provides meals to the clergy and its congregants, community, and people without homes. Some Black churches also have a prison ministry that assists newly released prisoners with finding housing, clothing for interviews, and securing job placement. Most importantly, the Black church provided childcare during the summer with Vacation Bible School and was historically the meeting place during the Civil Rights Movement.

On Sundays, the church becomes a place of fellowship, praise and worship, while also providing spiritual guidance and healing.

Flagstaff has four historically African-American churches:

- First Missionary Baptist where Evangelist Shirley Sims is the Assistant Minister (219 South Elden Street)
- Springhill Baptist Church led by second-generation church Pastor Cemie Clayton (624 South O'Leary Street)
- Riverside Church of God in Christ (419 South Verde Street)
- Harbert AME Church (424 South San Francisco Street)

### **REPRESENTATION & PRESERVATION QUICK FACTS:**

- > Historical evidence reflects a Black/African-American presence in Flagstaff since its early history
- > Little recognition or representation of the Black Cultural Heritage of Flagstaff exists
- > Most communities have social clubs, bars, and restaurants representing the different ethnic cultures in that town
- > Recent community dialogues have sparked the question of how/why the representation of Black culture in Flagstaff have largely been "erased," and how to reinvigorate representation going forward

The Black community has always had businesses that provide services unique to the culture. For example, there were black barbershops and hair salons, hat shops, butcher shops that sold meats like chicken gizzards, chitlins', fatback, oxtails, and turkey wings. Black people have always owned restaurants specializing in soul food cuisine, which traditionally includes collard greens, lima beans, okra, and black-eyed peas complemented with white rice and gravy, macaroni and cheese, buttermilk biscuits, or cornbread.



While most of Flagstaff's Black men were lumberjacks, railroad men, and miners, the women, like most in the African-American culture, were laundresses, shopkeepers, cooks, seamstresses, nurses, and maids. Those fortunate enough to complete specialized studies or four-year colleges became then called secretaries and schoolteachers.

Some Black men found a decent living becoming personal drivers and lawn care workers to the wealthy or maintenance workers at schools and businesses. Very few Negroes were able to attend college after graduating high school. Most Black men completed college degrees after returning home from WWII.

Flagstaff had an Elks Lodge and Black Masonic Hall. It should be noted that European-American Masons and Shriners met in a separate hall. The Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks of the World is an African-American fraternal order that was established in 1897 in the United States. The Elks Order is said to have descended from the Free African Society, the first formal Black society in America. When traveling or moving to a new city or state, Negro people would seek to find an Elks Lodge for dining, lodging assistance, and trusted guidance and advice while traveling.

These lodges were listed in the Negro Motorist Green Book, an annual guidebook used by Black travelers to navigate Arizona during Jim Crow. The guidebook featured Black-owned businesses and hotels, gas stations, restaurants, barbershops and beauty parlors, and dance-halls where Negro people were welcomed. Flagstaff had listings for rooming houses that also provided meals. The Sims family, one of the few remaining longtime black Flagstaff families, now owns the historic Elks Club location on San Francisco Street.



## CONTEXTUALIZATION

Despite the rich historical tapestry of Black/African-American culture in Flagstaff, there remain few physical representations of this culture to date. As part of this ongoing conversation, we seek to examine how this “erasure” has happened, recognize the significance of this history, and move forward in ways that recognize, honor, and preserve the legacy of Black culture in Flagstaff’s ever evolving story. To provide a contextual framework for this discussion, we will look at the lingering representations of Black culture in Flagstaff, and question the limitations thereof:

There are only two brick and mortar representations of African-American/Black businesses in Flagstaff – a barbershop and a co-op market that assists in launching retail and food businesses. Flagstaff’s other Black businesses are operated from the proprietor’s home. While there may be others, the following are the only known businesses to longtime Black Flagstaff residents:

1. **Dirty Bird Spices** is owned by **Brandon Billings-Reber** (2703 North 1st Street)
2. **Destiney’s Creations**, offering homemade bath and body products and handmade greeting cards, was created and is owned by **Coral and Destiney Evans**; products are available at the Market of Dreams located at 2532 East 7th Avenue, and other local retailers
3. **Elijah Smith** provides DJ services for private parties and special events
4. **Gallyvant/Jewelry, Women’s Clothing, and Accessories** is owned by **Kim Robinson**; this business transitioned from a downtown Flagstaff brick and mortar business to an online and mobile business
5. **Jerry Nichols** is a local musician (**DuB and Down with the Blues**), personal designer clothing line, and food caterer
6. **Kutz Barber Shop and College** is owned by **Jabar Nichols** (2219 East 7th Avenue)
7. Black communities have always had its celebrated soul food chefs who do catering for church fundraisers and special events (i.e., baby showers, wedding receptions, and the family dinners served after a funeral service). **Ms. Sissy Hickman’s** culinary skills are well known throughout the Flagstaff African-American community.

Next to Black spirituality and religion, Black culture uses the Arts to tell “our-story,” through drawing and painting, literature, poetry, music, and theatre. The only artistic evidence of African-American cultural preservation in Flagstaff is a mural on the Murdoch Community Center wall, originally the Dunbar School site, a formerly segregated elementary school named after African-American poet Paul Laurence Dunbar. The mural depicts Black community leaders and influencers from the Segregation era. If one did not drive or walk down East Brennen Avenue, they may never know that people of African descent are somehow connected to Flagstaff.

We are grateful to then community activist, Mayor Coral Evans, for organizing

community members to save the Murdoch Center, and our Community Chieftess, Ms. Deborah Harris, for being the Preservationist of the Murdoch and the scattered history of Black Flagstaff.

Our community is incredibly grateful to Dr. Ricardo Guthrie, whose artistic vision brought together the combined talents of other local artists, students, and community members to complete the mural in 2011.

It is not uncommon for communities to recognize and celebrate their artists with a gathering space to protect these sacred objects for many years to come. Today we ask if you know the following Black artists, and have you seen their art somewhere in Flagstaff?

- Debra Edgerton, NAU Assistant Professor, School of Art
- Dr. Ricardo Guthrie, Associate Professor, Department of Ethnic Studies (currently on Sabbatical)
- Professor Franklin Willis, NAU Professor, School of Art<sup>1</sup>

The Murdoch Community Center is where we gather to celebrate King Day, Black History Month, Juneteenth, and Kwanzaa. We gather there to celebrate our achievements. We meet there to plan our strategies for obtaining equality and our plans to become visible in a City that does not have at least one street named after a well-known African-American (see note below). However, there is a downtown street and local beer brewery named after celebrated scientist and public racist, Louis Agassiz.

Meanwhile, the NAACP also holds their monthly meetings at the Murdoch. Those walls contain class lectures, Southside Community Association discussions, and memories of birthday, graduation, and wedding celebrations. It is a space that taught young community leaders how to respond to, "but all lives matter." The Murdoch has been a preschool from Monday to Friday, a blues hall featuring Winslow's Tommy Dukes on Saturday evening, and a church on Sunday. The Murdoch is whatever we need it to be at the time we need it.



Most communities have social clubs, bars, and restaurants representing the different ethnic cultures in that town. These elements are notably missing within the Flagstaff community.

In conclusion, we leave you with questions raised by the African-American community of Flagstaff: Where is Flagstaff's jazz, rhythm and blues club, soul food restaurant, retailers that showcase the fashion and products that our culture heavily influences in the media and on the runways. Where is the Flagstaff Black Cultural Center? When will Aida, Porgy and Bess, The Wiz, Ladysmith Black Mombasa, and the Alvin Ailey Dance Theatre perform in Flagstaff? Can we plan to have Flagstaff's first annual African Arts and Food Festival in downtown Heritage Square?

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<sup>1</sup> Note: There is another Black painter (name unknown) recently brought to the author's attention in Flagstaff's La Plaza Vieja.

If Black lives matter in Flagstaff, its leadership must establish tangible evidence of this in its schools, businesses, food and beverage establishments, social and recreational activities, and the tourist industry. There needs to be an ongoing project to record and preserve the City and all of northern Arizona's Black history in one place. Most importantly, the City's Economic Development needs to encourage, support, and nurture Black businesses in prime areas that include downtown, Route 66, and Fourth Street. Cultural and artistic activities should also be included on the City's calendar.

This discussion is meant to spark a commitment to support the representation, resilience, and historical preservation of the past, present, and future Black culture and lives. Again, through these town halls, the Coalition wants to move the Flagstaff Community from actively listening to supporting its Black/African-American representation and preservation with moral conviction, personal involvement, and the investment of tangible and financial resources.

### KEY QUESTIONS

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- WHAT representations of the Arts, culture, and the unique development of community have you seen, if any, that are specific to the Black community in Flagstaff?
- WHAT historical, artistic, or other significant moments or representations are you aware of that are lacking within the portrayal and/or recognition of the Black community of Flagstaff?
- HOW can we, together, create a visible Black presence in Flagstaff?
- WHAT do you feel needs to change in order to ensure continued positive development of the Flagstaff community in this area?
- WHAT does change look like to you when it comes to Representation and Preservation for Flagstaff's Black community?



## COMMUNITY FORUM OUTCOMES

Great emphasis was placed on the need for cultural representation and recognition for the Black community of Flagstaff. Community members noted that they had previously not thought about the lack of Black representation in the community culture and historical preservation of Flagstaff; the conversation during the townhall led to a distinct recognition of the lack of such representation, and a sense that the community is “incomplete” without it.

When asked what change looks like when it comes to representation and preservation for Flagstaff's Black community, community feedback included:

- Recommendations for a cultural festival in Heritage Square to bring knowledge of the Black community
- More activities during Black History Month
- Looking into having some of Flagstaff's city signage changed to recognize, honor, and commemorate important figures within the history of Flagstaff and Northern Arizona
- Recognizing the “food ways and folk ways” of the Black community. It was noted that “all the things [Black people] do show our presence, although we might not see it in the built environment.” A recommendation was made in connection to this idea wherein the built environments within Flagstaff would recognize and reflect the Black presence, as historically functions in the City of Flagstaff “have not paid attention to” the cultural customs of Flagstaff's Black community
- Providing funding and support pathways to celebrate and recognize the “food ways, folk ways, and cultural impacts” of the Flagstaff Black community
- Finding ways to decrease the revolving door of Black enterprise and impact in the community; it was noted that Black economic enterprises often cannot sustain a presence in Flagstaff due to high costs of living and limited industry opportunities.
- Having the City's administration recognize all of the above.

When asked what needs to change in order to ensure continued positive development of the Black Flagstaff community in regards to representation and preservation, key feedback included:

1. Buy-In from City Leadership – The work of recognizing and ensuring representation and preservation of the Black community requires buy-in from the City, both financially and physically in participation, partnerships, and ongoing engagement.
2. Encouraging Community Accomplice-ship – It is essential that community members also buy-in, and partner with the Black community to raise awareness, bring knowledge, and celebrate culture.
3. Creating Awareness for Invisible Businesses – Community members need education on how to help, get involved, etc. There also needs to be enhanced visibility for the Black community, including getting messaging out to church groups, community members and organizations, etc.

4. Extra-Cultural Education – The education that people who aren't part of the Black Culture receive is very important, as trying to show empathy for a group you are unaware of is difficult.
5. Community Collaboration – A member of Council noted that the City should be “working toward implementation and meaningful change, [and] embracing this beautiful culture we're talking about.”
6. Cultural Showcases – There is a need to elevate cultural events that celebrate Black culture; the example was shared of the fact that in other areas of the country, events such as Juneteenth are major celebrations. There should be a showcasing of the music, the food, and so forth from the Black community, as well as representative and culturally celebratory mural art.
7. Sharing the “Lived Experience” – Community members noted that “the Black lived experience *is* the lived experience; there's no shame in saying Black Lives Matter because if all lives matter then Black lives must matter.”

A key element of the discussion focused on historical moments, artistic representations, et cetera that are lacking in the portrayal of the Black community of Flagstaff. Community members noted the need to recognize the Black lumberjack history of Flagstaff, and contributions to the sawmill and lumber legacies of the City. The lack of publicly accessible information on Black history in Flagstaff was noted; community members recommended creating a special section of the Flagstaff Public Library to archive the Black history of Flagstaff, and incorporate this literature and learning into the FPL summer reading series. Community members expressed a desire to see an “embodiment of Black culture in the community,” as otherwise the historical knowledge and sources regarding the Black community have been stored in special collections that remain uncommon knowledge.

Two distinct cultural centers and landmarks were recognized throughout the community dialogue. First, the importance and continued impact of the Murdoch Community Center was recognized. There was a marked desire to see the Murdoch Community Center serve as both a cultural landmark and cultural center for the Black community of Flagstaff.

Secondly, it was noted that there was once a Buffalo Soldier Museum in Flagstaff. The museum is believed to have been built in the 1980s to commemorate the Buffalo Soldier encampment historically based in Flagstaff; the museum was later torn down to facilitate the building of a library. The collection was disbursed throughout the country, with the noted intention that in three to five years the City of Flagstaff would designate a new, permanent location for the museum; this, sadly, never took place, and it is believed that the ability of the City to reclaim and restore the original historical collection is seriously diminished, if not altogether lost. There was a desire to see the museum, at the very least, memorialized, if not to see the City's promise fulfilled in restoring the museum outright. It was recommended that the City preserve the history of the Buffalo soldiers in Flagstaff; houses still exist that speak to this history, as well as information in the City archives and Pioneer Museum.

Finally, community members spoke of the social infrastructure of the community. Ways to enhance this infrastructure included

## Flagstaff's Lived Black Experience Strategic Plan

- Before and after-school programs
- A vibrant art community
- Broadband internet connectivity throughout the City, including the historic Southside community; and
- Methodology(-ies) to promote and uplift all cultural representation within the community

A closing thought presented during the community dialog stated: “If we continue to gentrify the City in the way it is being done, it will become a beautiful place without a beautiful [cultural] vibe.” The community expressed a desire to see Flagstaff “beautified” through cultural representation and infrastructural changes to create enhanced visibility of the Black community, thereby elevating an important, yet to date missing, aspect of Flagstaff’s broader community.

