



NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW



Some people say that Honeycutt
Clifton while he put three shot down
wound his heart then tore him a horse
Clifton fell on the concrete then Honeycutt
shot him in the stomach the last time and
stood over him and laughed.

Will you please do some something
about such murdering in the South. As this
we as Negroes in the South need better
protection especially in South Carolina. Will
you please give me some information on a
case like this. Clifton has never in any
Court in this County of Marlboro S.C. as I
know and they can't find out any thing that
he done here. I am a Negro man I love
my race. I will fight to the very last for
my race to have freedom. Please do
some thing good to help this Colored race.

Yours Truly
No
Thomas Clifton Brown

My address (Clifton S.C.)

YEAR END REPORT 2023

A MESSAGE FROM CRRJ DIRECTOR MARGARET BURNHAM

This year was a full and productive one for the project. At our national conference in September 2022, we celebrated the launch of the [Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive](#) that brings to the public the research we've done for well over a decade. A collection of 1,000 cases and 23,000 documents, the archive vastly enriches our understanding of historical racial violence and, as well, offers a window into contemporary assaults on Black rights and Black lives and enduring inequities. Scores of CRRJ alumni participated in our 2022 conference, offering us the opportunity to celebrate their contributions and reflect on the impact the project has had on students, families, and the larger public.

At the outset of 2023, we recommitted to improving the archive, recovering additional evidence, and exploring other avenues of redressing these past atrocities.

As to the archive, in 2023 a grant from the Mellon Foundation made it possible for us to expand our research to examine incidents of homicidal historical racial violence in Maryland, Missouri, West Virginia, Kentucky, Delaware, the District of Columbia, and Indiana from 1930 to 1954. We have also focused on historical police anti-Black violence in urban areas, including Baltimore, Memphis, Nashville, Washington, DC, and New Orleans. These ongoing recovery efforts were spearheaded by our historian, Dr. Jay Driskell, and Zitrin Fellow Olivia Strange, who directed our clinic students. We also added source material for the cases in the current version of the archive, maps, and other explanatory material. We enhanced the functionality of the archive, and pursued opportunities to interface with similar collections and databases.

Ours is a historical project, an educational project, and ultimately a community project. We redoubled our efforts to provide meaningful support to communities grappling with the scars of historical violence. Our work took us to Mississippi on the Hosea Carter case, Alabama on the Strickland case, and Durham, North Carolina on the Booker Spicely matter. Our stu-



dents collaborated with families to hold commemorative events, engage government officials, and disseminate educational materials.

Ably led by Katie Sandson, a staff attorney, our Redress and Reparations Lab expanded its initiatives in the national reparations arena with a view toward providing sophisticated legal support. We convened a seminar of experts to discuss how best to shape a local or state government project. A grant from the New Commonwealth Fund supports our initiative in Massachusetts. A grant from Liberation Ventures and the

Joshua Mailman Foundation supports our federal reparations project.

The Lab also developed a docket of criminal cases involving the wrongful execution of African Americans during the Jim Crow years, seeking to identify reparative approaches that might educate the public as to the lasting impact and national stain resulting from these deep fault lines in a racist criminal legal system. We are working with the Innocence Project and its attorneys Chris Fabricant and Lauren Gottesman to obtain posthumous relief in a Texas case involving the 1953 wrongful conviction and execution of a man. Together with Northwestern Law's Center on Wrongful Convictions and its director, Steven Drizin, we submitted a petition for posthumous exoneration of a man wrongfully executed in Springfield, Illinois in the early 20th century. Along with law firms associated with the Law Firm Antiracist Alliance and the University of Michigan's National Registry of Exonerations, we are building a docket of similar cases.

Additionally, we taught a seminar on reparations and a clinical course on civil rights-era violence this year.

We are grateful for the generous support we've received from our donors and so many others who have promoted our work.

It was, in all, a busy year here at CRRJ and we look forward to continued growth in 2024.

CIVIL RIGHTS & RESTORATIVE JUSTICE



About CRRJ

The Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project (CRRJ) at Northeastern University School of Law (NUSL) is a mission-driven program of interdisciplinary teaching, research, and policy analysis. We work at the crossroads of race, history, and criminal justice. CRRJ, established in 2007, is a founding project of the Center for Law, Equity, and Race (CLEAR), founded in November 2021 as a new Center of Excellence at NUSL. CLEAR was created to strengthen and expand the work of CRRJ and aims to explore new ways to address the continuing challenges of racial injustice and social inequities.

Offering courses, fellowships, workshops and a digital archive, CRRJ is the preeminent academic center for the study of mid-twentieth century racial violence.

Our original investigations, transformative pedagogies, and top-level scholarship facilitate local and national initiatives to uncover an accurate history of racial terror and reconcile the ongoing damage. Our central research product is the [Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive](#), a publicly accessible database of more than 1,000 cases of racial homicide in the Jim Crow South between 1930-1954.

2023 Accomplishments

This year, CRRJ led a clinic of 14 students at Northeastern University School of Law and provided experiential learning opportunities and internships to undergraduate and graduate students from across the country. This cohort helped expand CRRJ's investigative work beyond the Deep South for the first time. CRRJ expanded our restorative justice initiatives and provided support for reparative policies through the Racial Redress and Reparations Lab. In 2023, we worked with families in Mississippi and Georgia to plan commemorative events and pursue memorialization projects. We published a toolkit, [Redressing Historical Racial Injustices: A Toolkit for Policymakers and Advocates](#), designed for state and local policymakers, staff, and advocates, which introduces a range of policy approaches to remediating historical racial injustices, including racial violence, oppression, and discriminatory policies and practices. In doing so, we have continued to contribute to the work of scholars and activists who are shaping the national conversation on racial harms and redress.

Cover Images: Letter from Thomas Fletcher Brown. Courtesy of the Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive (left); Map search feature from the archive (center top); Historical Marker unveiling for Booker T. Spicely in NC. Photo courtesy of Jay Price (center bottom); Letter from Dinah Kirkland. Courtesy of the Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive (right).

Inside cover: Professor Margaret Burnham, CRRJ Director, Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project, Northeastern Law. Photo by Mark Ostow, 2023.

