

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP)



## BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL BRANCH #3001 STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN



**THE OLDEST AND THE BOLDEST—CIVIL RIGHTS' ORGANIZATION IN THE WORLD!**

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## I. WHO WE ARE:

In 1908, a deadly race riot rocked the city of Springfield, the capital of Illinois and resting place of President Abraham Lincoln. Such eruptions of anti-black violence – particularly lynching – were horrifically commonplace, but the Springfield riot was the final tipping point that led to the creation of the NAACP. Interestingly, the young men who were accused of harming the white woman in Springfield, were rushed to Bloomington, Illinois for shelter. As such, Bloomington, Illinois' role in the formation of the NAACP is an imperative to the history of the NAACP.

Appalled at this rampant violence, a group of white liberals that included Mary White Ovington and Oswald Garrison Villard (both the descendants of famous abolitionists), William English Walling and Dr. Henry Moscowitz issued a call for a meeting to discuss racial justice. Some 60 people, seven of whom were African American (including W. E. B. Du Bois, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, and Mary Church Terrell), signed the call, which was released on the centennial of Lincoln's birth. The NAACP established its national office in New York City in 1910 and the organization's legacy continues.

Today, the Bloomington-Normal Branch of the NAACP remains on the battlefield for racial justice and equality. We are the voice for the voiceless and we maintain the stamina to fight for those harmed by the vitriol associated with racism and discrimination. Your elected officials are:

Ms. Linda Foster  
President

Dr. Carla Campbell-Jackson  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President

Mrs. Willie Holton Halbert  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President

Mr. Ben Ryburn  
Treasurer

Mrs. Sabrina Coleman  
Secretary

## **II. NAACP's MISSION, VISION AND OBJECTIVES:**

### **Mission Statement:**

The mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination.

### **Vision Statement:**

The vision of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is to ensure a society in which all individuals have equal rights and there is no racial hatred or racial discrimination.

### **Objectives:**

The following statement of objectives is found on the first page of the NAACP Constitution — the principal objectives of the Association shall be:

- To ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of all citizens.
- To achieve equality of rights and eliminate race prejudice among the citizens of the United States.
- To remove all barriers of racial discrimination through democratic processes.
- To seek enactment and enforcement of federal, state, and local laws securing civil rights.
- To inform the public of the adverse effects of racial discrimination and to seek its elimination.
- To educate persons as to their constitutional rights and to take all lawful action to secure the exercise thereof, and to take any other lawful action in furtherance of these objectives, consistent with the NAACP's Articles of Incorporation and Constitution.

## **III. THE BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL BRANCH OF THE NAACP'S FOCI:**

- A. Economic Sustainability
- B. Education
- C. Health
- D. Public Safety and Criminal Justice
- E. Environmental and Climate Justice
- F. Voting Rights and the 2020 Census

Let's GO, as we are #DONE DYING!

## **A. Economic Sustainability:**

### **Overview:**

The NAACP Economic Department recognizes the importance of the economy and economic issues in advancing an equal opportunity society and aims to address the challenging economic realities facing our country including poverty, lack of jobs and disproportionate high unemployment, lack of affordable housing, foreclosures, etc. The NAACP Economic Department's work enhances the capacity of African Americans and other underserved groups through financial economic education; individual and community asset building initiatives; diversity and inclusion in business hiring, career advancement and procurement; and monitoring financial banking practices.

### **Anticipated Deliverables:**

- Upon request, local companies and organizations should share their models that advance diverse recruitment, hiring and retention. A focus must be placed on workplace diversity, inclusion and equity.
- Upon request, local companies and organizations should demonstrate a sincere commitment to bridging racial inequality particularly as it relates to employment, wealth, lending and business ownership.
- Upon request, local companies and organizations should share the number of racism and discrimination grievances filed by people of color, as well as an action plan to address the disparities and consternations.
- When racial discrimination claims and charges are filed, companies must work diligently to "right the wrong" by indemnifying those harmed, and must commit to sustained improvement.
- Living wage must be the order of the day to assist with elimination of food deserts. Organizations should provide grants for minority-owned businesses.
- Establishment of a robust Diversity and Inclusion (D & I) Department, as well as regular D & I training to address systemic racism, cultural biases and White privilege.