# YOUTH ISSUES & CONCERNS

## Mr. Warren Brown



### ISSUE STATEMENT

AS WE ENGAGE in historical conversations about the Black community presence in Flagstaff, we also understand the important future-forward engagement of young voices, issues, and concerns for continued progress. Recognizing the significance of the critical life stage of youth, particularly for young Black members of the Flagstaff community, and the unique perspective they offer to local issues and development, we also recognize the importance of continuously engaging young people and their perspectives on the development of the Black community in Flagstaff.



### BACKGROUND

To provide background on the issues and concerns facing youth in Flagstaff, the work of the Flagstaff Community Policy Trust (“the Trust”) was examined. The Trust is a group of former elected officials and community leaders that come together to analyze a community issue or topic. The Trust was established in 2017 by Flagstaff Mayor Coral Evans. Individuals are selected to participate in periodic Trust meetings based on knowledge and expertise in the topic of interest. The Trust also serves as an opportunity to provide continuity about the history and purpose of long-term policy goals from those no longer in office, and, with each meeting pertaining to a specific topic, it provides valuable insight regarding effective policy solutions to ongoing issues.

The Trust used the 40 Developmental Assets as a reference to guide Trust participants in evaluating community efforts toward building healthy skills in Flagstaff youth. Created in 1990 by the Search Institute, these developmental assets identify a set of skills, experiences, relationships and behaviors that enable youth to grow into successful, healthy, adults. The Developmental Assets framework is initially divided into two categories, External and

#### FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA 2010 CENSUS DATA

Population estimates (7/1/19):  
75,038

Persons > 5 <18 years: 17.90%

White alone: 78.00%

Black or African American  
alone: 2.30%

American Indian and Alaska  
Native alone: 8.60%

Asian alone: 3.20%

Native Hawaiian and Other  
Pacific Islander alone: 0.20%

Two or More Races: 4.60%

Hispanic or Latino: 19.00%



Internal. Each category is further divided into more specific assets. This asset framework helps users assess the needs of youth in their respective communities.

The members of the Trust who participated in a specific conversation on Youth Opportunities and Challenges were:

- Dan Musselman Deputy Chief for the City of Flagstaff Police Department.
- Donnie Jones Sunnyside Neighborhood Association
- Mayor Coral Evans Mayor of Flagstaff, was formerly Vice Mayor, a former City Council Member, and founder of the Policy Trust.
- Danny Neal Retired Director of the Hal Jensen Recreation Center.
- Stephanie Jefferson Board Member for the Sunnyside Neighborhood Association.
- Peter Van Wyck Regional Director for “First Things First”
- The Hon. Margaret McCullough, Presiding Judge of Coconino County Juvenile Court
- Amanda Kristinat CEO of the Boys and Girls Club of Flagstaff.
- Liz Archuleta Chair of the Coconino County Board of Supervisors, District #2
- Bryon Matsuda Director of Coconino County Juvenile Court Services.
- Kara Kelty Clerk for FUSD & former Flagstaff City Council Member

## DATA

### FUSD Demographics by Sex

Male: 52.1%

Female: 47.9%

### Socioeconomic Demographics

\* 40.7% of students in the district receive Free and Reduced-priced Lunch (FRPL) *[The data for this corresponding statistic were not broken down by ethnicity]*

### Demographics (Disciplinary)

\* Black students comprised 2% of the total in school suspensions, 2.2% of out of school suspensions, and 3.5% referrals to law enforcement, and 0.0% of expulsions across the district.

\* Biracial/Multiracial comprised 8.1% of in school suspensions, 5.7% of out of school suspensions, 1.7% of referrals to law enforcement, and 13.3% of expulsions across the

## CONTEXTUALIZATION

In a report from the Youth Opportunities and Challenges meeting of the Trust, it was shared that while Trust participants generally agreed that Flagstaff has done “great work giving youth the tools, programs and attention they need to help them succeed in life,” there was also a need to acknowledge that “more work is needed to ensure all Flagstaff youth are cared for and fully represented in the community. Specific challenges faced by Flagstaff youth included:

1. Family Experience
2. Economic Challenges, and
3. General Inclusiveness

Recommended solutions included increased communication, positive community attitudes and influence, education and educational opportunity, family support, and increased outreach. One of the two strongest recommendations brought forward during the discussion was the re-establishment of the City of Flagstaff Youth Commission; in 2019 the Flagstaff City Council began discussions to reestablish the committee, and formally moved forward with that action in Spring 2020. The second key recommendation was the establishment of an effort to secure assets for our community youth based on the 40 developmental assets model.

## KEY QUESTIONS

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### YOUTH ISSUES & CONCERNS QUICK FACTS:

#### Academic Enrollment

- Of the 46 students who enrolled in Algebra I in 8th grade, 0.0% were Black
- Of the 56 students enrolled in Calculus, 0% were Black
- Of the 558 students who enrolled in Chemistry, (1%) were Black
- Of the 178 who enrolled in physics, (1%) were Black
- Of the 42 students who took the SAT/ACT tests, 0.0% were Black

- WHAT are creative ways to fund youth programs in general in the Flagstaff community?
- WERE you aware of the Flagstaff Youth Commission? Why do you think it was stopped? What will it take to revive it in a form that is relevant, effective and inclusive of the Black Lived experience?
- WHAT direct experience(s) have you had with youth programs, initiatives, or other factors impacting the young Black members of the Flagstaff community, if any?
- ARE you aware of local resources aimed at youth and families (i.e. free public transportation services, prevention and crisis intervention services, etc.)? Are they provided equitably and inclusively?
- WHAT do you feel needs to change in order to ensure continued positive development of the Flagstaff community in this area?
- WHAT does change look like to you when it comes to Youth Issues & Concerns?

### COMMUNITY FORUM OUTCOMES

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As the focus of this community forum was youth concerns, the community discussion was intentional in seeking input from youth representation. One young adult in attendance, who is currently enrolled in the Flagstaff Unified School District, noted that there are no many clubs or organizations for people of color; this student felt strongly that clubs should be aimed at people of color, in order to inform people of “the history behind what’s happening in the world [and] why it’s happening.” They noted a desire to provide self-education and social awareness to their peer group, and to see such learning encouraged within the education system. The student noted the importance of communicating to the public that “these are things young people want, to inspire the community to help support [students and people of color].” They also suggested a partnership with NAU fraternities and sororities to fundraise for school organizations aimed at providing such educational and enrichment opportunities.

Another community member noted that they “hear so many things that young people talk about, that they request, and that [are] ignored.” They and other community members recommended providing fun educational opportunities that do not require parental transport. It was noted that groups like high school Mexican American and African American groups are about bringing people together.

One community resource that was noted throughout the discussion was the historical Flagstaff Youth Commission. It was noted that this was “just one of those things that just kind of went away,” but was a well-received and worthwhile investment in the youth of Flagstaff. It was recommended that such a program be reinstated, with representation as part of the organizational mandate.

Another historical data point that was gathered during this discussion was the Juneteenth program formerly run from the Cogdill Center; the Center has since been repurposed as the Boys and Girls Club, which marked a significant blow within the Black community of Flagstaff. The former Juneteenth celebration was put together by a small group that came together to represent the Black community and provide cultural and historical connection. Programming has since been conducted by the Coconino County African Diaspora Advisory Council. It was noted that with such programs, there was always an attempt to “give kids an experience that they might not have otherwise received ... not just Black experiences, but programs that they might not otherwise have the opportunity to engage in.”

Key points that recurred throughout the discussion included:

- Core Group of Invested Individuals – It takes a “core group of adults” who are willing to step up, put in the work, volunteer, and remain vested in programs and engagement opportunities.



- Future Leader Training Opportunities – There was a desire to see increased mentorship programs, the redevelopment of a Flagstaff Youth Commission, and partnership engagement with City Council and other City, County, and State leadership.
- City Sponsorship – There was also a desire to see City investment in youth programs that highlighted and emphasized participation among students of color. It was noted that in many opportunities, Black youth are overlooked as their numbers are small; yet these missed opportunities mean that future generations are not being raised to “see themselves” within the community.

When asked what change looks like when it comes to Black youth in Flagstaff, key topics included:

1. Visibility: Black youth and children of mixed race feel unseen, invisible, and like they don't fit in. It is important to listen to our youth and students of color, to ensure they develop in their sense of community attention and personal identity.
2. Engagement: The concept of engagement is two-fold. First, students must be given more opportunities for engagement that are fun, free, educational, and engaging. These opportunities should recognize and celebrate the cultural diversity representative within the school and educational systems in Flagstaff, and not allow any group to become “invisible” simply because their numbers are few. Secondly, adults and potential mentors should be sought out for engagement with Flagstaff's youth. This hinges on finding those in the community who are invested, who have or work with children, and/or who know that the children of Flagstaff are Flagstaff's future.
3. NAU Connection: It was noted that there are many lecturers who do not have stable employment, and thus cannot commit to impactful community projects. For example, there has been ongoing discussion of an historic walkthrough project through the Southside Community; however, it has been impossible to complete when there has not been the stability of staffing to see it through. Community members asked that NAU stress the desire to have a strengthened relationship with the community, in order to pull in faculty who want to do more yet feel limited in their ability to do so.
4. Community Partnerships: The example of recent yearly Juneteenth celebrations highlighted partnerships with local climbing walls, student summer programs, the Shakespeare festival, Kuttz barbershop and college, and other community organizations. Such events highlight the diversity in Flagstaff and bring groups together that have at times been forced into systemic conflict or competition. For funding, community members noted the potential to partner with programs such as AmeriCorps to both provide increased funding and bring diverse leaders to Flagstaff. Other partnership recommendations included Camp Colton, the Flagstaff Unified School District, Gore, etc.

One issue that was highlighted throughout the discussion was the fact that Black and other students of color feel “invisible” within their classrooms and learning environments. In one instance—which was affirmed by others within the community—a student was told that there was “not a need” to discuss Black History Month because there were not enough Black students to make it “relevant.” Similar concerns were raised in consideration of curriculum development, extracurricular activities, and so forth, wherein students of color—particularly Black students—lacked representational interests due to limited visible presence. The community emphasized that “few” does not mean “irrelevant,” and the need for ongoing partnerships and community commitments to ensuring visibility and cultural recognition of all students. The need to provide an increased variety of opportunities—after school programs, jobs and economic opportunities, civic engagement, etc.—was emphasized throughout the program.



## ISSUE STATEMENT

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WE RECOGNIZE the historic and ongoing contributions of Black entrepreneurs, business owners, and other economic drivers to the development and continued advancement of Flagstaff; yet we also recognize that the voices of Black leaders are underrepresented in the local business sector, employment advancement opportunities, and economic development discourse. We believe in the need for sustainable initiatives focused on both historic and current African American service providers and leadership development in order to ensure Black economic and employment parity and sustain the continuous economic growth of Flagstaff with equity.



## BACKGROUND

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A central tenant of all community development is the access to and development of business and economic capital. Flagstaff, as a city of both corporate and small, independent businesses, has long focused on the ongoing development of a vibrant economy where business is viewed as a catalyst for community and economic development. Recent national dialogs about historical wealth distribution and economic equity have focused a spotlight on the support of Black-owned businesses. In a recent *Business Insiders* article, it was noted that supporting Black business means “seeing [Black business owners, and Black citizens in general] as equals and experts and not assuming our skills, services, and creations are less than, which has been the common narrative when discussing supporting Black ideas, creativity, and business.”

## CONTEXTUALIZATION

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Nationally, it is typical of communities to enjoy the presence of businesses and economic drivers reflective of the various, diverse populaces they serve. As noted in a prior discussion of Representation and Preservation, the presence and preservation of Black community is typically reflected in local businesses that provide services unique to the culture; barbershops, hair salons, restaurants, and other economic establishments both serve and celebrate this culture, and provide the means for the economic sustainment of both the Black community and the broader communities in which it sits.

Flagstaff historically had a number of brick and mortar establishments representative of Black business and economic community. Furthermore, such establishments provided a needed sense of cultural refuge: places where Black culture could not only provide valuable economic support to the broader Flagstaff community, but also be celebrated as visible representations of essential communal bonds. The lack of visible representations of Black business suggest a broader disparity in Black economic equity, Black cultural representation, and the general visibility of the Flagstaff Black community.

Today, only two brick and mortar representations of Black business exist in Flagstaff: the Kuttz Barber Shop and College, and a co-op market. General representation of Black business is less visible, operating from proprietor homes, virtually, or in other decentralized locations.

It is important to understand that culture is central to community development. The absence of cultural representation in community development suggests that something is missing. This conversation aims to discuss and discover what those missing pieces of culture are in Flagstaff's ongoing community development. We will examine the subject of "cultural economics," the fundamental connection between culture (the shared beliefs and preferences of respective groups, here specifically referencing Black culture) and economic outcomes. We seek to understand why there appear to be limited representations of Black businesses; the impact this limited economic representation has on the perceptions of the Black community (namely, the perception of Black "invisibility" within Flagstaff); and how meaningful change can be encouraged in Flagstaff to simultaneously rectify economic disparities, increase cultural visibility, and ensure continued economic and cultural growth.

### QUICK FACT

According to the 2012 Survey of Business Owners, of the approximately 6,382 total firms in Flagstaff, 935 (14.65%) identified as "Minority-owned firms," while 5037 (78.93%) identified as "Nonminority-owned firms."

## KEY QUESTIONS

- WHAT do you feel are the primary concerns facing the Black community of Flagstaff in this area?
- WHAT Black businesses are you aware of within Flagstaff, if any? What experience have you had with these businesses? What stories can you share about the development of Black business, economic development, etc. in Flagstaff?
- WHAT business representation is missing within the Flagstaff community? What types of businesses do you think should be present that are not? Why do you think that is?
- WHY do you think there are not more Black businesses or economic opportunities within the Flagstaff community?

## **Flagstaff's Lived Black Experience Strategic Plan**

- WHAT challenges have you faced in securing or advancing in employment in Flagstaff?
- WHAT do you feel needs to change in order to ensure continued positive development of the Flagstaff community in this area?
- WHAT does change look like to you when it comes to Black Economic Inclusion and Impact?