DOCUMENTING THE PAST

Archive Updates

In 2022, CRRJ launched the Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive, marking the culmination of 15 years of research, investigation, and preservation. The archive team processed 18,500 records collected by CRRJ investigators, with the aim to individually catalog 13,000 of those. Unable to complete that cataloging prior to release, they continued this work in 2023 and are approaching completion of this phase. In spring 2024, they will begin processing records for the next archive release, to include the most recent investigations.

In 2023, the archive team also worked to verify the integrity of the cases covered in the archive. As a result of this work, 93% of cases in the archive are now supported by at least three discrete sources.

This year, Dr. Jay Driskell, our lead historian, prepared 340 cases for inclusion in the next version of the archive, set to be released in 2024. He collected more than 4,000 documents, which include newspaper articles, genealogical records and death certificates, DOJ and FBI files, as well as NAACP records. More than 83% of these have been incorporated into our case files.

Besides sifting through nearly 200 open boxes of FBI Headquarters files held at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Driskell has begun to examine newly released NAACP records at the Library of Congress, documents only made available to researchers at the end of October, 2023.

In November 2023, the Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project's archival team released a [map feature](#) on the Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive. Months in the making by CRRJ's dedicated archivists, historians, designers and developers, this [interactive map](#) is a visualization of racialized violence in the United States between 1930 and 1954. The data presented have been collected and analyzed by CRRJ and documented within the Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive.

This year, CRRJ also published a series of articles highlighting historically important documents housed in the archive and telling the heart-breaking family histories of racial violence contained therein. [One article](#) spotlighted correspondence with Thurgood Marshall that reveals his unique, integrated approach to advocacy, including the precedence he gave to collective action and grassroots organizing. [Another article](#) featured the case of Edward Williams, killed in 1937 in Ocala, Marion County, Florida, and



This map is a visualization of racialized violence in the United States between 1930 and 1954.

letters written by his grief-stricken mother to the NAACP. Her correspondence is at once touching and terrifying. This collection demonstrates how the Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive can be used to elevate the human stories often buried behind sensationalist headlines or lost to the annals of history.



Edward Williams, killed in 1937 in Ocala, Marion County, Florida. Photo courtesy of the Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive.

2023 New Case Investigations

In 2023, CRRJ clinic students investigated 41 cases from the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Missouri, and Washington D.C. Thirty-six additional cases were investigated by other students at Northeastern University. Students at the Southern University Law Center also contributed to a number of new case investigations.

Featured cases

Nelson Marshall, Washington, DC, 1955

In this year's clinic, Emma Espinosa (NUSL '24) dove deep into the Washington, D.C. case of Nelson E. Marshall. Through her thorough archival investigation, Emma uncovered the story of Marshall's killing at the hands of a police officer.

In the summer of 1955, Nelson Marshall, 30, was a truck driver for Safeway Foods, living with his young family in a brick house in the Washington, D.C. suburb of Chapel Oaks, Maryland. With his wife, Flora Marshall, 26, the couple had three young children.

On July 6, Marshall was working, driving with his helper, Edward Fitten, when they came upon a taxicab blocking the right lane. Marshall honked the truck's horn at the taxi, and this drew the attention of police officer Private James Barnes, who was directing traffic nearby.

Newspapers reported that Barnes attempted to direct Marshall to drive the truck around the taxi and that Marshall initially declined to do so. At Barnes' continued insistence, however, Marshall reportedly gave in with a loud laugh out of the truck's window. Later, Barnes would claim that Marshall also cursed him. As Marshall pulled away, officer Barnes got into a nearby taxi and instructed the driver to "catch that truck. He thinks he's smart."

Once the truck was again stopped in traffic, Barnes exited the taxi and approached. He walked to the passenger's side first and demanded, "Let me see your permit, boy." Marshall asked, "For what?" Barnes then approached the cab from the driver's side. Sources differ on whether Barnes jumped up on the running board to open the driver's door, or whether Marshall opened the door himself.

Barnes once again demanded to see Marshall's permit, and Marshall refused. The officer grabbed Marshall's shirt in his left hand, while holding his nightstick in his right. According to Fitten, Barnes raised the nightstick as if to hit Marshall, who prevented the blow by grabbing the stick midair. Barnes said, "So you got my stick!" Fitten testified that Barnes released the nightstick and, while holding onto Marshall by the collar, pulled out his pistol. Fitten frantically fled the cab but heard two shots as he escaped. Several other witnesses on the crowded street watched Marshall topple out of the truck and land face down on the street.

As spectators gathered around the scene, Barnes reloaded his gun, shouting, "Everybody get up on the sidewalk. I mean everybody, unless you want to get some of the same." According to one eyewitness, a man who said he was licensed to practice first-aid attempted to help Marshall, but Barnes said, "I don't care who you are. Get back on the curb."

Marshall was transported to the emergency room at Freedmen's Hospital, where he succumbed to hemorrhaging and shock caused by two gunshot wounds to the abdomen. His wife and children were left without their husband, father, and sole financial supporter.

Remarkably, Marshall's case went to trial. Barnes was indicted for manslaughter and tried before an all-white jury of seven women and five men. Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas A. Flannery served as the prosecution. Three taxi drivers testified that Barnes had jumped onto the running board and shot twice. Seven of the witnesses, including two who were called by the defense, testified that there was no struggle between Marshall and Barnes, and that Marshall had died at the wheel of the truck. Barnes' self-defense argument was not supported by any of the eyewitnesses.

On October 18, 1955, Barnes was acquitted. The jury deliberated for four and a half hours before returning its verdict. After his acquittal, Barnes was restored to duty and immediately placed on sick leave because, in the words of the chairman of the board of police surgeons, Barnes' trial "would be an ordeal to anyone."

On October 24, 1955, the Director of the FBI indicated that no further action would be taken by the Bureau regarding this case.

William White, Wellston, St. Louis County, 1949

Dominique Agnew, now a third-year law student, researched the case of William White while participating in CRRJ's 2023 Spring Clinic.

On the morning of July 2, 1948, William White, a 41-year-old father of five young children and a skilled painter, was living with his family in St. Louis. He went to work that day with another painter named Rufus Irons.