## **B. Education:**

### Overview:

The NAACP works to ensure all disadvantaged students and students of color are on the path to college or a successful career by ensuring access to great teaching, equitable resources, and a challenging curriculum. Our ultimate goal is that every student of color receives a quality public education that prepares him or her to be a contributing member of a democracy. In addition to the anticipated deliverables, the Bloomington-Normal Branch of the NAACP high recommends the establishment of a Diversity and Inclusion (D & I) Department, supplemented with mandatory ongoing D & I training to address systemic racism, cultural biases and White privilege. Additionally, we recommend the school's support of and advocacy for the NAACP's ACT-SO program, as the program recognizes and encourages creative talent and academic achievement, while promoting a climate of artistic development, mentorship and serves as an avenue to assist African American students with the necessary skills for goal attainment. Portions of the recommendations were provided by the Normal Community West Black Student Union and by the Education, Equity and Excellence (E3) Task Force, and is unequivocally and categorically supported by the Bloomington-Normal Branch of the NAACP:

### **Anticipated Deliverables:**

#### Discipline:

- Socialize the fact that every student has a right to a quality public school education in a safe environment, free from racism, discrimination and bullying of any form. Institutionalize mandates for zero tolerance of racism, discrimination and prejudice whether overt or covert.
- Remove the subjectivity in definition of disciplinary infractions that result in disparate disciplinary outcomes. Operationally define disciplinary infractions free from racially coded language. Implement restorative practices embedded with trust, sincerity and fidelity.
- Plan and execute communication of changes or initiatives with input from students and the community.
- Understand and embrace the rich cultural differences associated with the African American learning experience.

#### Academic Achievement:

- Allocate funding for programs targeting the academic needs of African American students. Expand curriculum to include studies of minorities/ethnic groups as relayed by African American writers and historians. Courses should elaborate on the history of people of color and the importance of diversity and inclusion.
- Provide equal opportunity and access for African American students to enroll in accelerated/advanced courses starting in middle school and continuing throughout higher education.

#### Hiring:

- Actively recruit, hire and retain African American teachers, professors, administrators and staff of diverse ethnic backgrounds. Strengthen partnerships to target recruitment beyond local and in-state schools by leveraging Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and the NAACP.
- Require diversity training for students, administrators, professors, teachers and staff members. The educators and administrators must passionately embrace diversity and inclusion at its very best.

## **C. Health:**

### Overview:

The NAACP's mission includes a focus on the right of African Americans and other people of color to have optimal health outcomes and access to timely, quality, affordable health care. African Americans continue to have the highest incidence, prevalence and mortality rates from chronic diseases like cardiovascular disease, diabetes and obesity, and issues like HIV/AIDS continue to overwhelm the Black community more so than any other racial or ethnic group.

The NAACP is committed to eliminating the racial and ethnic inequities that exist within our health care system which undermine communities of color their life opportunities and their ability to contribute fully to the common good.

### **Anticipated Deliverables:**

- Upon request, status updates from the McLean County Health Department (MCHD) to make certain the underserved and disenfranchised are properly served and embraced. Socialize the stark reality of healthy disparities and ensure everyone is aware of their entitlement to affordable or free access to quality health care.
- The Bloomington-Normal NAACP advocates for equitable stability recovery for vulnerable populations impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19).
- Upon request, MCHD shall provide status updates related to COVID-19, AIDS, diabetes and other ills that disproportionately impact African Americans.
- Quality health care must be free from biases. All medical facilities should share, when requested and permissible, a list of grievances and complaints from patients, as well as the recommended plan of action to resolve same.
- All health departments, hospitals and clinics are strongly encouraged to establish a Diversity and Inclusion (D & I) Department. Regular D & I training will assist with addressing systemic racism, cultural biases and the elements associated with White privilege.

## **D. Public Safety and Criminal Justice:**

### Overview:

The 2020 brutal murder of Mr. George Floyd has awakened the world. The NAACP advocates for smarter, results-based criminal justice policies to keep our communities safe, including treatment for addiction and mental health problems, judicial discretion in sentencing, and an end to racial disparities at all levels of the system.