### COMMUNITY FORUM OUTCOMES

When asked about economic inclusion and representation for the Black community in Flagstaff, community members noted that the matter “could all come down to numbers.” Participants noted that there are not many Black business owners or entrepreneurs still around Flagstaff; this was pinpointed as a concern that needs to be addressed. One community member noted that it has become evident that “where we are as a society can see the social issues [aimed at/within the Black community] are troubling.”

One local seamstress noted an instance where they were seeking a space for a shop. When they did find a place, and contacted the owner about a lease, it was “way over anything that I could afford.” The participant noted that, even had they sought a business loan, it was likely they would have had to put their house up as collateral. They noted the need for some sort of mechanism to provide support, as African-American/Black people have “a harder way to go” when it comes to starting business, because people tend to look at them “a little differently.”

A factor identified as a hinderance to Black economic development in Flagstaff was the disproportionate cost of living and utility impact for communities of color. For instance, the cost of energy in Flagstaff was noted by a Councilmember as hitting folks in the Sunnyside and Southside neighborhoods harder than it does elsewhere. Costs for improvements, and projects like the Rio de Flag project, have major impacts on the Flagstaff Black community disproportionately to others.

Forum attendees worked to identify various programs working for economic development in and around Flagstaff. Identified agencies included:

- **The Economic Collaborative of Northern Arizona (ECoNA)**, an agency aiding in economic development on a regional scale
- **The Coconino Small Business Development Center**, run through Coconino Community College (CCC) and offering advising, training, online courses, and other resources for businesses throughout the Northern Arizona region
- **Moonshot at NACET**, a program offering training to entrepreneurs and innovators to develop economic viability and investment-ready businesses
- **The Sunnyside Market of Dreams (Mercado de los Sueños)**, a local business incubator focused on people living in poverty and/or working multiple jobs, to help move them from generational poverty

It was noted that the Flagstaff Black community has faced many of the same issues as the Indigenous community, particularly in having limited access to brick and mortar establishments; instead, entrepreneurs and small business owners rely on sale through consignment.

Suggestions to ensure economic parity and development included:

1. Wrap-around Services – agencies or other mechanisms focused on helping individuals get business licenses, working with them to get proper City and County registration and permits, and working in conjunction with a Coconino County program providing matching funds with successful completion of a program
2. Create Access – providing equitable access to mentorship, business resources, and other help agents/agencies
3. Redefine “Legitimacy” – there is often a sense that certain business pursuits are not seen as “legitimate business” as they are not traditional businesses; there is also a perception that poor/low-income individuals don’t know how to—or, even more simply, cannot—run a business
4. Community Support for Entrepreneurship – citing the example of the Silicon Valley, encouraging entrepreneur support from local communities that embrace small local businesses; in the case of the Silicon Valley, such partnership, support, and encouragement led to the development of businesses and economic thriving within the community
5. Embrace Entrepreneurship – recognize that entrepreneurship leads to both economic and community development

In addressing factors that have driven the trend of low Black business numbers in Flagstaff, causes and contributors included:

- Lack of receptiveness from the community
- Lack of education and community awareness – the community does not know these businesses exist
- Lack of education and opportunity awareness – Black entrepreneurs do not know where to get support or assistance in starting businesses
- Limited opportunity for in-spending; the Black community lacks opportunity to spend moneys within the Black community
- Limited economic sustainability – it was noted that it could be the businesses some want to start (i.e. cultural hair salons, restaurants, etc.) are “not the type that can lead to a business they can live off of in Flagstaff”

The question was raised by a forum participant: “How much of this is a problem about Black businesses, and how much of it is a problem of business and entrepreneurship in Flagstaff?” Community members responded by noting a desire to see Flagstaff show intentionality in seeking Black- and other culturally-representative businesses. It was noted that historically, Black professionals were “not given the opportunity to diversify their work” beyond the types of jobs they were readily relegated to (i.e., sawmills); as a result, many chose to leave and look elsewhere for economic opportunity. There is also not clear evidence throughout Flagstaff that there is an African-American population in Flagstaff, beyond the mural on the historic Murdoch Community Center.

Possible solutions for addressing and enhancing Black economic development, and the partnered development of the Black community in general, included:



- Creating visibility for the Black community through mechanisms such as walking tours, marketing, public and visible recognition of locations that were part of the historic **Green Book**, etc.
- Diversification, unification, and visibility established as the three key pillars of emphasizing Black presence in Flagstaff
- A nexus hub, such as a Black community website, where Black-owned businesses can be recognized, discovered, and accessed
- Creating a co-op where leaders in Black business can help provide visibility and resources – this necessitates the provision of space, and remains a question of affordability and attainability
- Creating a centralized marketplace run once a month out of the Murdoch Center as a launching pad for Black businesses in Flagstaff
- Focusing on sustainability and creating avenues for ongoing, secure funding
- Work with Discovery Flagstaff to initiate a “walk-the-talk” augmented reality project to virtually walk through and engage in the story of the Black community, recognizing items of historical significance such as Green Book locations, Buffalo Soldier encampment, etc.
- Increased visibility of the Black community through a “Third Thursday” or “Third Friday” program hosted through the Murdoch Center to provide an opportunity for people to shop and engage with the Black community
- Create visibility beyond brick and mortar establishments through murals, celebrations, events, etc.
- Providing educational opportunities to ensure community members are aware of and properly educated in resources and programs available

Two key words that stood out to forum participants in the discussion of economic inclusion and impact were “visibility” and “intentionality.” Participants desired increased visibility of the Black community, through representation and celebration. There was also the desire to see City-sponsored intentionality, in partnering with the community to ensure visibility and equitable access to resources and business opportunities. It was noted that it “does not take much to work toward economic equity and Black representation in the community of Flagstaff ... it simply takes more.”

# RACE, SPACE & SEGREGATION

## Dr. Ricardo Guthrie



### ISSUE STATEMENT

FLAGSTAFF HAS a documented history of redlining and other socioeconomic practices and policies which have created a trend of physical separation (segregation) of communities of color and marginalized representation within the City's structure and development. Racial exclusion and segregation are contributing factors to the erasure and lack of representation of Black community structures within the City.



### BACKGROUND

When talking about the exclusion of a particular culture or race in a geographical area, it is important to understand that there are multifaceted aspects to such exclusion. Segregation can be at once physical (redlining, blockbusting, etc.), systemic (based in social practices, policies, and processes), and ideological (the idea that certain people do not belong in certain spaces; i.e. NIMBYism). Spatial racial exclusion consists of historic, institutionalized policies and practices which privilege private interests over the public good; this is the social landscape in which the idea that providing equal and equitable access to the public space of community (housing, parks, education, transportation, etc.) is viewed as threatening to privatized interests. The basic problem facing much of the economic and social development of communities of color throughout the country has been a long-held link between race, place, and power.

### CONTEXTUALIZATION

As noted above, Flagstaff has a documented history of redlining and other socioeconomic practices and policies which have created a pattern of segregation and discrimination against Blacks and communities of color within the City. Growth and development have occurred as a result of racial exclusion and segregation during much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and are still contributing factors to the erasure and lack of representation of Blacks within the City proper. The absence of Black cultural and historical structures outside of Southside neighborhoods is a continuing problem, as a lack of visibility leads to planning that fails to assess policy impacts on African Americans, and undermines their contributions overall.

#### RACE/SPACE/SEGREGATION QUICK FACTS:

- Southside is home to four historically Black churches
- Southside was the segregated neighborhood for Blacks and LatinX for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century
- Home to Segregated Dunbar School and South Beaver School

Flagstaff demographics indicate growing segments of Native American, LatinX/HispaniX, Asian, and African Americans—who work at the university, the medical center, the private sector and entertainment/hospitality industries—but growth has remained stagnant because of lack of jobs, affordable and adequate housing, and limited cultural opportunities for people of color.

Segregation is a thematic construct and a continuing legacy that has affected the built environment in certain neighborhoods, but it is also an underexplored aspect of a small mountain town that seeks to embrace growth and change. **Areas to discuss include:**

- Legacy of Segregation (pros and cons)
- Growth and Development within Demographic Shifts
- Relocation of the Rio de Flag
- NAU & Neighborhood Empowerment
- The City and Resource Allocation



*Dr. Ricardo Guthrie, Assoc. Prof. Ethnic Studies, Northern Arizona University*

### City of Flagstaff - Low Income Concentrations (c. 1990s)

Neighborhood	Pct. Low-Mod. Income Persons	Median Income	Median Home Value	Pop.	No. of Households
Sunnyside	63%	\$20,554	\$56,733	4,506	1,491
<b>Southside</b>	<b>81%</b>	\$10,981	\$64,050	1,611	671
<b>Southside</b> (Plaza Vieja)	<b>83%</b>	\$13,176	\$63,300	3,006	574
<b>Southside</b> (Pine Knoll/ Brannen Hms.)	<b>87%</b>	\$15,296	\$50,600	895	347
<b>FLAGSTAFF</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>\$28,382</b>	<b>\$90,300</b>	---	---

City of Flagstaff: Where Do People of Color Live?

Neighborhood	Sunnyside		Southside		Plaza Vieja (Southside)		Pine Knoll (Southside)		FLAGSTAFF	
Race/ Ethnicity	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
White	2,067	44%	1,466	72%	873	67%	337	53%	41,477	79%
African American	115	2.4%	147	7.2%	61	5%	136	21%	1,079	2%
Native American	976	21%	101	5%	166	13%	154	24%	4,371	8.3%
LatinX	1,805	38%	499	25%	296	23%	139	22%	8,657	16.4%
Other	1,509	32%	285	14%	173	13%	8	1.2%	4,516	8.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,721</b>		<b>2,030</b>		<b>1,308</b>		<b>642</b>		<b>52,701</b>	

## KEY QUESTIONS

- WHAT are some of the reasons why the contributions of African Americans might not be recognized throughout the City?
- HOW are the legacies of Segregation continued through City policies, NAU activities, and the actions of Residents?
- HOW important are “home ownership,” “job development,” and “community control of development” to the City’s future?
- WHAT direct experience(s) have you had with systemic or practical segregation or division of space in Flagstaff, if any?
- WHAT positive changes would you like to see in order to promote “Sustainable Growth” as it affects African Americans?
- WHAT does it mean to maintain the Character and Culture of Black neighborhoods if the Black population decreases?

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Southside Neighborhood Plan 2020

Historic Southside Mural at the Murdoch Community Center (2011)

Arizona Daily Sun reports and news articles 2000-2020



### COMMUNITY FORUM OUTCOMES

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Forum participants were asked why contributions of African Americans might not be recognized throughout the City. Among reasons identified by participants were:

- A lack of markers or plaques to designate the contributions of African Americans posted throughout the City. One participant noted having worked in the Riles building and never knowing that it was named for Wilson Riles.
- The invisibility of the African American community – participants noted that even in the smallest towns throughout the nation, they have been able to find places that served [the Black community]; there are usually cultural representations in the downtown areas of cities and towns to mark the cultural makeup of that community.
- Lack of a central Black community center – one participant noted that had they not happened to see the Murdoch Center upon arriving in Flagstaff, they might never have found the Black community.

Emphasis was placed on the historical significance of Wilson Riles, and the lack of communal knowledge of his legacy. Wilson Riles was the first Black graduate that we know of from Northern Arizona University. A participant noted a conversation with the Dean of the Department of Arts and Letters, an office housed in the Riles building; the Dean was unaware of who Wilson Riles was. Another member of the community noted that if NAU were “truly invested in Black culture,” the contributions of Mr. Riles “would have been commemorated on [an] historical plaque either inside or outside of the building.” A faculty member noted that there is a small plaque on the inside of the building, on the ground floor; it was relocated due to weather, but few within the community are aware of it.

Further discussion yielded the opinion that despite having perceptions as a “liberal town,” Flagstaff seems to have a hesitation toward recognizing the history of trauma and oppression toward Black people. A call was made for the City to acknowledge that barriers to Black community development, inclusion, and space access existed, and continue to exist, that need to be overcome. Until there is a cultural shift from complacency with being “liberal,” the community as a whole cannot move forward. Parallels were made to the Southside Community Plan, which acknowledged historical inhibitors to community and economic development and sought to create positive change for this historic community. A Councilmember acknowledged that there is a need to “open our eyes” to the difference between what the Black community was (thriving, visible, and included) to what it has become (dwindling, invisible, and largely segregated). Issues of housing and quality of life in historically Black communities in Flagstaff were raised as needing to be addressed.

Forum participants spent time discussing “political will.” While some held that the issues to be addressed were matters of political will, the question was raised regarding



whether such will exists within the City, particularly Council. While it was held that some members of the current Council may have political will to enact positive change for the Black community, historical knowledge suggests that such will is not pervasive; this creates and perpetuates the fear that little to nothing will be done if there is not full—or at least, majority—buy in from Flagstaff's political leadership. Specific issues of affordable housing in the Southside community, and other communities of color, were cited, and the perception that there are still “people who feel that saving the prairie dogs [is] more important than providing housing to people.” The question was raised of whether new people in Flagstaff and potential new Councilmembers understand the importance of political will, and if so, whether it elicits the “drive” to do the right thing. Forum participants desired to see Council and other community leaders focus on “all of us.”

Further conversation addressed the visible indicators of the legacies of segregation continued through City policies, NAU activities, and the actions of residents. Key points included:

- **Issues of Affordability and Homeownership:** The legacy of segregation exists in that homeownership in Flagstaff is less than 10%. Residents in Flagstaff neighborhoods feel separated and sense a lack of connection to the broader Flagstaff community. With NAU planning continued land purchases, many of which enter historically Black communities and drive out historic residencies, there was the concern that “a benevolent dictator is still a dictator.”
- **Community Silence:** Participants noted that while the conversation has been started, and they were actively engaged in the conversation that sought and reached out to all segments of the Flagstaff community, there remained a lack of engagement and participation. The lack of community voices, and ongoing community silence, is helping to enforce the legacy of segregation.
- **Displacement:** The university being so close to the Southside community draws development that disproportionately displaces people of color.
- **Disproportionate Cost of Living:** Raising the cost of living would not be as much of a problem if wages and incomes rose proportionately. People cannot afford to stay in neighborhoods when businesses enter and drive up cost of living. This is an issue that disproportionately impacts communities of color.