The St. Louis Metropolitan Police report of the incident contains Irons' statement about what occurred. Irons recounted that the two painters were working on different stories of the house that morning. White was painting underneath the second-floor porch of the house where Irons stood when two white men pulled up to the house in a taxicab. These men were John Schumann and Ellis McKinley. McKinley got out of the cab and approached White beside the house. Irons could not see the men, but he heard McKinley ask White whether he was in a union. White responded that that was none of McKinley's business and that the two should leave the property and leave him and Irons alone.

Instead, McKinley and Schumann beat White to death with a paint can before Irons could climb off the porch. After the perpetrators fled the scene, leaving White unconscious, he was brought to a hospital and pronounced dead on arrival.

Both Schumann and McKinley fled to the homes of friends in the city to hide but were later found by the police.

At the time of White's killing, the story was heavily covered by local press. Delois White, William White's widow, made a statement to the press, in which she mentioned that William White actively avoided trouble with the union by keeping away from disputes among union painters and rejecting jobs that the union objected to. She also stated that White never knew his killers.

Despite press coverage, however, White's story was lost to his family for decades; neither White's widow, nor his children, ever talked about their loss or the damage it did to their young family. One of White's granddaughters, Anise White-Goff, has taken particular interest in her family's history.

The injustices surrounding William White's death plagued Ms. White-Goff until the spring of 2023, when Agnew reached out to her about the case. The family would like local media to correct the record and help them heal by telling White's story and, in doing so, focus on the victim for the very first time.

John C. Jones, Minden, Louisiana, 1946

Brett Watson graduated from Northeastern Law School in 2013 and now serves on the staff of the State of California Civil Rights Department. Brett recalls that as a student, an important assignment was the investigation he conducted into the 1946 lynching of John C. Jones in Minden, Louisiana.

Jones' murder was one of the few cases resulting in a criminal prosecution against the lawmen and their co-conspirators who murdered this World War II veteran. With Professor Burnham, Brett traveled to Minden in 2011, where the two interviewed witnesses and civic leaders, and reviewed documents that were in the custody of a local historian. Brett also uncovered photographs of the events; these images are currently on display at the National Museum of African American History and Culture. When Brett returned to the Law School in Spring 2023 for his 10th year reunion, he met with Professor Burnham and together they recalled that impactful investigation in Louisiana. Read the full story here: <https://bit.ly/JohnJones1946>



Professor Margaret Burnham and Brett Watson ('13), at a recent alumni reunion weekend. Burnham was Watson's professor and mentor a decade ago. *Photo by David Leifer.*

2022 Case Docket

Other cases of historical racial violence investigated by the CRRJ Clinic in 2023:

Washington, D.C.

George Adams, Washington, DC, 1935

Lawrence Basey, Washington, DC, 1936

John Burke, Washington, DC, 1953

James Campbell, Washington, DC, 1930

Edward and Jasper Cobb, Washington, DC, 1941

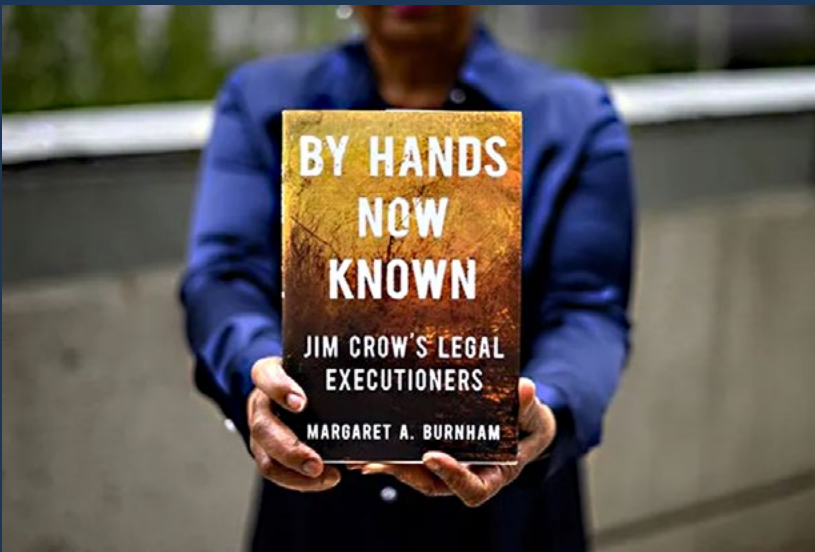
Leroy Davis, Washington, DC, 1950

Gladys Greene Dixon, Washington, DC, 1941

George Harris, Washington, DC, 1937

Albert Johnson, Washington, DC, 1937

Leroy Keys, Washington, DC, 1938



Professor Margaret Burnham's critically acclaimed book has garnered many accolades in 2023. Photo by Matthew Madoono/Northeastern University.

Edward Little, Washington, DC, 1930
Nelson Marshall, Washington, DC, 1955
Hylan McClaine, Sam Banks, and Theodore Goffney, Washington, DC, 1940
Clarence Miller, Washington, DC, 1935
Richard Robinson, Washington, DC, 1933
Charles Scott, Washington, DC, 1946
George Tolliver, Washington, DC, 1932
James Williams, Washington, DC, 1950
Charles Young, Washington, DC, 1932
Clifford Edward Young, Washington, DC, 1934

Missouri

Henry Black, St. Louis, 1947
Charles Campbell, Richmond, Ray County, 1934
Noah Craig, Springfield, Greene County, 1948
William Finley, Kansas City, Jackson County, 1934
Milton W. Givens, St. Louis, 1954

John H. Harris, Kansas City, Jackson County, 1949
Clarence Hayes, Kansas City, Jackson County, 1930
William Howard, St. Louis, 1946
Elsie May Lorene Hughes & Erskine Stephenson, Kansas City, Jackson County, 1948
Willie B. Jones, Lilbourn, New Madrid County, 1948
Raymond Lee, St. Louis, 1934
Logan McDaniels, Ladue, St. Louis County, 1945
James Perry, St. Louis, 1949
Nathaniel Quick, Kansas City, Jackson County, 1949
Jack Sutton, Sikeston, Scott County, 1933
Damon Verder, Kansas City, Jackson County, 1931
Harrison J. Ware, Kansas City, Jackson County, 1941
William White, Wellston, St. Louis County, 1949
James Williams, Kansas City, Jackson County, 1941
Harrison Collins, Macon, Macon County, 1931
Les H. Cunningham, Jefferson County, 1949

Recognition for *By Hands Now Known*

In her latest book, [*By Hands Now Known: Jim Crow's Legal Executioners*](#) (W.W. Norton & Company, 2022), Margaret Burnham examines the true scope and nature of Jim Crow-era violence, the laws that condoned it, and their legacy today.