The United States is home to the world's largest prison population. As "tough on crime" laws have put an unprecedented number of non-violent offenders behind bars in recent years, our neighborhoods feel no more secure.

### **Anticipated Deliverables:**

- 1-Strict adherence to the NAACP's 10 Shared Principles\* and immediate notification, to the Bloomington-Normal NAACP's Executive Committee of deviation from same. Regular communication cadence with the NAACP to ensure bolster relationships and review reports, actions and any pending social justice issues.
- 2-Upon request, immediately provide review of each and every officer's discrimination complaint repository and share the results and strategies to address discrimination concerns, so as to focus on corrective action.
- 3-Establishment of a robust Diversity and Inclusion (D & I) Department and monthly D & I training for all employees to address systemic racism, cultural biases and elements associated with White privilege.
- 4-Call for funding and collaboration of Community-Based Policing initiatives.
- 5-Citizens Review Boards with subpoena power and identify accountability structures.
- 6-Develop "Grow Your Own Candidates" and "Grow Your Own Police Officers" pipeline campaign.
- 7-Call for elimination and ban of "Knee Holds" as acceptable Use of Force Continuums.
- 8-Call for the Use of Force Continuum to include acceptable use of six points, with clear rules on escalation.
- 9-Adoption of de-escalation training and techniques.
- 10-"Whistler blower" immunity (Blue Code) with a duty to intervene and stop excessive force by other officers.
- 11-An Annual Report Card will be based on the following (non-all inclusive) criteria: complaints, responses, relationships, collaboration, diversity, leadership, etc.



## **NAACP'S 10 SHARED PRINCIPLES:**

Strict adherence to the NAACP's 10 Shared Principles and immediate notification, to the Bloomington-Normal NAACP's Executive Committee of deviation from same.

A RESOLUTION AFFIRMING THE ADOPTION OF THE TEN SHARED PRINCIPLES DESIGNED TO BRIDGE THE GAP OF MISTRUST BETWEEN LAW ENFORCEMENT AND COMMUNITIES OF COLOR. AS SUCH, THE FOLLOWING IS AGREED UPON:

1. We value the life of every person and consider life to be the highest value.
2. All persons should be treated with dignity and respect. This is another foundational value.
3. We reject discrimination toward any person that is based on race, ethnicity, religion, color, nationality, immigrant status, sexual orientation, gender, disability, or familial status.
4. We endorse the six pillars in the report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. The first pillar is to build and rebuild trust through procedural justice, transparency, accountability, and honest recognition of past and present obstacles.
5. We endorse the four pillars of procedural justice, which are fairness, voice (i.e., an opportunity for citizens and police to believe they are heard), transparency, and impartiality.
6. We endorse the values inherent in community policing, which includes community partnerships involving law enforcement, engagement of police officers with residents outside of interaction specific to enforcement of laws, and problem-solving that is collaborative, not one-sided.
7. We believe that developing strong ongoing relationships between law enforcement and communities of color at the leadership level and street level will be the keys to diminishing and eliminating racial tension.
8. We believe that law enforcement and community leaders have a mutual responsibility to encourage all citizens to gain a better understanding and knowledge of the law to assist them in their interactions with law enforcement officers.
9. We support diversity in police departments and in the law enforcement profession. Law enforcement and communities have a mutual responsibility and should work together to make a concerted effort to recruit diverse police departments.
10. We believe de-escalation training should be required to ensure the safety of community members and officers. We endorse using de-escalation tactics to reduce the potential for confrontations that endanger law enforcement officers and community member; and the principle that human life should be taken only as a last resort.

\*Shared Principles

## **E. Environmental and Climate Justice**

### **Overview:**

Environmental injustice, including the proliferation of climate change, has a disproportionate impact on communities of color and low income communities in the United States and around the world. Toxic facilities, like coal fired power plants and incinerators, emit mercury, arsenic, lead, and other contaminants into the water, food, and lungs of communities. Many of these same facilities also emit carbon dioxide and methane – the #1 and #2 drivers of climate change. At the same time not all are equally impacted. For example, race – even more than class – is the number one indicator for the placement of toxic facilities in this country. And communities of color and low income communities are often the hardest hit by climate change. We shall work diligently to eliminate food deserts and to ensure all citizens are free from the ills associated with environmental injustice and climate change.