A major topic during one part of the conversation was the question of **gentrification**. While gentrification may be a form of desegregation in that it allows others to enter the community, an issue exists when the built environment no longer serves the community. Issues of displacement, and communal indicators that particular peoples who historically developed a community are no longer welcome within that community raised the question “Desegregation for who?” The example of the Brown vs the Board of Education ruling was cited, which took away Black schools that served the communities in ways that schools that replaced them did, and do, not. Any development undertaken by the City that is not cognizant of maintaining the community does a disservice.

Housing costs and taxes have increased beyond the capacity of historical communities within these neighborhoods to afford them, resulting in displacement and the breakdown of historical communities. It was noted that where gentrification becomes the opposite of positive desegregation is when it results in the displacement of already underserved communities.

Communities members expressed frustration with the knowledge that their presence as white residents with high incomes contributed to the increased cost of living for others within the community. A recommendation was made for guidelines in place for landlords.

Acknowledgement of historical inequities and **disparate impact** to the Black communities was made during this discussion. As one community member noted, newcomers to this discussion are only beginning to enter into the ongoing discourse of the Black community, which has been “attempting to catch up in a race that started 400 years ago.” Another community member noted the ongoing need for both political and community will; as we discuss the “invisible community” that exists within Flagstaff, and that does not have a sense of itself within the broader Flagstaff community, it becomes clear that there is a perpetuated need for change-driving movements. The entire community must take ownership.

A community member raised the question of **reparations** thusly: “As I read about redlining and learn about our history, I have to ask what role does reparations play for our City? Whatever the image we’re [the white community of Flagstaff] trying to hold onto ... it’s my opinion that they need to play a part.” It was noted that as a society that is built on economics and capitalism, it is “only fair that we address [the Black community] in the same way.” Another participant noted that while we often hear about being generous with our time, “there are people who can also be generous with their money. There is a generation of white people who are going to pass on their money to their children ... and I think that’s a real shame.” Concepts for community reparations in Flagstaff included the establishment of an equity fund and donations to the historic Murdoch Community Center.

# MENTAL & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

## Mr. Jermaine Barkley



### ISSUE STATEMENT

THE HISTORICAL Black experience in America continues to reflect a disparate degree of trauma, violence, and mental and physical health concerns when compared to European-Americans. We recognize the parallel between the historic dehumanization, oppression, and violence against the Black community and ongoing structural and institutional racism, as well as the connection between these factors and the apparent lack of resources specifically aiding in the treatment of Black mental, behavioral, and physical health concerns.



### BACKGROUND

The history of Black lives in America is one of trauma, oppression, resilience, and constant struggle. Through the fight for equity and justice in a system that perpetually oppresses Black communities, progress has been made. However, that continuous fight is not without its impacts. Systemic racism, colonialism, and the constant fight against it leaves behind trauma and severe detriment to the mental health of our community. In fact, the CDC reports that Black Americans are 20% *more likely* to report serious psychological distress than that of White Americans<sup>1</sup>.

Indeed, to many Black individuals, this statistic comes as no surprise. The current picture of the Black experience in the U.S. is a story of disparities. While the Black community only makes up a small portion of the U.S. population, we are frequently over-represented in at-risk populations, making up almost half of all homelessness and children in foster care, as well as half of the population currently incarcerated in prison<sup>2</sup>. Exposure to these circumstances are not without their impacts, frequently resulting in detrimentally impacted mental health, a sharp decline in physical health, and the perpetuation of these impacts passed to the next generation.

#### MENTAL & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH QUICK FACTS:

- > Black individuals report psychological distress at a rate of 20% *higher* than white individuals in the U.S.
- > This year, rates of anxiety and depression have increased by over 20% in the Black Community.
- > Only 3 in 10 Black individuals ever receive mental health treatment.



When looking at the issue of police violence against the Black community, the consequences on mental health are striking. As these tragedies begin to become more high-profile, we are seeing an increase in the signs of PTSD and anxiety among our Black communities. Since the events in Minneapolis, depression and anxiety in Black Americans has increased by over 20%<sup>3</sup>. Indeed, poor mental health can affect your ability to maintain stable employment, healthy relationships, and overall well-being. Generally speaking, a remedy to mental health distress is of course mental health services. Yet here too we see remnants of systemic oppression. While Black Americans are more likely to report severe emotional distress, only around 33% will ever receive any form of mental health intervention services, compared to a national average of 45%<sup>4</sup>. The factors contributing to this range across a broad spectrum including:

- **Stigma:** a study conducted in 2014 found that African Americans were very concerned about seeking mental health services due to the stigma associated with having a mental health issue and receiving treatment<sup>5</sup>.
- **Access to culturally appropriate treatment:** For instance, as of 2015, only 4% of mental health providers in the U.S. identified as African American<sup>6</sup>. Misdiagnosis was also found to be common amongst African Americans, with evaluation often neglecting to include key contextual factors of the Black experience in America<sup>7</sup>.
- **Access to quality care:** Black Americans are less likely to have access to mental health services in their community, less likely to receive best-practice treatments for depression and anxiety, and more likely to report receiving poor services during treatment<sup>8</sup>.

### Fact:

Only 4% of Mental Health providers in the U.S. are Black.

Black lives matter.  
Black mental health has to matter too.

## CONTEXTUALIZATION

The Flagstaff community is not immune to the impacts of systemic racism and oppression towards the Black community, nor are we immune to its impacts on mental health. The issue at hand is that Black individuals and communities experience mental health issues as a result of racism and oppression at very high rates with severe consequences, and the services in place have historically fallen short when it comes to addressing said mental health impacts. Therefore, the conversation around mental health in the Black community of Flagstaff is one that must be addressed on two fronts: reactive and preventative measures. Reactive measures include addressing the disparities in mental health treatment services for our Black community. How do we



increase access and quality of care? How do we address stigma? How do we ensure our services are culturally competent? Yet should we seek to see long-lasting improvement we must also address how to prevent such detrimental impacts on the mental health of our community in the first place.

Improvement comes with increasing awareness, identifying what contributes to the mental health impacts that accompany living while Black, and addressing those contributing factors head on. By acknowledging the impacts that systemic oppression has on our community in Flagstaff, addressing that system, and ensuring our safety net of mental health services for the Black community are effective, respectful, and easily accessible, we can seek to finally close the gaps of disparities in the arena of mental health for our community.

### KEY QUESTIONS

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- WHAT do you feel are the primary concerns facing the Black community of Flagstaff regarding mental health?
- IS mental and behavioral health an important aspect of healthcare and service to fund and provide for the Flagstaff community? Why or why not?
- DO we need resources within the Flagstaff community to specifically address the mental and behavioral health needs for the Black Community? Why or why not?
- WHAT resources are you aware of within Flagstaff specifically addressing mental and behavioral health for the Black Community?
- HOW important is it to you that mental health service providers come from the same cultural or ethnic background as you and why?
- WHAT have you personally seen as a barrier to seeking mental health services in Flagstaff?
- WHAT does culturally competent care look like to you?
- WHAT do you feel needs to change in order to ensure continued positive development of the Flagstaff community in this area?
- WHAT does change look like to you when it comes to Mental and Behavioral Health?
- WHAT communities online have you found helpful for mental health and overall support?
- WHAT mental health resources in Flagstaff have helped you or a friend the most?



## Resources

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### COMMUNITY FORUM OUTCOMES

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Among primary concerns facing the Black community in Flagstaff regarding mental health, participants noted the following:

- Perceived invisibility creates a sense of the needs of Flagstaff's Black community being insignificant
- Hindered emotional development; one participant noted that particularly in romantic relationships, Black men experience a lack of expressiveness, as until recently "we weren't really able to do that"
- The perception that Black vulnerability is dangerous
- Stigmatization of mental health in the Black community, and the limited understanding of Black mental health outside of the community

Mental and behavioral health were identified as key aspects of services needed within the Black community. It was noted that there are seldom resources where Black consumers can experience understanding and impactful treatment of mental health concerns. With a lack of representation in mental and other healthcare professions, there is a sense of discomfort that remains internalized. Participants spoke of the challenges faced as Black consumers who, when seeking treatment and care, become the primary source of education to their caregivers. A great deal of emphasis was placed on the mental and emotional strain of Black identity.

Discussion regarding trauma informed care, and the historical and present-day trauma of Black identity, yielded interesting insights into the Black experience in Northern Arizona and the American west. It was noted that during the Great Migration, Blacks moved into the area of Northern Arizona to escape the oppression of the Deep South; Blacks migrated west to pursue work, particularly in the lumber industry. Yet here in Flagstaff, while a Black family could move and find jobs, this did not mean it was any less segregated, oppressive, et cetera. The enduring history of traumatic Black experience creates voids in the broader community where Black voices are seldom heard.

The concern regarding representation emerged again during discussion of resources within the Flagstaff community to specifically address the mental and behavioral health needs of the Black community. While participants noted that exact sameness is not a necessity, the perception of "differentness" and "otherness" within the community creates major issues for Black community members seeking care. Noted concerns included:

- The perception of "**gaslighting**" 'when it comes to addressing Black concerns
- The added emotional weight of having to explain issues particular to the Black community in order to receive treatment
- Statistical data points reflecting the under diagnoses and delayed care of Black consumers

Regarding resources in Flagstaff, participants were unaware of any resources specifically addressing mental and behavioral health for the Black community. While participants noted that mental health service providers need not come from the same cultural or ethnic background as the individual seeking care, having similar backgrounds creates a sense of ease in care and has other health benefits. The

discussion of shared or similar backgrounds yielded further discussion of the perception of “whiteness” as “the norm.” Participants noted trends in general discomfort with seeking or receiving services from professionals of color, as the majority (in this case, representative of European Americans) determines what is perceived as “normal” and thus what is perceived as comfortable. It was noted that while Black consumers must typically adapt to nonrepresentative care, others do not see the issue because they share the same background and culture as the majority of care providers.

Positive change in this area included the following:

- Improved cost of living to retain professional talent of color
- Increased resources specifically addressing mental, behavioral, and other medical health concerns within the Black community
- Intentionality in recruitment, to seek and retain professionals of color
- Implicit Bias training within Flagstaff Medical Center and other healthcare provider offices

## INSIGHTS FROM LIVED BLACK EXPERIENCE FOCUS GROUPS

In addition to the six community forums, the Lived Black Experience CommUnity Coalition sponsored a series of smaller focus groups aimed at creating connections with various **community gatekeepers**. The goal of the focus groups was to create increased opportunity for community input, engagement, and the sharing of historical knowledge to drive the ongoing conversation of future engagement with the Black community of Flagstaff.

### Focus Group Structure and Guidelines

The LBE Focus Groups consisted of smaller sessions held both in-person and telephonically. In-person groups engaged social distancing and mask wearing in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During each Focus Group, participants were asked a standardized questionnaire to facilitate uncensored dialog. The questions included:

1. How do you feel, as a Black person, living in Flagstaff? (i.e. comfort, unease, unsure, etc.)
2. What is it like, experientially, to live in Flagstaff, as a Black person?
3. What was it like to live in Flagstaff as a Black person? What history can you share? What has changed, for better or worse?
4. What needs to change in Flagstaff, as it relates to the Lived Black Experience?
5. What does change look like to you?
6. What views and perceptions do you see that impact or impede progress in the Black community of Flagstaff?

It should be noted that while questions during the focus group were specifically directed toward the Black community and experience, all were welcome to attend and participate in the groups.

Focus Group participants and invitees included (listed alphabetically):

- Coconino County African Diaspora Advisory Council
- Collegiate/Black Student Union student focus groups (including invitations to NAU and CCC)
- Community gatekeepers and elders
- First Missionary Baptist Church
- Flagstaff NAACP
- Flagstaff Unified School District student focus groups
- Harbert Chapel A.M.E.
- Kuttz Barbershop and College
- Riverside Church of God in Christ
- Springhill Missionary Baptist Church

***Following are highlights from the various community discussions. The below summary attempts to record repeated themes only once. As many participants requested or preferred anonymity, names are not associated with comments to preserve the protected identities of speakers.***