In 2023, *By Hands Now Known* received national acclaim and recognition, winning multiple accolades, including

[The Hurston/Wright Legacy Award](#) in October of this year. Burnham's work also won the [2023 Hillman Prize for Book Journalism](#), the [Los Angeles Times Book Prize](#) and the 2023 Nautilus Book Award. *By Hands Now Known* was also a finalist for the 2022 Kirkus Prize for Nonfiction, and has been named a Best Book of the Year by The New Yorker, Oprah Daily, Kirkus, Chicago Public Library, and Publishers Weekly.

ADDRESSING PAST VIOLENCE IN THE PRESENT: THE RACIAL REDRESS AND REPARATIONS LAB

The Racial Redress and Reparations Lab of CRRJ provides research, education, and engagement that paves the way for successful projects of repair. Building on CRRJ's archival research, the Lab works from an academic base that is deeply enriched by experience in communities and relationships with descendants. The Lab's mission is to engage with policymakers, activists, and community stakeholders to develop and implement conceptual and programmatic restorative justice approaches to the U.S. history of racial violence and exclusion. We provide legal and policy re-

search, convening spaces, educational programming, consultation, and on-the-ground assistance.

In 2023, the Lab worked with descendant families to engage in restorative justice processes, including planning commemorative events and working towards memorialization efforts. The Lab provided informational resources and guidance to public officials working to pass and implement reparative policies.

Case-based Restorative Justice

Hosea Carter

On May 2, 1948, Hosea "Shant" Carter was killed in a racially motivated mob event in Marion County, Mississippi.

Nearly 75 years later, his son Jimmie Carter, honored his legacy. With the support of CRRJ, he [held a memorial service](#) in the spring of 2023 that brought together family and community members in remembrance.

"My prayer before I leave this world is that I can help to restore the honor and dignity that was taken from him in life," said Jimmie Dale Carter.

The event served as a powerful restorative gesture for family and community members. Building on this momentum, CRRJ is assisting the family to secure a military headstone for Hosea Carter and potentially to display his military artifacts, including his uniform, in the African American Military Museum in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, near Carter's hometown. Additionally, the project is assisting Mr. Carter to create a film to further preserve the life and legacy of his father.

Hosea "Shant" Carter was born in 1915 and raised in a family of 11 children, including younger brothers Eddie and William. As an adult, he served in the military and worked as a carpenter. He and his wife Earnestine had four children: Florine, Donna Fay, Jimmie Dale, and Lavern. It was a household that was described as "close-knit," warm, and kind. But the family was destroyed when Carter was shot in the chest on May 2, 1948.

According to accounts, on the day of the murder Carter had been hired to do some carpentry at the home of Charles Ray and Gisela Renfro. When a passerby spotted Gisela and Carter speaking together, he informed Charles Ray, who was working at the time with his employer, William Ratliff Prisk.

Two carloads of men, including Prisk and Renfro, pursued and shot Carter, who escaped but succumbed to his injuries in a wooded area.

A few weeks later, Hosea's brother William Carter, who had vowed to seek revenge on the men who murdered his brother, was found burned to death in his car. Following Hosea Carter's murder, Prisk was arrested and charged but released. None of the assailants ever faced trial.

Details of the case can be found in the Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive, here: <https://bit.ly/HoseaCarterKilling>



Memorial for Hosea Carter, organized by his son, with support from CRRJ, in spring 2023.

Russell Charley

On May 8th, 1954, Russell Charley's three eldest sons, John, Russell, and Willie Lee -- who were between the ages of 12 and 16 at the time -- found their father's body hanging from a tree not far from their home in the company town of Vredenburgh, Alabama. Russell Charley was a father to six children and his wife, Carrie, was pregnant with their seventh when he was lynched.

Although Charley's death was reported as a suicide, two informants came forward to the FBI disputing this claim. One informant detailed a whiskey bootlegging business to which Charley had outstanding debts, while another described an interracial "love triangle" between Charley, a Black woman, and a white man who worked at the sawmill with Charley. Both informants suspected a cover-up, orchestrated by Lee Thomas, a policeman for the sawmill town of Vredenburgh. The DOJ files suggest the informants were interviewed but the Department declined to pursue the matter.

Our collaboration with Russell's daughter, Ms. Annie Whitlock, extends to facilitating a dialogue with Monroe County officials on the legacy of Russell Charley's death, and repair for Ms. Whitlock and her family.

Denna and Estella Strickland

On October 17, 1932, 52-year-old Denna Strickland, and her 25-year-old daughter, Estella, residents of Coweta County, Georgia, were killed by a law enforcement officer in their home.

In October 2022, on the 90th anniversary of their death, a group of Strickland descendants gathered to celebrate and honor the two women. The family's work to uplift the memory of their ancestors is ongoing. With the support of CRRJ's Racial Redress and Reparations Lab, the group applied to the Georgia Historical Society for a marker to commemorate the lives of Denna and Estella.

This past fall, their efforts bore fruit with the conditional approval of a marker honoring Denna and Estella Strickland. It is anticipated that the marker will be installed in 2024, ensuring that the stories of Denna and Estella Strickland will become an officially recognized part of the fabric of Georgia history.

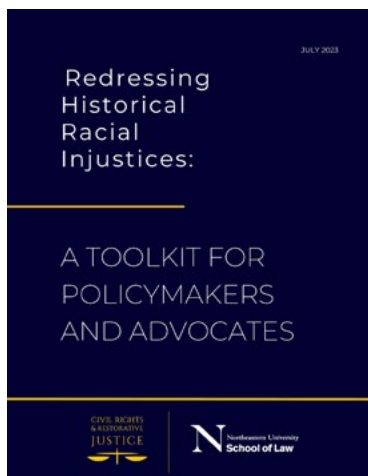


Members of the Strickland family placed flowers on the gravesites of Denna and Estella Strickland. *Photo by Connie Cross*

Reparations Research and Policy

This year, the Lab produced the toolkit [*Redressing Historical Racial Injustices: A Toolkit for Policymakers and Advocates*](#). It introduces readers to a range of policy approaches to remediating historical racial injustices. The toolkit outlines legislative remedies and other initiatives that aim to address a broader historical pattern of events, such as apologies by state or local government officials or legislative bodies; truth and reconciliation commissions;

The toolkit is available upon request here: <https://bit.ly/RHRIToolkit>



and material reparations for survivors and descendants. It serves as a resource to help state and local policymakers and advocates appreciate why such remedies are needed, what forms they may take, and what policies other states and localities have adopted to address historical injustices.