### **Anticipated Deliverables:**

- Community leaders and politicians must acknowledge the reality of climate change and begin activating immediately by sharing solar and “go green” initiatives with constituents.
- Develop incentives to reduce global warming and looming water resource crises at local levels.
- Respect science and the intelligence associated therein.

## **F. Voting and the 2020 Census:**

### **Overview:**

The Bloomington-Normal Branch of the NAACP recognizes the fundamental right of every eligible voter to cast their ballot and every resident to have their voice heard as a member of society as cornerstones of our democracy. How we deploy resources, make real the social norms and standards across every community, shape our daily lives through policy, and move forward the shared values of this country are all based on these foundational principles.

The COVID-19 pandemic has called into question how we as a nation can ensure elections are free of barriers for all eligible voters. This crisis requires the federal government, in partnership with states, to provide dedicated resources to guarantee that all communities—especially those systematically left behind—are included.

The 2020 Census can be completed online, through the mail, or by phone, making it convenient for every citizen to participate.

### **Anticipated Deliverables:**

- Widely publicized polling places and voting registration verification.
- Bloomington-Normal must make certain the poll watchers and election judges are diverse.
- Diversity and Inclusion training for all poll watchers and judges to address systemic racism, cultural biases and the elements associated with White privilege.
- Ensure election protection by advertising how voting irregularities and indiscretions may be reported by calling 866-OUR-VOTE. Local government must make certain voting complies with health standards to ensure safe and full voter participation.
- Ensure no harassment when pursuing count data for the 2020 Census.

## IV. CONCLUSION:

Our strategic action plan is designed to ensure all citizens experience significant and sustained changes as related to the elimination of race-based discrimination. As such, the Bloomington-Normal Branch of the NAACP will initiate regular meetings with the entities included in this plan, as well as with constituents and allies to make certain we have “a seat at the table” to effect real change. Additionally, we will issue an annual report card based on the aforementioned action plan and anticipated deliverables. After reviewing the data, results and accomplishments, we will assign a letter grade to the six foci clearly identified. We are addressing racial inequalities from the courtroom, to the corporate boardroom to the hospital room. The annual assessment will ensure accountability, while providing our constituency base with an evaluation for areas that warrant improvement. We will hold elected officials, CEOs, educators and our law enforcement partners accountable for deliverables. This is just the beginning of true progress, and when proved successful, our actions can be emulated by cities all across America.

America, and Bloomington-Normal, are both in a state of substantial dissonance, and rightfully so. Since 1619, African Americans have endured centuries of racism, discrimination and disenfranchisement. In 2020, our constituency base, allies and associated organizations have courageously denounced the multitude of issues associated with racial disparities. The NAACP has long labored for equality associated with health care, education, climate justice, legislation and economic reform. After viewing Mr. George Floyd’s horrific death, at the hands of Minnesota police officers, White America could no longer participate in manufactured denial. The entire world caught a glimpse of the injustices that African Americans have long endured the horrendous act has galvanized our constituency base, as they are even more engaged and inspired to effect real change.

We challenge residents to perform their own racism self-examination by discussing the dangers associated with unconscious biases and white privilege. We must engage in complex conversations so that the healing process may begin. We invite community members, who are aligned with the NAACP’s mission and vision, to join us as we continue to eradicate all elements of racism and discrimination.

The NAACP shall remain vigilant, involved and hopeful, as we remain encouraged while contending with two pandemics—the coronavirus (COVID-19) and racism. In the words of the great, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, “Well, we have some difficult days ahead”; however, the NAACP continues to face racial discrimination in the eyes—and we shall not be the first to blink! We are dedicated to eliminating the severe racial inequities that continue to plague every iota of our existence—from systemic racism to implicit biases to covert racism. The battle against discrimination, in any form, must cease and desist. We are resolute knowing that “an injustice anywhere is an injustice everywhere!”

We graciously accept the baton from former freedom fighters and will continue running in an effort to eliminate race based discrimination. We shall run until the race is won and the victory is ours!

<https://bnaacp.org/>