HOW DO YOU FEEL, AS A BLACK PERSON, LIVING IN FLAGSTAFF? (I.E. COMFORT, UNEASE, UNSURE, ETC.)
Comfortable. There has been change, but I feel comfortable in this community. I feel safe. I feel supported. When you're born and raised here, Flagstaff is a place where people know you.
I used to be comfortable, but there are a lot of hidden agendas in how the City has grown and who is "in" and who's not.
Growing up it was more comfortable, but now I'm kind of unsure. Racism is everywhere, even in little Flagstaff ... Because I was born and raised here, I'm comfortable, but people make me unsure. I'm more unsure now than growing up.
Growing up here it was comfortable; that has changed in the last four years, with the oncoming of the new President. I won't blame it all on him ... but racism has gotten [...] more out there. It's gotten more uncomfortable over the past few years, but basically in my experience you don't see a lot of racism in Flagstaff because the community is so diverse. But still, I fear for my grandchildren and for my son and daughter, especially with my son being a Black man. I fear for them in the time's we're living in.
I moved from Southern California to work for the state and was the only Black person in the building. I feel at ease but I have been stopped twice I believe because of my color. The first time I was stopped by the police, when I asked why the reason given was, "Because I can."
I feel uncomfortable and unsafe. I was stopped once, and I know I was being profiled. People aren't used to diversity here.
I have gotten used to being racially profiled. Racial profiling happens every day here, and for that reason I am not at peace here.
I feel thankful. I feel commanded to love people. I don't care about the politics – the Word is my handbook.
Times have really changed.
The only difference is now they're killing us. Back then they would just beat you really bad. I'm just trying to live a better life. I feel uncomfortable living in Flagstaff, and grew up here.
My husband is Black and had a good experience living here, but his daughter came here and had a terrible experience.
Until I started attending my church, I only saw maybe two, possibly three, people of color.
It depends on where I go. When I'm at the Murdoch Center or doing community events, I feel accepted. When I'm at work or out in public, especially if I dress a

certain way or wear my hair a certain way, I feel uncomfortable but I've also become accustomed to it.
When I first moved out to Kachina, I felt incredibly uncomfortable. It's gotten a little easier, but there's also been a shift in the population there. I would say I always feel a general sense of unease, and on guard for confrontation and looks.
I'm not a Black woman, but I can relate to a sense of discomfort.
I feel more uncomfortable since the Black Lives Matter movement, with fear that people might see me as a threat. I had white neighbors that I could speak to who won't speak to me now. I'm fearful that someone will say something to me or do something to me.
There was an immediate shift when Trump was elected. The night the results came in, I felt that fear of who might now feel the courage to say something [racist] to me who didn't have it before.
I feel a greater sense of having to appease law enforcement and not be perceived as a threat.
It's more comfortable here than where I'm from. People tend to stare and think we're going to say something about Black Lives Matter. I feel more comfortable here than I do at home.
I've lived here since I was 7 ... I feel like living as a Black person in Flagstaff and living as a Black person on NAU's campus are two different things. NAU has quotas to fill ... we still attend a PWI, but it's nice to see other people who look like you on campus. I do also wonder for people who don't have these connections, is there anybody out there who feels completely isolated.
It's very stressful and nerve wracking to be a Black person in Flagstaff. It was very hard my first semester. It was disappointing to see that there weren't more people like me. As soon as I found spaces like BSU, I felt much more comfortable staying here because I felt connected to something, because Flagstaff doesn't have spaces just dedicated to Black peace and Black experiences.
Sometimes it feels like it's a very sketchy area. [Finding spaces] like BSU or Soul Sugar ... helped influence me to stay.
I feel like coming from a big city like Phoenix, even though there's a smaller number it feels more like community [on NAU campus]. I felt not as isolated as I was in Phoenix. We had to fight for safe spaces in my high school. It's been a lot better.
My experience in Flagstaff was a total culture shock [coming from the South-Central LA area]. It took me a while to be comfortable. BSU kept me in Flagstaff; I did not feel comfortable here all of Freshman year, but BSU made me feel like I belonged.
It feels like a stigma lately for folks to ask me "how I'm doing with this whole Black Lives Matter situation." It helps my mind more understand that there is a true...divide. BSU is home for the youth of black individuals in flagstaff. We try our hardest to make it feel as so.
I have felt insecure in my skin once here. [I never] wanted to feel that again. I know that I'm not alone in that feeling so utilization of groups that make you whole is great. Such as, Ladies of Truth, BSU, and Soul Sugar Open Mics.



**WHAT IS IT LIKE, EXPERIENTIALLY, TO LIVE IN FLAGSTAFF, AS A BLACK PERSON?**

I feel a lot of personal frustration in Flagstaff ... It's so brazen now with the clique-ishness. I go into [areas] where you would see nothing but Black people, and now there seems to be everything but Black people.

Despite being from here, [people] make you [as a Black person] feel like an outsider. Social media has a lot to do with it. I don't really socialize a lot with the outside world and it could be I don't [know about the cliques] because I don't engage with that. I don't see a lot of color ... I do know it's clique-ish in Flagstaff. If you're not from here, you're left out.

People want to keep this a small town. A lot of the clique-ishness comes from people not wanting to let go of the small-town feel.

Flagstaff grows when it wants to grow and for whom it wants to grow. There's a feeling of the have and have-nots. The new people who move to Flagstaff don't want to know about the history because they want to make it what they want it to be. The Pioneer Museum did not know anything about [the Black community].

I'm still relatively new, and I enjoy the secluded area of Doney Park. I am comfortable with the serene surroundings.

I haven't had problems; I am happy to be here.

If more of the population was educated about the African American experience, the more comfortable they would be around Black people. There is a perception of Black people as doing bad things. More positive experiences would equal more comfort living here.

It hurts that they took Cogdill away from us, away from "the Hood."

More so now, we feel like we are outcast in our own communities.

Sometimes I feel like I'm the spokesperson for my race. Maybe because of BLM and our current political climate, I feel like I'm constantly being asked questions ... about my hair, about Blackness. A lot of people do approach you here because evidently we're not seen. A lot of times people approach me it seems like just to get a rise [out of me] ... it is different treatment, because [people] don't approach anyone else to [ask those kinds of questions].

We were canvassing and had a bunch of Trump supporters drive by and went out of their way to be rude. I had my car towed and it was surrounded by Blue Lives Matter vehicles. The man who was supposed to help me was rude and wouldn't look me in the eye.

What shocked me [at a local canvassing event] was when the organizer said, "Be careful, because some of these [Trump] supporters might follow you home." In that moment, it was suddenly put right in front of my face. It was nothing I ever had to deal with back home. Back home ... you had to squint to see it, but here it can be right in your face.

My third year I was living with someone, and they would ask me things like "How would you feel if a white person tweeted the N word?" I felt like they just wanted to feel woke and make themselves feel better. I would give them answers but it would make me feel uncomfortable. My dad just got his car towed, and he experienced something similar; the individual at the towing place was blatantly rude, and my dad is a very outspoken individual and I was worried for him ... It's definitely not something I

have experienced back home, because back home is minority majority, but living in Flagstaff has been an experience.

When the movie Get Out came out, it felt like that movie was made for me because in that film, the horror is the "nice" racist white people. And I feel like I encounter veiled/hidden anti-Blackness and microaggressions a lottt [sic] in Flagstaff.

I am Mexican and come from New Mexico, which is very [minority-populated]. Coming to Flagstaff I felt very out of place. It was very scary and I wanted to leave. The more I put myself out there, the more I found people like me and that made me want to stay. It was finding people who experienced the same things I did and understood what it was to be a people of color.

### WHAT WAS IT LIKE TO LIVE IN FLAGSTAFF AS A BLACK PERSON? WHAT HISTORY CAN YOU SHARE? WHAT HAS CHANGED, FOR BETTER OR WORSE?

It's completely different, and it doesn't have to be. It's as if a Black population did not live here ... like an old Hispanic population did not live here. And these are the people that worked the forest and the sawmills. It's like that never existed. There used to be a sawmill on Route 66 in La Plaza Vieja. Black people lived in the Adobe Quarters. Aspen Place was built on the historic logging pond and sawmill. People want to think they've created something new; the Black community created a lot of what we have now. When the "haves" decided that they wanted beautiful houses back in the forest and isolated areas, the spotted owl became an issue and that became the end of Black employment.

I have memory of the Log Road from [...] Happy Jack, Arizona. The men would go to cut logs, and the road was so red from the Camp, you could run your hand down trucks coming down the road and eat the red dirt.

Black people had a very instrumental and interesting beginning in Flagstaff.

When men to service in WWII, all the women left behind stayed in the boarding houses when everyone was gone. We had Black cafes, juke joints, and everything here in Southside.

We all lived in the Adobe Quarters or down on O'Leary Street, which was a mixed population with Mexican and Black folk. By O'Leary was primarily Black, La Plaza Vieja was primarily Hispanic, and in between it became very mixed. But none of us lived north of the tracks. The Locketts and the Johnsons may have been the only ones to live "over there." Mrs. Lockett told me the story of how they were able to find a lot and purchase it without anyone knowing they were Black. They told the Johnsons, who were living on campus, and helped them purchase there.

There was school segregation, too. Emerson School, located where the Flagstaff Public Library currently sits, was the "elite" white school. The Dunbar School, located where the Murdoch Center now sits, was a segregated Black school. South Beaver School was Hispanic, and Kinsey School was Black. We didn't have bussing. When we moved to the Brannon Home Projects, the football and basketball coaches protested because the Black boys couldn't get to practice; they went to the School Board and demanded a bus be sent to Brannon Home, because otherwise the Black children could not get to school. When busses started, students of color got sent out

to traditionally white schools; there was not bussing of white students into traditionally Black schools.

I grew up in the 60s and 70s in Flagstaff. I knew there were areas of Flagstaff where I couldn't go. If I went to a white classmate's home, my parents had to sit outside because they were afraid of what might happen. Things didn't get better in Flagstaff, they got worse. I remember when Little America first opened, we got told we had no business on their property. It made me angry coming home from [the Vietnam War] and finding that this wasn't my home. The 60s haven't changed Flagstaff, the 70s haven't changed Flagstaff, the 80s haven't changed Flagstaff, the 90s haven't changed Flagstaff ... and we wonder why we're tired.

There used to be more cohesiveness in the Black community.

When I first moved here, it was a huge culture shock. I was like one of two Black people in my high school, and one moved away. It's been better because there have been more Black people coming and being able to connect, but there's still a feeling of isolation.

People leave, that's the biggest thing. Flagstaff is such a transient place because there's no real job market. It can be demoralizing to be here and be isolated for so long, so people will leave. My family's close family friends got tired of it and just left. [Deborah Harris] is one of the only Black people I know who has put down roots in Flagstaff. Everybody is looking for the next big thing and looking for a reason to leave.

### WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE IN FLAGSTAFF, AS IT RELATES TO THE LIVED BLACK EXPERIENCE?

The original Black people who are here are older and comfortable; the younger generation coming in are the go-getters. The people who have come are making it known that there needs to be a change. The older Black population doesn't have their comrades to make their fight.

There are a lot of Black people, but they are mixed "in the crowd." We are "hidden."

As a younger person, growing up in a well-known family I only needed my family. There was only one of you in class. People in college seemed surprised to find that there were Black people in Flagstaff. You feel so hidden in Flagstaff, it's like nobody is really checking for you. New people see you, and some want to know the history and see what it's like to be of a different culture in a small town.

There was a sense of Black people needing to "blend in."

Flagstaff needs to be more inclusive and accepting of all people. The more visibility the better. Black culture is awesome but if you've never experienced it you can't know how to [engage].

We used to have corporate prayer where all the churches would come together. This hasn't happened in a while. We need to stay focused spiritually.

We need to accept the time we're living in right now.

There need to be more positive experiences with police officers and City representatives. More positive interactions would be good.

As a student at NAU, I feel the most Black at church. Outside of church I don't have a community here.

We need to give young people somewhere to go. If you're not a part of the church, you're not part of anything. They don't have anywhere to go, which leads to them getting in trouble. Back then we had people to look up to, especially at Cogdill.
People need to see each other as people, not defined by their race.
The profiling and prejudice needs to stop. I've been dealing with racism all my life. It starts at home. I try to teach my kids to love everybody. People need to be taught that racism is wrong.
What we're seeing in our community now stems from systemic racism. Remember that what was done to Native peoples happened to us, too ... We get stripped of our language and identity.
As a white person I find myself ashamed of the way we act.
We need to keep having these conversations and sharing our identities.
We need to be able to have Black representative products, including Black beauty salons.
I would like to see more connection with other Black people in this town. More community gatherings to help people connect.
I feel we need representation. I also feel systemic change needs to be there. At this point racism has been perpetuated for so long, it's intrinsic to the system.
Job opportunities. I don't see myself spending my money here. It's not growing as a community.
There aren't job opportunities. We have formed a community, but it needs more culture. I feel like the only time I see another person of color it's an Indigenous person getting harassed by the police.
I really enjoy the natural landscapes and summer weather [but] I feel like there is not much for me here either.
We only have one outpatient mental health facility. In this small town it gets filled up pretty quick. So the only option we have to turn to is NAU mental health services.
I would feel better staying in this town if I could stop seeing the police state. I cannot go anywhere in this town without seeing a cop. It's especially saddening to see them continually harass the homeless population. I feel the lack of representation within the force and town causes over-policing black and brown persons.
We need more culture here. Everyone who came here has stayed here so their knowledge of what's outside of here is limited. Flagstaff is very faux liberal ... the more you're here, the more you see it change.
I've been working with my former high school, and as someone who went to other Flagstaff schools, there's a lot of work to be done. It doesn't make sense to me that Flagstaff is so aggressively white and faux liberal ... It's like there's defensiveness about it.

### WHAT DOES CHANGE LOOK LIKE TO YOU?

There are younger generations who want to know about their history and the history of Flagstaff, and those who could tell them are gone. There's a need to sustain the history that would otherwise be lost.

Have a community meet and greet. We need to learn and know ourselves. The Black community feels divided.
I'm having a lot of ideas ... a museum, a community center, a youth center, a community cook out, economic business investments. I noted down, "reaching out of the past and moving ahead."
If I was going to push for one thing, that would be my push, that there should be a museum of African American history in Flagstaff.
As a community, we need to find ways to build community ... to create more positive Black community. I know Flagstaff has a history of a lot of Black people who have disbursed over time; we need to rebuild the community.
We have to work toward reestablishing community, through activities that are free of political associations.
We need to start conversations to unearth the unseen issues and help cultivate a community where all people can feel comfortable, included, and attended to.
Being able to go outside and not having my fight or flight ramped up, and not feeling pressured to educate people all the time.
Community and work spaces where, when we share our lived experiences, they're not seen as a threat or invalidated.
I want to see people educated, and to see the ingrained bias that children are taught erased.
I would like to see more Black owned businesses in Flagstaff.
There needs to be more education about local resources, and a building of engagement with events where people can be educated.
More Black owned businesses. Kutz Barber shop and Ms. Deb's Murdoch Center is the only two beautiful black routes.
I would consider staying here if it was less expensive, actually liberal, [and had] more Black spaces: hair stores, salons, restaurants, community buildings, [et cetera].
Defunding the Flagstaff Police and diverting resources to mental health resources and health care and education. Also having the Police Department go through Implicit Bias and bias training. With those mental health resources, hiring Black therapists who will relate to Black patients who are dealing with things a White therapist won't understand or be able to relate to.
We need more places to find the black community. Besides the churches, it's difficult for black students to find the Black community members.

#### WHAT VIEWS AND PERCEPTIONS DO YOU SEE THAT IMPACT OR IMPEDE PROGRESS IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY OF FLAGSTAFF?

I don't think Black people support Black people, in general.
Everything on San Francisco St used to be Black owned; you feel like a foreigner when you go down there now.
We are not visual/visible within the community. You have to be or have something out there about you that people can see.
There used to be a beauty shop, and other Black businesses. Now everyone is professional and created a different lifestyle.



Political climates and party divisions have spilled over into communities. This creates segregation, as does the lack of corporate prayer and community. This causes us not to seek opposing views for engagement, but instead to isolate from those we see as different.