In the spring of 2023, the Lab continued its programming on the issues surrounding reparations. In March, the Lab hosted a group of scholars and attorneys for a discussion of approaches to establishing a historical record as a foundation for redress. The event brought together Jennifer Llewellyn, a law professor at Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia and an international subject matter expert on restorative justice, Keith Stokes, the lead researcher and author of Providence, Rhode Island's "A Matter of Truth" report, and Don Tamaki, a member of the legal team that overturned Fred Korematsu's 1944 criminal conviction for defying Japanese internment and a member of California's

Reparations Task Force. The panelists discussed how to build an effective historical record to support reparative responses to historical harms. The conversation explored the Restorative Inquiry for the Nova Scotia Home for Colored Children (Canada) and the California Reparations Task Force process, as well as the racial reconciliation and

reparations process in Providence, RI. The panelists also discussed how to ensure that truth-telling reports lead to specific policy and program recommendations and sustainable change, and the importance of including a wide range of stakeholders in all phases of the reparative process, including the final reporting

Posthumous Exonerations

CRRJ has worked closely with the Law Firm Antiracism Alliance, the Innocence Project, and the National Registry of Exonerations to expand its docket on historical posthumous exonerations. Along with the Innocence Project CRRJ is representing the family of Tommy Lee Walker, wrongfully convicted of murder in Dallas County and executed by the State of Texas in 1956. The family seeks a posthumous exoneration to restore Walker's good name and address the miscarriage of justice.

In January, CRRJ teamed up with the Center for Wrongful Convictions at Northwestern University School of Law to work for a posthumous pardon on behalf of Joe James, a young man executed in Springfield, Illinois in 1908.

Along with Professor Steven Drizin and his students, Rachel Cox and Christian Wynn, CRRJ attorney Olivia Strange helped to draft an official petition to the Illinois Prisoner Review Board requesting a posthumous pardon for James.

James, who was 19 years old at the time of his execution, was convicted of the murder of a well-liked white labor leader. James was a gregarious and boisterous outsider in town looking for work and had already run into trouble with local law enforcement for "vagrancy" when he was accused of the murder.

The team's petition to the Board argued that not only was James convicted on spurious and insufficient evidence, but that he was unjustly tried before an all-white jury after having been repeatedly and publicly accused of attempting to assault the 16-year-old daughter of the deceased—an allegation equally unsupported by the record. Of equal significance, Joe James was tried directly in the aftermath of the infamous Springfield Race Massacre of 1908, which started when a white mob of enraged Springfield residents could not break into the local jail to lynch James and another African American prisoner. The legal team presented their argument before the Illinois Prisoner Review Board on April 11, 2023. A decision is still pending.

EDUCATION

Courses and Clinics

Northeastern University School of Law Clinic

The CRRJ Clinic continues to work closely with communities in the US that are engaging with historical injustices. Each spring, select Northeastern Law students, in collaboration with their professors, professional archivists and historians, track down materials from government repositories; conduct interviews; and, where feasible, visit the region where the events took place. Applying tools and insights from the fields of restorative justice and transitional justice, law students work closely with families and local communities to memorialize these past events.

In the 2023 spring term, the Civil Rights & Restorative Justice Clinic enrolled 12 students from the Northeastern University School of Law and two students from the Northeastern Media Advocacy Program. This cohort helped to launch a new era for CRRJ's investigative work by taking

on our first investigations beyond the Deep South. Together, the students investigated over 40 cases from the states of Missouri and Washington, D.C. with each student in charge of three cases. At the end of the semester, students presented their cases to a panel of academic experts and lawyers, and they each produced a portfolio of investigative work that will be added to the Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive in the coming months.

Through their investigations, the students were able to gather new information about how racial violence manifested in the border states, specifically Missouri and Washington, DC. They also noted potential trends in the legal aftermath that followed racially motivated killings beyond the technical geographical limits of Jim Crow. Students investigating cases in Missouri, for example, found that prosecutorial action was relatively common in the wake of the killings they investigated. However, the nature and extent of that action seemed to leave families without a signifi-



Above: Dominique Agnew researched the case of William White, a father of five children and a skilled painter who was beaten to death by two white men on July 2, 1948 in St. Louis, MO.

Left: The first Burnham Honors Cohort, left to right: LaChassity Jackson, Blaise Adams, Amari Brantley, Dasia Turner, Victoria Ardoin, and Whitley Parker.

cant sense of justice, with minimal charges being brought and many cases faltering prior to conviction.

Burnham Cohort

The Burnham Honors Cohort was a 2023 project of the Louis A. Berry Institute for Civil Rights and Justice at Southern University Law Center (SULC), in partnership with CRRJ, Philander Smith College and Tougaloo College.

The cohort comprised of six students, Whitley Parker and Victoria Ardoin from SULC; LaChassity Jackson and Blaise Adams from Tougaloo College; and Dasia Turner and Amari Brantley from Philander Smith College. The program was directed by SULC Professor Ada Goodly Lampkin, and Lauren Hawkes, former CRRJ Program Manager. The students were supported in their efforts by Julian D. Miller, Esq., director and assistant professor of political science at Tougaloo College; Dr. Daniel Egbe, associate professor of political science at Philander Smith College; John Collins, project manager at the Louis A. Berry Institute; and Brandi Worley, project coordinator at the Louis A. Berry Institute.

On Feb. 17, the [2023 Burnham Honors Cohort](#) began investigating cases of Jim Crow-era violence in Louisiana, Arkansas and Mississippi.

“The Burnham Honors Cohort, comprising students attending HBCUs, will be undertaking crucial work, uncovering narratives that have been buried for far too long, and will play a vital role in bringing restorative justice for victims and their families,” said CRRJ Director and Distinguished Professor Margaret Burnham, after whom the initiative is named. “Their work will join that of previous scholars and CRRJ students in the Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive, which currently houses documents and information on more than 1,000 cases of anti-Black violence,” said Burnham.