For Black youth, there is a sense of being disconnected. I have developed my own community, but it took a long time. The [NAU Office of Inclusion (IMQ)] has worked to dispel feelings of isolation. People can't find the Black church or the Black community. A group called Soul Sugar has been having open mic nights and trying to host prayer times to meet the spiritual needs of younger Black people. We are lacking the connection to the spiritual guidance from our mothers and grandmothers.

The shifting Black community is the result of the population decrease due to lack of employment opportunities, for youth in particular. In recent years, there has been regrowth with incoming Black professionals at NAU, medical fields, et cetera; with this there has also been an influx of issues with police and other systems, especially with the suggestion that because Black numbers are small, Black narratives are insignificant.

People of color are struggling with economics; community resources and services have been stripped. Black people have been trained how to behave, and being uncomfortable is something we've been conditioned to accept. African Americans are taught to dislike each other.

A lot of what we have in the community are segregated functions. We need more integration, while keeping our history.

Systemic racism has created a system where we [as Black people] hate each other. It's become a cultural thing [for all people] to disrespect each other. We need to take conscious control of how we're represented.

Inaction stands in the way – people who don't see it as their problem or the idea of being color blind, which negates our struggle.

We need to have a conversation around the term racist; people need to learn to address the behavior without taking the term personally.

There is division, within the Black community, that doesn't allow us to have connection with ourselves. We need to stop using personal history to allow us not to support each other.

I think the cost of living is probably another huge barrier. Because even if I settled for a job in Flagstaff that's kinda outside my desired field, could I afford to stay? Probably not.

There's a white and privileged mentality that you see everywhere. It restricts our ability to be comfortable with ourselves. I'm so tired of it. I believe we're on Indigenous land, and it doesn't make sense that there are so many white people here.

Working in this town is terrible. Working in customer service is already terrible, but working in customer service in Flagstaff, where everyone feels entitled to everything, is a lot. It might have to do with where people are from and settling here ... There's a white superior mentality. I feel like someone needs to voice this and maybe we can start.

I think we need to band together as a community. [As suggested by Mr. Brown], creating a guide or directory to Black businesses, it's like, why don't these things



exist? Because we don't have these cultural touchstones, we seclude ourselves. It's enhanced by us not reaching out and uplifting each other.

It's the lack of culture that keeps me from wanting to stay here. That might be why the diversity rate on campus is so low. The first thing my mind went to was the Native American community and how their history was shut down. There's a colonialist mentality ... if you land here, you own this space, if you kill enough people you have control over it. If we're going to make any forward progress, we need to get beyond this territorial mindset and understand it's not always about taking as much as you can.

I definitely think that if [there were] more people of color that were here in Flagstaff, I would feel more comfortable staying and being here in general.

There's no regular meeting space for the community.

As someone who is Black and Mexican, I feel like there is not enough representation of people of color. More culture and representation in Flagstaff would make me feel so much more comfortable being here.

## **CHAPTER 3: GOALS, POLICIES, AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

### GOALS, POLICIES & STRATEGIES

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Goals and policies in the Flagstaff's Forgotten People (FFP) Strategic Plan aim to specifically address issues and concerns facing Flagstaff's Black community via methods that simultaneously advance the goals and priorities of the City of Flagstaff while encouraging a more complete fulfillment of the City's mission, vision, and organizational values. Goals are presented both broadly and specifically in line with the various levels of need within the Black community of Flagstaff, aiming to ensure continued viability for the next 10- to 20-year plans for development and engagement by Council. Strategies presented within this plan represent ideas that may help achieve desired outcomes.

#### City Council Mission

The Lived Black Experience Community Coalition believes that to fulfill its mission "to protect and enhance the quality of life for all," the City of Flagstaff must take deliberate action to address the needs and concerns of the Black community.

#### City Council Vision

The City Council has stated the following vision for the City of Flagstaff:

*The City of Flagstaff is a safe, diverse, just, vibrant and innovative community with a unique character and quality of life for all. The City fosters and supports economic, environmental, educational and cultural opportunities.*

It is the belief of the LBEC Coalition that until the City of Flagstaff recognizes the contributions of its historic Black community, and takes steps to ensure continued engagement and enrichment of this community, this vision cannot be fully realized. The aim of the FFP Strategic Plan is to provide various mechanism through which the City can proactively engage the Black community, thereby furthering what we believe to be an admirable and worthy vision for all of Flagstaff's citizenry.

#### Goals Overview

The goals outlined within this plan represent the desired results envisioned by the Black community of Flagstaff, in partnership with the LBEC Coalition and Flagstaff's City Council, with the commitment of both Council and the community. These goals represent four primary areas of focus:

##### I. Community Development

To grow and strengthen an equitable, resilient, and thriving Black community through economic advancement, increased access, and the recognition and preservation of

## Flagstaff's Lived Black Experience Strategic Plan

the historic and developing Black community of Flagstaff.  
*Representation & Preservation / Economic Inclusion & Impact / Race, Space & Segregation*

### II. Community Engagement

To partner with the community to develop, improve, and sustain relationships that guide solutions addressing social, cultural, and economic determinants of access, public consideration, education, advancement, and care.  
*Representation & Preservation / Mental & Behavioral Health*

### III. Community Infrastructure

To intentionally partner with the Black community to develop ongoing programs of education, celebration, and economic development, with a direct focus on recognizing the need for public spaces and places directed toward such engagement.  
*Youth Perspectives & Concerns / Race, Space & Segregation / Mental & Behavioral Health*

### IV. Community Outreach

To enhance public transparency, accessibility, economic equity, and social justice within the Black community of Flagstaff in order to enable a more holistic approach to Flagstaff's long-term developmental goals that is cognizant of the potential impacts to all aspects of its community.  
*Social & Criminal Justice / Representation & Preservation*

## Policies Overview

Policies represent a deliberate system of principles and actions intended to guide decisions and achieve the stated goals of the FFP Strategic Plan.

### I: Community Development

Goal I: To grow and strengthen an equitable, resilient, and thriving Black community through economic advancement, increased access, and the recognition and preservation of the historic and developing Black community of Flagstaff.

Policy I.1: Create opportunities where new businesses and economic opportunities can contribute financially to community growth and development.

Policy I.2: Create greater awareness of programs and opportunities that support the development of economic drivers specifically focused within the Black community.

Policy I.3: Support investment in the Black communities of Flagstaff that address longstanding issues and community concerns including home ownership, housing affordability, job development, historic preservation, et cetera.

## II: Community Engagement

Goal II: To partner with the community to develop, improve, and sustain relationships that guide solutions addressing social, cultural, and economic determinants of access, public consideration, education, advancement, and care.

Policy II.1: Enhance visibility of the Black community through events, cultural celebrations, educational opportunities, and historic preservation.

Policy II.2: Examine opportunities for access to community-specific care, including culturally specific health resources, education, etc.

Policy II.3: Engage in continued and ongoing conversation with the Black community via public forums, the establishment of a culturally specific commission, and the development of a community partnership to continuously solicit input, feedback, and awareness.

Policy II.4: Ensure engagement activity remains at all times inclusive and cognizant of the diversity within the community, to the greatest extent possible allowing equitable opportunity for civic engagement.

## III: Community Infrastructure

Goal III: To intentionally partner with the Black community to develop ongoing programs of education, celebration, and economic development, with a direct focus on recognizing the need for public spaces and places directed toward such engagement.

Policy III.1: Expand capital improvement, economic development, and workforce investments to maximize and maintain growth within the historic Black neighborhoods and communities of color in Flagstaff.

Policy III.2: Utilize various community and economic resources to create new and support existing centralized, publicly accessible spaces dedicated to the engagement of the Black community and the support of cultural and artistic spaces.

Policy III.3: Provide funding and other community resources to the establishment of programs providing ongoing education and engagement opportunities with the historic Black neighborhoods and communities of color in Flagstaff.

Policy III.4: Utilize infrastructure development to address regional disparities, access imbalances, and the ongoing rural-suburban-urban divide.

## IV: Community Outreach

Goal IV: To enhance public transparency, accessibility, economic equity, and social justice within the Black community of Flagstaff in order to enable a more holistic approach to Flagstaff's long-term developmental goals that is cognizant of the potential impacts to all aspects of its community.

Policy IV.1: Cultivate community partnerships by promoting civic engagement and outreach initiatives between local agencies and the historic Black neighborhoods and communities of color in Flagstaff.

Policy IV.2: Recognize the historic disparate impact of community policing and criminal justice system policies on communities of color, and actively engage both

public and private agencies and community partners to examine, review, and revise policies, programs, and procedures that may preserve and sustain such impacts.

Policy IV.3: Actively engage the Black community of Flagstaff in ongoing dialog, to ensure visibility, cultural inclusion, positive representation in civic discourse, and an ongoing presence in the public discourse of city development.

## Strategic Overview

The strategies presented in this plan are suggestions and ideas directed toward the achievement of the goals and policies listed above. These strategies are the direct result of community engagement, having been compiled from community dialogs, public participation, focus groups, community gatekeepers, subject matter experts, etc. Strategies are identified and categorized by the goals and policies they further, as well as the strategic focus areas identified during the community forums held in conjunction with the City of Flagstaff. Because many strategies interconnect across recommendation areas, we recognize that similar ideas may be presented in a variety of areas.

### **I: Community Development – To grow and strengthen an equitable, resilient, and thriving Black community through economic advancement, increased access, and the recognition and preservation of the historic and developing Black community of Flagstaff.**

- Provide funding to the development of Black business ownership and entrepreneurship, as well as education and support resources to Black entrepreneurs and innovators within the Flagstaff community *[RP/PI.1, PI.3]*
- Provide funding and other support mechanisms for the celebration and recognition of Black food, art, and cultural traditions *[RP/PI.1, PI.3]*
- Create publicly accessible preservation resources, including an oral history database, a Black cultural walking tour, and public access to the various special collections and records pertaining to Flagstaff's historic Black community *[RP/PI.3]*
- Provide wrap-around services via agencies and/or other community mechanisms focused on helping individuals—particularly those of color—to acquire business licenses, City and County registrations and permits, and provide matching funds for successful completion of business development educational programming *[EI/PI.1, PI.2, PI.3]*
- Ensure equitable access to mentorship, business resources, and other help agents and/or agencies *[EI/PI.1, PI.2, PI.3]*
- Provide community and funding support for nontraditional business development and entrepreneurial endeavors *[EI/PI.1, PI.2]*



## Flagstaff's Lived Black Experience Strategic Plan

- Solicit the development of traditionally Black-servicing businesses and resources, including hair salons, beauty shops and parlors, food services and restaurants, etc. **[EI/PI.1]**
- Create and market visible representation of the Black community through mechanisms such as walking tours, marketing, and public and visible recognition of locations that are representative of Flagstaff's historic Black community (including historic Green Book locations, Buffalo Soldier encampments, historic homes and community centers, etc.) **[EI/PI.2]**
- Create a nexus hub, such as a Black community website, where Black-owned businesses can be recognized, discovered, and accessed **[EI/PI.1, PI.2, PI.3]**
- Create a co-op where leaders in Black business can help provide visibility and resources for economic development **[EI/PI.1, PI.2, PI.3]**
- Create a centralized marketplace, run once a month out of the historic Murdoch Center, as a launching pad for Black businesses in Flagstaff **[EI/PI.1, PI.3]**
- Develop programming such as a "Third Thursday" program, hosted through the Murdoch Community Center, to provide an opportunity for community members to engage with the Black community and Black economic drivers **[EI/PI.1, PI.3]**
- Provide various public educational opportunities to ensure all community members are aware of and properly educated in resources and programs available for economic development **[EI/PI.1, PI.2, PI.3]**
- Develop a dual position Black Community Liaison and Murdoch Center Executive Director, selected via a joint City of Flagstaff and Southside Community Association selection committee **[EI/PI.1, PI.3]**
- Recognize, via proclamation or other public issuance, the fact that barriers to Black community development, inclusion, and space access existed, and continue to exist, that must be overcome for the benefit of the full Flagstaff community **[RS/PI.2, PI.3]**
- Focus on the development of equitable, affordable housing and homeownership opportunities for Black and other communities of color, recognizing the historical impact of systemic racism enacted via redlining, blockbusting, and other programs that denied housing and other economic resources to various citizens on the basis of race **[RS/PI.3]**
- Homeownership opportunities with centralized services localized within the historic Southside neighborhood **[RS/PI.3]**
- Recognize that development undertaken by the City must remain cognizant of maintaining the historic communities occupying areas of development **[RS/PI.3]**
- Actively support the recruitment of diverse medical, behavioral, and mental healthcare professionals **[MB/PI.1, PI.3]**
- Consider and engage in thoughtful discourse regarding mechanisms for reparations within the Black community of Flagstaff, including consideration of community reparation programs such as the establishment of an equity fund and/or donations to and fiscal partnership with the historic Murdoch Community Center **[RS/PI.3]**

**Policy I.1:** Create opportunities where new businesses and economic opportunities can contribute financially to community growth and development.

**Policy I.2:** Create greater awareness of programs and opportunities that support the development of economic drivers specifically focused within the Black community.

**Policy I.3:** Support investment in the Black communities of Flagstaff that address longstanding issues and community concerns including home ownership, housing affordability, job development, historic preservation, et cetera.