On May 9, 2023, CRRJ hosted the Burnham Honors Cohort at Northeastern School of Law. A panel of lawyers and scholars reviewed their findings. The cohort’s work will be included in v.2.0 of the Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive.

Co-ops, Interns and Volunteers

CRRJ welcomed several undergraduate, graduate, and law students for experiential learning opportunities throughout the year.

CRRJ is grateful for the [contributions of its interns](#), research assistants, co-op students, and volunteers, including interns Sydney Wideman, a rising third year student at Pennsylvania State University and Keneya Onuaguluchi, a

third-year undergraduate student at Northeastern University; NUSL co-op students Marisa Belthoff (NUSL ‘25) and Anna Kennedy (NUSL ‘25); and Dr. Cheryl Holmes, who undertook a research role at CRRJ to complete her master’s degree in higher education leadership from Bridgewater State University. Our co-op students investigated 24 cases, while our undergraduate interns investigated eight. Northeastern sophomore, Avery Emison, provided critical

research support to CRRJ historian Jay Driskell and to our associate researcher Lydia Beal.

These students and volunteers were crucial in expanding our research and developing educational resources that make CRRJ a pioneering project in the field of civil rights and restorative justice.

“By doing this work we’re trying to uncover [victims’] histories as well as uncover the rest of America’s history.

— Sydney Wideman, CRRJ intern



Sydney Wideman, joined the project in early June, and worked with CRRJ throughout the summer.

Educational Partnerships

The University of Kentucky Rosenberg College of Law

Beginning in the fall of 2022, CRRJ sought to explore the extent and nature of cases of Jim Crow violence in states outside of the Deep South. After 15 years of investigations in the Deep South, the Project fully appreciates that connecting with the locations where our cases take place is a vital part of ethical casework and reparative justice. In that spirit, CRRJ approached the University of Kentucky Rosenberg College of Law, located in Lexington. Since that initial contact in October 2022, CRRJ has helped UKY to launch a clinic modeled on CRRJ’s pedagogy, and UKY Law’s first civil rights law clinic.

During the spring and summer of 2023, Elizabeth Zitrin Justice Fellow Olivia Strange supported D’lorah Hughes, H. Wendell Cherry Associate Clinical Professor of Law, and historian Dr. Austin Zinkle, in designing UKY’s clinical course. The UKY clinic had its inaugural run in the fall of 2023, with five law students signing on to undertake case investigations located entirely in the clinic’s home state. The UKY cases were assembled with the assistance of Dr. Jay Driskell.

CRRJ UKY is slated to run for its second semester in spring of 2024.

Conferences and Workshops

World War II: Black Soldiers and Veterans Workshop



Matthew Delmont, author of *Half American: The Epic Story of African Americans Fighting World War II at Home and Abroad*, with Richard Brookshire, executive director of the Black Veterans Project and a U.S. Army veteran.

CRRJ met for its spring workshop [*World War II: Black Soldiers and Veterans*](#) on May 17, 2023, with Matthew Delmont, Dartmouth College professor of history and author of the recently published and widely acclaimed book *Half American: The Epic Story of African Americans Fighting World War II at Home and Abroad*. Delmont was joined by Richard Brookshire, executive director of the Black Veterans Project and a U.S. Army veteran. Together, they discussed the “two-front battle” that Black soldiers fought during World War II, as well as Black veterans’ ongoing fight for recognition and benefits.

CRRJ restorative justice framework event at Mills College

The Black Reparations Project (BRP), an academic initiative at Mills College at Northeastern University, brought together scholars, elected officials and activists to discuss reparations policies for Black Americans in California and

across the country. Katie Sandson, former program director of CRRJ's Racial Redress and Reparations Lab, and Malcolm Clarke, a CRRJ attorney and Elizabeth Zitrin Justice Fellow, participated in a [virtual panel discussion](#), organized by BRP on February 23 and 24. Sandson and Clarke discussed the frameworks of restorative justice, transitional justice and reparations, and how they impact CRRJ's work.

CRRJ Attorney Presents at Southern Clinical Conference 2023

On October 21, 2023, CRRJ attorney and Zitrin Fellow Olivia Strange [presented at this year's Southern Clinical Conference](#) in Atlanta, Georgia.

Hosted by Georgia State University College of Law, the conference was titled *Good Trouble, Necessary Trouble: Opportunities and Challenges for Clinics and Externships in the South*. Organizers brought together clinical faculty from across the country to explore the diverse ways clinical faculty can create "good trouble."

Strange joined D'lorah Hughes, of the University of Kentucky's College of Law, and Ada Goodly Lampkin, of the



CRRJ attorney and Zitrin Fellow Olivia Strange (right) with D'lorah Hughes, of the University of Kentucky's College of Law (left).

Southern University Law Center at a workshop that the three teachers organized, titled *Creating a Clinic Based on Historical Violence: The Implications of Place*. They explored how historical clinical pedagogy can be used to tackle the ongoing harm of unaddressed historical violence, emphasizing that historical justice calls for creative approaches to redress that may be outside of the scope of traditional legal remedies.

REACHING THE PUBLIC

CRRJ launches newsletter

This year, CRRJ launched a quarterly newsletter, featuring news and case updates, staff announcements as well as information on past and upcoming events. Stay informed

on CRRJ's latest projects by subscribing here: https://bit.ly/subscribe_CRRJ

Media and News Coverage

Booker T. Spicely case

In 2014, CRRJ student Shaneka Davis published on our website an essay that brought public attention to the case of Booker T. Spicely, a soldier killed by a bus driver on July 8, 1944, in Durham, North Carolina. In 2022, Davis' paper on the Spicely case led civil rights lawyers and other advocates in North Carolina to form a committee to publicize the case and seek remedies on behalf of the Spicely family. Recent developments in the case signify the importance of the research CRRJ conducted nine years ago.

This year, there were many developments in this case. Firstly, North Carolina Central University Law School officials [announced in January 2023](#) that the school was awarded a \$100,000 grant from the Duke Energy Foundation to create the Private Booker T. Spicely Endowed Scholarship Fund. Then, this past fall, it was announced that Spicely's

case will [be taught to students](#) K though 12 in NC's public schools. This is the first time that a case unearthed by CRRJ and to which we have brought renewed public attention has directly led to the creation of a case-specific syllabus.