## **II: Community Engagement – To partner with the community to develop, improve, and sustain relationships that guide solutions addressing social, cultural, and economic determinants of access, public consideration, education, advancement, and care.**

- Creation of an annual cultural festival, held in Heritage Square, aimed at bringing and sustaining knowledge of the historic, current, and future Black communities of Flagstaff *[RP/PII.1, PII.4]*
- Engage the community in increased levels of activities during Black History Month, Juneteenth, and other significant holidays and events in Black cultural history *[RP/PII.1, PII.3, PII.4]*
- Provide signage (including street names), plaques, murals and public art, and other public markers that recognizes, honors, and commemorates important figures within the history of Flagstaff and Northern Arizona *[RP/PII.1]*
- Enable the built environments of Flagstaff to recognize and reflect the Black presence *[RP/PII.1, PII.3, PII.4]*
- Create mechanisms for the inclusion of educational programming aimed at inclusive representation, regardless of classroom makeup, recognizing that all cultures should be represented within the education system *[YP/PII.1, PII.3, PII.4]*
- Develop partnerships with NAU fraternities, sororities, and panhellenic organizations to offer mentorship, community engagement, and the development of educational and enrichment programs *[YP/PII.1, PII.2, PII.3, PII.4]*
- Provide sponsorship funding for ongoing community partnerships between the Black community and local businesses and community organizations *[YP/PII.1, PII.2, PII.4]*
- Provide educational resources to combat both the stigmatization of mental health in the Black community and the limited understanding of Black mental health outside of the Black community *[MB/PII.1, PII.2, PII.4]*
- Provide resources and mechanisms for trauma informed care specific to, and guided by principles native to, the Black community and other communities of color *[MB/PII.2, PII.4]*

**Policy II.1:** Enhance visibility of the Black community through events, cultural celebrations, educational opportunities, and historic preservation.

**Policy II.2:** Examine opportunities for access to community-specific care, including culturally specific health resources, education, etc.

**Policy II.3:** Engage in continued and ongoing conversation with the Black community via public forums, the establishment of a culturally specific commission, and the development of a community partnership to continuously solicit input, feedback, and awareness.

**Policy II.4:** Ensure engagement activity remains at all times inclusive and cognizant of the diversity within the community, to the greatest extent possible allowing equitable opportunity for civic engagement.

### **III: Community Infrastructure**

- Install permanent markers and plaques to designate and commemorate the contributions of African Americans throughout the City *[RS/PIII.2, PIII.4]*
- Create a central Black Community Center to ensure access to information and contact with the Black community of Flagstaff *[RS/PIII.1, PIII.2, PIII.3, PIII.4]*
- Recognize the historical significance of Wilson Riles and ensure community knowledge of his legacy *[RS/PIII.3]*
- Creation of a Black Cultural Center, utilizing the preexisting space and programs of the historic Murdoch Center, and recognition of the Murdoch Center as an historic cultural center for the education, preservation, and celebration of Flagstaff's Black cultural heritage *[RP/PIII.1, PIII.2, PIII.3, PIII.4]*
- Restore, or memorialize, the Buffalo Soldier Museum *[RP/PIII.2, PIII.3]*
- Provide broadband internet connectivity throughout the City, with intentional focus on the connectivity infrastructure within the historic Southside community *[RP/PIII.1, PIII.4]*
- Examine and improve the cost of living to enable the retention of professional talent of color *[MB/PIII.1, PIII.4]*
- Increase resources specifically addressing mental, behavioral, and other medical health concerns within the Black community *[MB/PIII.1, PIII.2, PIII.3, PIII.4]*

**Policy III.1:** Expand capital improvement, economic development, and workforce investments to maximize and maintain growth within the historic Black neighborhoods and communities of color in Flagstaff.

**Policy III.2:** Utilize various community and economic resources to create new and support existing centralized, publicly accessible spaces dedicated to the engagement of the Black community and the support of cultural and artistic spaces.

**Policy III.3:** Provide funding and other community resources to the establishment of programs providing ongoing education and engagement opportunities with the historic Black neighborhoods and communities of color in Flagstaff.

**Policy III.4:** Utilize infrastructure development to address regional disparities, access imbalances, and the ongoing rural-suburban-urban divide.

### **IV: Community Outreach**

- Develop various before- and after-school programs directed toward youth within the Black and other underrepresented cultural communities of Flagstaff *[RP/PIV.1]*
- Establish programs of restorative, versus punitive, justice within the Flagstaff criminal justice system *[SJ/PIV.1, PIV.2, PIV.3]*

- Introduce young, underrepresented citizens to the law for the purposes of recruitment, increased diversity, and to ensure understanding of how to engage with the legal system *[SJ/PIV.1, PIV.2, PIV.3]*
- Provide ongoing, mandatory training for all employees within the criminal justice system (courts; police officers, staff, and personnel; etc.) in diversity, equity, inclusion, implicit bias, etc. *[SJ/PIV.2]*
- Engage in ongoing review of laws and practices within the Flagstaff criminal justice system that perpetuate systems of institutional racism *[SJ/PIV.2]*
- Develop community engagement programs between the Flagstaff Police Department and the Black community to foster positive relationships and engagements *[SJ/PIV.1, PIV.2, PIV.3]*
- Partnership with the Flagstaff Unified School District for the development of clubs, groups, and other organizations for students of color in order to educate and inform them of various historical and current events of social and cultural significance *[YP/PIV.1, PIV.3]*
- Create a strategic partnership between the Northern Arizona University Ethnic Studies program and the Flagstaff Unified School District *[YP/PIV.1]*
- Reestablish the Flagstaff Youth Commission, ensuring that cultural representation is part of the organizational mandate *[YP/PIV.3]*
- Provide future leader training opportunities via mentorship and partnership engagement through City Council and other City, County, and State leaders *[YP/PIV.1, PIV.2, PIV.3]*
- Dedicated investment on the part of the City to youth programs highlighting and emphasizing participation among students of color *[YP/PIV.1, PIV.3]*
- Provide implicit bias training to all professionals and staff within Flagstaff Medical Center, North Country Health Care, and other healthcare provider offices *[MB/PIV.1, PIV.2, PIV.3]*

**Policy IV.1: Cultivate community partnerships by promoting civic engagement and outreach initiatives between local agencies and the historic Black neighborhoods and communities of color in Flagstaff.**

**Policy IV.2: Recognize the historic disparate impact of community policing and criminal justice system policies on communities of color, and actively engage both public and private agencies and community partners to examine, review, and revise policies, programs, and procedures that may preserve and sustain such impacts.**

**Policy IV.3: Actively engage the Black community of Flagstaff in ongoing dialog, to ensure visibility, cultural inclusion, positive representation in civic discourse, and an ongoing presence in the public discourse of city development.**

<b>SC</b>	Social & Criminal Justice
<b>RP</b>	Representation & Preservation
<b>YP</b>	Youth Perspectives & Concerns
<b>EI</b>	Economic Inclusion & Impact
<b>RS</b>	Race, Space & Segregation
<b>MB</b>	Mental & Behavioral Health

## **APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY**

## GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

*Below are key terms referenced within, or otherwise essential to, the conversations undertaken in this strategic plan.*

<b>Black/African American</b>	This nomenclature, used interchangeably to denote people of African descent who live in the United States, has always been complicated by migration, forced enslavement, and a quest for freedom that began among Indigenous Africans who have been part of a forced Diaspora
<b>Black Psychology</b>	According to the Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi) Black or African Centered psychology "is a dynamic manifestation of unifying African principles, values and traditions." The term and nomenclature of Black Psychology was developed in contrast to mainstream, Eurocentric (white-oriented) psychology which was inherently based in concepts of white superiority, resulting in what original conceptualist Joseph White defined as "erroneous conclusions" and deficient analysis of Black culture, tradition, cognitive development, and social needs.
<b>Community Gatekeepers</b>	Those who have influence or control over various initiatives within a community; gatekeepers are members of a community, viewed as community "insiders," with distinct—and often distinguished—understanding of the community's culture, climate, and political environment.
<b>Defunding</b>	The reduction of (typically police) budgets and subsequent reallocation of funds to crucial, and oft-neglected, community resources (e.g. education, housing, public health, youth services, etc.).
<b>De-policing</b>	Though typically defined as the retreat of officers from proactive law enforcement tactics, in the context of communal conversation this term was used to mean a reduction in what may be perceived as aggressive policing of community in deference to concepts such as "peace officers" and enhanced community resources.
<b>Disparate Impact</b>	In general, practices which are formally neutral yet disproportionately adversely affect one or more groups represented by a protected characteristic (e.g. race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability status, etc.)
<b>Diversity</b>	Generally, the wide variety of shared and different personal and group characteristics among human beings. Diversity is both visible (color, gender, age, ethnicity,



### **Equity**

visible disability, and sometimes religion) and invisible (socioeconomic status, invisible disability, mental/behavioral health, religion, familial status, etc.). The act of ensuring that individuals are provided with the resources they need to have access to the same opportunities as the general population. While “equity” and “equality” are often used interchangeably, there are key differences. “Equality” suggests uniformity, with even distribution among all people; what is equal, however, is not always equitable. “Equity” or “Equitability” suggests impartiality, with distribution made in such a way to “level” opportunities for all people; what is equitable is not always equal.

### **Gaslighting**

A tactic in which one is manipulated, whether deliberately or undeliberately, by psychological means into questioning their own experiences, memories, perceptions, judgements, and even sanity. Gaslighting uses tactics such as contradiction, denial, misdirection, and misinformation to delegitimize one’s beliefs.

### **Gentrification**

Generally, the process of making a person, place, or thing more refined and/or respectable. Culturally, gentrification is the process whereby the character of a community typically representative of marginalized groups is changed by wealthier people, particularly of a majority group, moving in; this typically leads to what generally is perceived as “improvements” (housing, new business, etc.), but also typically displaces the current culture and community in the process.

### **(The) Green Book**

The Negro Motorist Green Book was an annual guidebook, written and published by Victor Hugo Green, for African American travelers who faced discrimination, racism, and other hostilities on the road. The guide provided lists of resources, services, and places considered mostly friendly to African Americans. Flagstaff locations included the Du Beau’s Motel Inn, El Rancho Flagstaff, the Nackard Inn, the Park Plaza Motel, Pearl Polk, Vandevier Lodge & Dining Room, and the Yucca Greyhound Café.

### **Inclusion**

Authentically bringing traditionally excluded (“marginalized”) individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision- and/or policy-making in a way that shares power. Inclusion actively creates involvement and empowerment, whereby any person or group can be, and feel, welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate.

<b>Institutional Racism</b>	Institutional Racism describes forms of racism that are embedded into political and social institutions and discriminate, either deliberately or indirectly, against particular racial groups; institutional racism routinely and systematically advantages the dominant culture or ethnic group while disadvantaging and excluding others
<b>Marginalization</b>	The exclusion, ignoring, or relegation of a group to the “outer edge” of a group, society, or community. Marginalization devalues those who vary from the “norm” or “mainstream,” at times to the point of dehumanizing them or otherwise categorizing them as deviant, regressive and/or inferior.
<b>Reparations</b>	The making of amends for a wrong one has done, typically by means of financial restitution to, or otherwise helping, those who have been wronged. Reparations are a traditional, well-precedented remedy to historic wrongs, including examples of the Holocaust, Japanese Americans, et cetera.
<b>Representation</b>	While representation often refers to the (traditionally negative) perceptions of particular groups represented in media, throughout this work “representation” signifies the presence, and recognition, of particular groups within a community, in a manner that acknowledges, celebrates, and makes efforts to positively include these groups in the development of the community.
<b>Restorative Justice</b>	An approach to justice in which those who have caused harm are engaged in a cooperative process to repair that harm, wherein the goal is for both the victim and the offender to discuss and share the experiences of what happened, who was harmed, and how to pursue repair of harm via consensus.
<b>Segregation</b>	The forced separation and discrimination against people of color—particularly those of African descent—through <i>de factor</i> (social custom) and <i>de jure</i> (legal practice) methods. Also called American Apartheid, and/or Jim Crow Segregation.
<b>White Psychology</b>	The disconnect that exists between what is in front of someone and what is conditioned through “institutional reinforcements.” In context, this term refers to the ability of white individuals to dismiss the marginalization and cultural exclusion of people of color due to systemic, institutional indicators which suggest such marginalization and exclusion does not, in fact, exist.

## **APPENDIX B: STRATEGIC PLAN CONTRIBUTORS**

We offer deep thanks, gratitude, and appreciation to all the elected and appointed officials, professionals, and community members who contributed to Flagstaff's Lived Black Experience Strategic Plan:

### **City Council**

Mayor Coral Evans  
Vice Mayor Adam Shimoni  
Councilmember Regina Salas  
Councilmember Austin Aslan  
Councilmember Jamie Whelan  
Councilmember Charlie Odegaard  
Councilmember Jim McCarthy

### **Southside Community Association Board**

Deborah Harris, Executive Director  
Pam Garcia  
Khara House  
Sandra McCoy  
Elson Miles  
David Rodriguez  
Shirley Sims

Valeria Chase (non-voting member)  
Coral Evans (non-voting member)  
Frank Higgins (non-voting member)  
Joshua Maher (non-voting member)

### **Policy Brief Writers (in order of presentation)**

Pastor Gerald Richard  
Rev. Bernadine Lewis  
Warren Brown  
Khara House  
Dr. Ricardo Guthrie  
Jermaine Barkley

### **Lived Black Experience CommUnity Coalition Member Organizations**

Coconino County African Diaspora Advisory Council  
NAACP Flagstaff Branch  
Southside Community Association  
Ethnic Studies (Northern Arizona University)  
Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Incorporated  
Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Incorporated

### **Historic Black Church Partners**

First Missionary Baptist Church – Pastor Jeffery Kennedy  
Harbert AME Church – Pastor Corey Moore  
Riverside Church of God in Christ – Pastor Leonard Bryant  
Springhill Baptist Church – Pastor Cemie Clayton

### **Community Forum Participants**

*Below are the lists of all who registered for each of the six community forums. Not all who registered may have attended in person.*

#### **Criminal & Social Justice – Pastor Gerald Richard**

Charmayne Allen  
Austin Aslan  
Carly Camplain  
Ricky Camplain  
Joseph Carroll  
Carmenlita Chief  
Greg Clifton  
Justis Daniels-Bezout  
Destiney Evans  
Linnea Evans  
Alexis Floyd  
Hilary Giovale  
Chelsea Green  
Melvin Hall  
Deborah Harris  
Harvey Hill  
Jennifer Hunter  
Patrice Horstman  
Khara House

Grey Jones  
Kara Kelty  
Carolyn Kidd  
Bernadine Lewis  
Edward Lumpkin  
Gretchen Mcallister  
Dr. Tracye Moore  
Daniel Musselman  
Eric Nolan  
Abby Ortiz  
Mike Oxtoby  
William Ring  
Adam Shimoni  
Joe Stubblefield  
Annette Yazzie  
Ricky Young