On December 1, 2023, Spicely's birthday, a state highway historical marker was unveiled close to the site of Spice-



Pfc. Booker T. Spicely was killed in 1944, by a white bus driver.



Left top: Margaret Burnham (second right) with James Williams (center) and other members of the Booker Spicely Committee campaigning for justice for the Spicely family.

Above: Historical marker first in North Carolina to use the term "Jim Crow." *Photo by Jay Price.*



Left: Members of the Spicely family at the dedication ceremony, December 2023.

ly's killing. North Carolina has erected more than 1,600 such markers over the past nine decades, but this will be the first to directly mention the term "Jim Crow" in connection with a civil rights historical event. Members of the Spicely family, the Booker Spicely Committee, the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, and members of the North Carolina School of Science and

Math community unveiled the new state highway historical marker and hosted a program of speakers and musical performances to honor and remember Spicely. CRRJ Director Margaret Burnham spoke at the event, after a decade of involvement with the case.

In the news

Albert King case featured in Washington Post

An article published by The Washington Post on January 15, 2023 highlights CRRJ's efforts to reverse an erroneous and racist contemporaneous finding about the circumstances of Pvt. Albert H. King's death in 1941.

King, who was stationed at Fort Benning near Columbus, Georgia, was returning from an evening off-base when he was fatally shot five times by a military police officer, Sgt. Robert Lummus.

Professor Rose Zoltek-Jick, CRRJ's associate director, worked with the King family and lawyers at the firm of Morgan Lewis to correct official army records that stated King's death had been "not in the line of duty." In November 2022, an army review board granted the family's peti-

tion. King's records were corrected, and his death is now listed as having occurred "in the line of duty."

CRRJ Director Burnham interviewed by Boston Review

CRRJ Director Margaret Burnham was interviewed by Jeanne Theoharis of the Boston Review, July 2023. Burnham spoke about her book, *By Hands Now Known: Jim Crow's Legal Executioners*, and the ways in which Black people challenged and documented racist violence during the Jim Crow era.

"This period was one of authoritarian rule by every definition that every political scientist worth their salt has ever used."

-- Margaret Burnham, CRRJ Director.

PEOPLE AT CRRJ

Commendations

CRRJ Director honored with 2023 Mass Humanities Governor's Award

On September 28, 2023, Professor Margaret Burnham, was honored with the [2023 Mass Humanities Governor's Award](#).

The award recognizes Burnham's contributions to civic life, and she was singled out for her "dedication to exploring history, illuminating truth and confronting injustice in order to protect civil and human rights locally, nationally and internationally," according to the announcement on August 1.

Mass Humanities honored Burnham and three other recipients at a ceremony presented by Governor Maura Healey (NUSL '98), at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum in Boston.

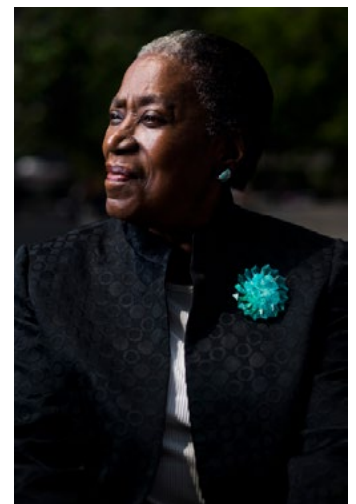
CRRJ and Center for Law, Equity and Race program coordinator, honored at MLK statue unveiling

In January 2023, Charlotte Mathews-Nelson, program coordinator for Northeastern Law School's Center for Law, Equity and Race (CLEAR), was honored at the unveiling

of the new statue of Martin Luther King Jr. and his wife, Coretta Scott King, on Boston Common.

Mathews-Nelson is one of 69 civil rights leaders in Boston whose work was recognized at the celebration, and her name is engraved alongside her late husband's, Leon T. Nelson, founder of the Greater Roxbury Chamber of Commerce, on a plaque embedded in the paving stones surrounding the new statue, titled "The Embrace."

A Northeastern graduate, Mathews-Nelson has held positions at the university since 1979. Decades of service, her activities with the NAACP and her role in local leadership have created opportunities for communities in Boston's Roxbury neighborhood and beyond.



Ms. Charlotte Mathews-Nelson, honored at MLK statue unveiling.

Photo by Adam Glanzman/Northeastern University.

In Memoriam

Hollis Watkins, Activist and CRRJ Advisor, Remembered

On September 20, 2023, Hollis Watkins, [CRRJ](#) advisor, voting rights activist and key figure in the 1960s Civil Rights Movement, passed away, aged 82.

Watkins was born in 1941 in Lincoln County, Mississippi, the youngest of twelve children to John and Lena Watkins. He spent much of his childhood helping his parents run their farm and molasses business. The proud Mississippian joined the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee as a Tougaloo College student. Watkins believed in the power of grassroots activism and sometimes criticized SNCC and other organizations for relying on the support of “outsiders.” Watkins believed that Mississippians had the strength and resolve to create social change for themselves.

In her tribute to Watkins, CRRJ Director Professor Margaret Burnham wrote:

“Hollis Watkins was a steadfast supporter of the work of CRRJ. He attended our founding meeting in 2007 and maintained close connections with the work in Mississippi over the years. With feet solidly planted in Mississippi, Hollis was truly a fierce voice for justice across the world. We will miss his wise and generous advice, counsel and support.”

— Professor Margaret Burnham, CRRJ Director



Hollis Watkins, civil rights activist, died aged 82, September 20, 2023, in Mississippi. Photo taken at CRRJ's 2007 conference.

Ángel David Nieves

The Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project shares the sad news that Northeastern Professor Ángel David Nieves, a faculty affiliate of CRRJ, passed away December 5, 2023. Professor Nieves is perhaps best known for his innovative work on 3D spatial histories and models of sites in apartheid South Africa. He was the author of *An Architecture of Education: African American Women Design the New South*, a pathbreaking book about nineteenth century educational edifices designed, built and administered by Black women. The book was edited by Nieves' late husband, Richard Foote. Nieves was Professor of Africana Studies, History, and Digital Humanities in the College of Social Sciences and Humanities (CSSH), an Affiliate Professor in the Department of English and in the School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs, and Director of the Humanities Center. He was also a co-principal investigator on the project *Reckonings: A Local History Platform for the Community Archivist* supported by the Mellon Foundation.