**Representation & Preservation – Rev. Bernadine Lewis**

Khara House  
Linnea Evans  
David Bonnell  
Warren Brown  
Alexander Darmawaskita  
Justis Daniels-Bezout  
Gwen Glover  
Mary Grove  
Dr. Ricardo Guthrie  
Melvin Hall  
Jessica Ivola  
Carolyn Kidd  
Edward Lumpkin  
Laurel Matsuda  
Dr. Tracye Moore  
Charlie Odegaard  
Adam Shimoni  
Joe Stubblefield  
Ricky Young

**Youth Issues & Concerns – Warren Brown**

Hawwah Abdullah  
Jermaine Barkley  
David Bonnell  
Sydney Carter  
Shilah Chase  
Jason Cook



Carnell Council  
Justis Daniels-Bezout  
Alex Darmawaskita  
Emily Davalos  
Dan Duke  
Kijan Edwards  
Coral Evans  
Linnea Evans  
James Gallardo  
Marissa Garcia  
John Grahame  
Mary Grove  
Melvin Hall  
Deborah Harris  
Jay Hicks  
Harvey Hill  
Erica Holling  
Khara House  
Jennifer Hunter  
Jennifer Ingram  
Erin Kaczmarowski  
Liza Kretzmann  
Arthur Kumon  
Kara Kumon  
Bernadine Lewis  
Darrell Lieteau  
Frederick Littles  
Edward Lumpkin  
Tracye Moore  
Johnell Murphy  
Charlie Odegard  
Style Ranger  
Rene RedDay  
Obie Saddler  
Adam Shimoni  
Daniel Slack  
Joe Stubblefield  
Crystal Warden-Gant  
Annette Yazzie  
Ricky Young  
**Economic Inclusion & Impact – Khara House**  
David Bonnell  
Jason Cook

Chris Duarte  
Vickey Finger  
Melvin Hall  
Deborah Harris  
Kara Kumon  
Tracye Moore  
Lina Wallen  
Ricky Young

**Race, Space & Segregation – Dr. Ricardo Guthrie**

Jermaine Barkley  
David Bonnell  
Warren Brown  
Jason Cook  
Justis Daniels-Bezout  
Vickey Finger  
Harvey Hill  
Khara House  
Jennifer Hunter  
Susie Immel  
Eliza Kretzmann  
Kara Kumon  
Edward Lumpkin  
Jessica Miller  
Tracye Moore  
Ricky Young

**Mental & Behavioral Health – Jermaine Barkley**

David Bonnell  
Warren Brown  
Justis Daniels-Bezout  
Elizabeth Dublinski  
Steven Finger  
Vickey Finger  
Deborah Fresquez  
Khara House  
Zayita James  
Patricia McCaslin  
Tracye Moore  
Michele Ralston  
Rene RedDay  
Margaret W  
Lina Wallen  
Molly Yumkas

## Focus Group Participants

*Note: As many participants requested or preferred anonymity, in some cases names of focus group participants are not listed to preserve the protected identities of speakers.*

### **Community & Youth Advocates**

Danny Neal

Tyrone Johnson

### **Kuttz Barber Shop & College**

Jabar Nichols, owner and community & youth representatives

### **First Missionary Baptist Church**

Pastor Jeffery Kennedy and congregants

### **Harbert AME Church**

Pastor Corey Moore and congregants

### **Riverside Church of God in Christ**

Pastor Leonard Bryant and congregants

### **Springhill Baptist Church/NAACP Flagstaff**

Pastor Cemie Clayton and congregants

### **Coconino County African Diaspora Advisory Council**

Breyaunna Smith, Chair

Amber Jones

Laurel Matsudo

Dr. Tracey A. Moore

### **Northern Arizona University Black Student Union**

Alexa Hart, President

Kobe Lee, Vice President/Secretary

Samrawit Shibeshi, Treasurer

Amethyst Nabors, Social Justice Chair

Malik Bossett, Black History Month Event Coordinator

Alexia Phillips, Black Renaissance Chair

Angel Sabay, Homecoming Co-Chair

Jessica Daniels, Advisor

## **APPENDIX C: SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS**

## RECOMMENDED READING

### Social & Criminal Justice

[“Race, Ethnicity, and the Criminal Justice System”](#) – American Sociological Association

[“Social Justice and the African American Liberation Tradition”](#) – William Cook, *Journal of Black Studies*

[“Preparing Leaders for Social Justice”](#) – Colleen A. Capper, George Theoharis, James Sebastian, *Journal of Educational Administration*

[“How We Police”](#) (presentation to Flagstaff City Council) – Deputy Police Chief Dan Musselman

*The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* – Michelle Alexander

*Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* – Bryan Stevenson

*No Equal Justice* – David D. Cole

### Representation & Preservation

[“The Fight to Preserve African-American History.”](#) Casey Cep, *The New Yorker*, Feb 2020.

[“Preserving Black Culture.”](#) Brent Leggs, National Trust for Historic Preservation African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund/Main Street America. Feb 2020.

[“Preserving African American Historic Places.”](#) Brent Leggs, Kerri Rubman, and Bryd Wood, National Trust for Historic Preservation/Saving Places, 2012.

[“Making Black history matter in public space.”](#) Hanna Love and Jennifer S. Vey, *The Avenue* (Oct 2019).

[“The ‘Transcendent’ Nature of Preserving African American Places.”](#) Carson Bear, Saving Places.

### Youth Issues & Concerns

[“Structural Racism and Youth Development: Issues, Challenges, and Implications”](#) – The Aspen Institute/Racial Equity Tools

[“The Face of the Future: Risk and Resilience in Minority Youth”](#) – Ana Mari Cauce, Rick Cruz, Marissa Corona, and Rand Conger, National Center for Biotechnology Information/NIH

[“Fewer Black Teens Seek Treatment for Depression, Mental Health Issues than White Counterparts”](#) – Rebecca Klisz-Hulbert, *The Washington Post*

*The Mis-Education of the Negro* – Carter G. Woodson

*Black Youth Rising: Activism and Radical Healing in Urban America* – Shawn R. Ginwright

### Economic Inclusion & Impact

[“Systematic Inequality and Economic Opportunity”](#) – Danyelle Solomon, Connor Maxwell, and Abril Castro, Center for American Progress

[“The Economic State of the Black Community”](#) – Senate Joint Economic Committee

[“How to Support Black Businesses, According to Four Black Entrepreneurs”](#) – Dreamers & Doers, *Business Insider*

*PowerNomics: The National Plan to Empower Black America* – Dr. Claud Anderson

### Race, Space & Segregation

“New Southside mural inspirational, educational -- and colorful, too.” *Arizona Daily Sun*, August 2011: A-5.

“The Days of ‘Haze’: A Personal Journey Down the Back Road to *Brown v. Board of Education*.” Linda C. Boone, *Arizona Attorney*, March 2000: 38-40. <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>

[“Commentary: Arts, Neighborhoods, and Social Practices: Towards an Integrated Epistemology of Community Arts.”](#) Karen Chapple and Shannon Jackson, *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 29

“The African American Murals of Los Angeles.” Robin Dunitz, *American Visions* 9 (Dec./Jan. 1994/1995): 14. <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>

[“Rio De Flag – Flood Control.”](#) Bill Gaud, Northern Arizona University.

[“Rio de Flag Faces Reengineering.”](#) Lucas Holub, *The Lumberjack* (October 2002).

[“The Community Mural and Democratic Art Processes.”](#) Michael R. Mosher, *Review of Radical Political Economics* 36 (Fall 2004): 528-537.

[“The Murdoch Center is Producing Solar Energy!”](#) Solar Mosaic, 2012.



["The Art of Swinging Left in the 1930s: Modernism, Realism, and the Politics of the Left in the Murals of Stuart Davis."](#) Jody Patterson, *Art History* 33 (Feb 2010): 98-123.

["Hey! Are There Any Murals Around Here?"](#) Jon Pounds, *Public Art Review* 17 (Fall/Winter 2005): 16-19.

"Art as Civic Biography: Philadelphia Murals Project." Robin Rice, *New Art Examiner* 26 (April 1999): 18-23.

Wilson Riles: "'No Adversary Situation,' Public School Education in California and Wilson C. Riles," recorded by Sarah Sharp, Regional Oral History Office. The University of California Bancroft Library, 1984.

["Can the Arts Change the World? The Transformative Power of Community Arts."](#) Abby Scher, *New Directions for Adult & Continuing Education* 116 (Winter 2007): 3-11.

["Public Art at the Global Crossroads: The Politics of Place in 1930s Los Angeles."](#) Sarah Schrank, *Journal of Social History* 44 (Winter 2010): 435-457.

["The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies: A Research Review."](#) Christine E. Sleeter/National Education Association, 2011.

["Conflict and Consensus: New Deal Mural Post Office Art."](#) Robert L. Stevens and Jared A. Fogel, *National Social Science Journal* 33 (Jan 2010): 160-165.

"A Methodological Model for Rapid Assessment, Response, and Evaluation: The RARE Program and Public Health." Robert Trotter and Richard Needle, et al, *Field Methods* 13 (May 2001): 137-259.

["Community, Consensus & the Protest Mural."](#) Jane Weissman and Janet Braun-Reinitz, *Public Art Review* 17 (Fall/Winter 2005): 20-23.

["The Rise of Black Phoenix: African-American Migration, Settlement and Community Development in Maricopa County, Arizona 1868-1930."](#) Matthew Whitaker, *The Journal of Negro History* 85 (Summer 2000): 197.

*Mountain Town: Flagstaff's First Century.* Platt Cline/Northland Publications, 1994.

*Theatre of the Oppressed.* Augusto Boal/Theatre Communications Group, 1985.

*Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment.* Patricia Hill Collins/Routledge, 2000.

*Rough in Reverse.* Manthia Diawara/California Newsreel.

*The Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* Paulo Freire/Continuum.

*What Has Passed and What Remains: Oral Histories of Northern Arizona's Changing Landscapes.* Peter Friederici, ed./ The Univ. of Arizona Press, 2010.

*How Racism Takes Place.* George Lipsitz/Temple Univ. Press, 2011.

*American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass.* Douglas S. Massey and Nancy A. Denton/Harvard University Press, 1993.

*The Great Depression, America, 1929-1941.* Robert McElvaine/Times Books, 1984.

*All Deliberate Speed: Reflections on the First Half-Century of Brown v. Board of Education.* Charles Ogletree/W. W. Norton & Co, 2004.

*Theme Town: A Geography of Landscape and Community in Flagstaff, Arizona.* Tom Paradis/iUniverse, Inc, 2003.

*Southside Community Assessment.* 2009. Flagstaff, AZ: Southside Community Association, Civic Service Institute at NAU, and the Arizona Community Foundation.

### **Mental & Behavioral Health**

[“Mental and Behavioral Health – African Americans.”](#) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health.

[“Identity and Cultural Dimensions: Black/African American.”](#) National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

[“Black and African American Communities and Mental Health.”](#) Mental Health America.

[“African Americans Have Limited Access to Mental and Behavioral Health Care.”](#) American Psychological Association, 2017.

[“Stigma Regarding Mental Illness Among People of Color.”](#) Victor Armstrong, MSW. The National Council for Behavioral Health, 2019.

## **RECOMMENDED VIEWING**

### **Social & Criminal Justice**

[“Criminal Justice as Social Justice”](#) – Bruce Western (American Academy of Arts & Sciences)

[“A Prosecutor’s Vision for a Better Justice System”](#) – Adam Foss (TED.com)

### **Representation & Preservation**

[“Protecting America’s Treasures: Black History in the Vault”](#) – US National Archives

[“Preserve Black Culture: Built Structures Keep Memory”](#) – Dr. Toni Shorter Smith (TEDx Talks)

### Youth Issues & Concerns

[“The Criminalization of Black Youth in the Classroom”](#) – New America/Howard University

[“Black Youth and the Media”](#) – C-SPAN

### Economic Impact & Inclusion

[“‘BlackEnomics’ with Dr. Claud Anderson”](#) – The Elephant Room/TCN Network

[“What is Black Economic Power & How Do We Create It?”](#) – Paul C. Brunson, Christina Lewis, Kezia Williams, and Rodney Sampson (Tribe PCB)

### Race, Space & Segregation

[SouthSide Soul Stories History 101 Part One, & Part Two](#). LBM Studios/Lawrence B. McCullum, 2012.

[“Housing Segregation and Redlining in America: A Short History”](#) – NPR

[“Race & Space: A Straight Red Line from Housing Segregation to Communities in Crisis”](#) – American Constitution Society

### Mental & Behavioral Health

[“Black Mental Health Matters”](#) – Phillip J. Roundtree (TEDx Talks)

[“Black Mental Health Isn’t the Same as White Mental Health”](#) – Big Think/The Mental Health Channel

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

City of Flagstaff – [www.flagstaff.az.gov](http://www.flagstaff.az.gov)

Coconino County African Diaspora Advisory Committee – [www.coconino.az.gov/93/African-Diaspora-Advisory-Council](http://www.coconino.az.gov/93/African-Diaspora-Advisory-Council)

Ethnic Studies – [www.nau.edu/ethnic-studies](http://www.nau.edu/ethnic-studies)

Flagstaff City Council – [www.flagstaff.az.gov/Mayor-City-Council](http://www.flagstaff.az.gov/Mayor-City-Council)

Flagstaff City Commission on Diversity Awareness –  
[www.flagstaff.az.gov/2783/Commission-on-Diversity-Awareness](http://www.flagstaff.az.gov/2783/Commission-on-Diversity-Awareness)

The Murdoch Community Center (YouTube) –  
[www.youtube.com/channel/UCcIY7WfFSsrwsoiBnr4shiA/](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcIY7WfFSsrwsoiBnr4shiA/)

NAACP Flagstaff – [www.facebook.com/NAACPFlagstaff](http://www.facebook.com/NAACPFlagstaff)

Southside Community Association – [www.southsideflagstaff.com](http://www.southsideflagstaff.com)

## **POLICY SOURCE MATERIALS**

*For resources used in the composition of Policy Briefs, please view the References section of the brief paper.*