Professor Nieves at CRRJ's Digital Archive conference in October 2022. Photo by Craig Bailey/Perspective Photo.

New at CRRJ

Jay Driskell, Lead Historian

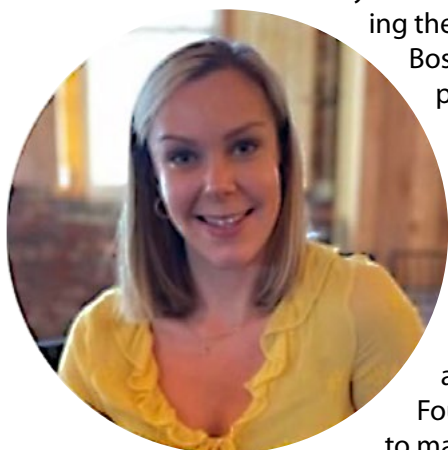
Driskell has worked as a consultant with CRRJ since October 2016, when he designed the research strategy that has, to date, collected nearly 20,000 records for inclusion in the Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive. He joined CRRJ full-time this year. His first book is *Schooling Jim Crow: The Fight for Atlanta's Booker T. Washington High School and the Roots of Black Protest Politics* (U. VA Press, 2014) and he is currently at work on his second, tentatively titled *A History of Impunity: Lynchings and Police Violence in the Twentieth Century*.

Joel Lee, Data Engineer

Lee is our new data engineer in the Digital Scholarship Group at Northeastern University. He was previously a researcher and fellow in Digital Humanities at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and he also worked as a student at the Price Lab for Digital Humanities and Penn Libraries. He works on the data pipelines for the Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive, helping to standardize the data model and the movement of research findings into the digital archive.

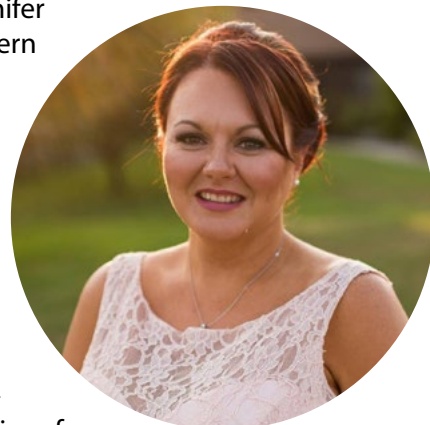
Catherine McGloin, Communications Specialist

In January 2023, McGloin joined CRRJ as our first full-time communications specialist. A former digital marketer, journalist and multimedia storyteller, McGloin has worked for many local and national titles, including the New York Times and the Boston Globe. Her role expands CRRJ's media coverage, online presence and outreach efforts, with particular focus on raising awareness of the Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive as a research and tool. We are grateful to the Ford Foundation for the funding to make her position possible.



Jennifer True, Program Manager

In July 2023, True joined CRRJ as the Program Manager for CRRJ and CLEAR. Jennifer has been with Northeastern University since April of 2015, and has held roles including Faculty Assistant at the School of Law and Administrative Operations Manager for Northeastern's PhD Network. As Program Manager, True oversees and coordinates the various programs and activities of CRRJ.



Joy Zanghi, Project Archivist

Gina Nortonsmith, CRRJ's former archivist, has been promoted to Specialist Archivist, African American History at Northeastern. Zanghi joined the project as Archivist in December 2023. Zanghi joins CRRJ and Northeastern from the Archdiocese of Boston Archives and Library, where she implemented policies to process, preserve, and use archival materials in digital and analog formats according to best professional standards and the institutional records retention schedule.

Emily Spieler, Senior Advisor

CRRJ's senior advisor celebrated her retirement from active teaching in May 2023. Spieler came to the law school in 2001 as dean and later moved onto the faculty, teaching labor law to generations of students and supporting the social justice and experiential law missions of the school in myriad ways. In her position as dean, Spieler generated critical funding for CRRJ in its earliest years. As senior advisor, she guided the strategic growth of its programs and infrastructure, and worked closely with its students and legal staff.

The Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project Network

CRRJ Staff: Margaret Burnham, **Director**. Rose Zoltek-Jick, **Associate Director**. Emily Spieler, **Senior Advisor**. Gina Nortonsmith, **Archivist for African American History**. Joy Zanghi, **Project Archivist**. Jay Driskell, **Lead Historian**. Malcolm Clarke, **Elizabeth Zitrin Justice Fellow**. Olivia Strange, **Elizabeth Zitrin Justice Fellow**. Jennifer True, **Program Manager**. Lydia Beal, **Researcher**. Catherine McGloin, **Communications Specialist**. Victoria Rothbaum and Ann Baum, **Editors**.

Center for Law, Equity, and Race: Deborah Jackson, **Executive Director**. Margaret Burnham, **Faculty Director**. Deborah Ramirez, **Faculty Director**. Charlotte Nelson, **Program Coordinator**.

Affiliates: Michael Beaudet, Patricia Davis, Laurel Leff, **Northeastern University College of Arts, Media, and Design**. Nicole Aljoe, Jack McDevitt, (ret.) **Northeastern University College of Social Sciences & Humanities**. Dan Jackson, Jules Rochielle Sievert, Deborah Ramirez, **Northeastern University School of Law**. Drew Facklam, Julia Flanders, Candace Hazlett, Giordana Mecagni, Gina Nortonsmith, Joy Zanghi, Joel Lee, Sarah Sweeney, **Northeastern University Snell Library**. John Pierre, Ada Goodly Lampkin, **Southern University Law Center**. D'Iorah Hughes, Austin Zinkle, **Rosenberg College of Law, University of Kentucky**. Steven Drizin, **Northwestern University**.

Honorary Advisors: Rita L. Bender, Fania Davis, David J. Dennis, Ruby Sales.

External Advisors: Ifetayo Belle, Janeen Blake, Tasmin Din, Tara Dunn, Bayliss Fiddiman, Hon. Geraldine Hines (ret.), Melvin Kelley, Mary Nguyen, Melissa Nobles, Rashida Richardson, Kaylie Simon.

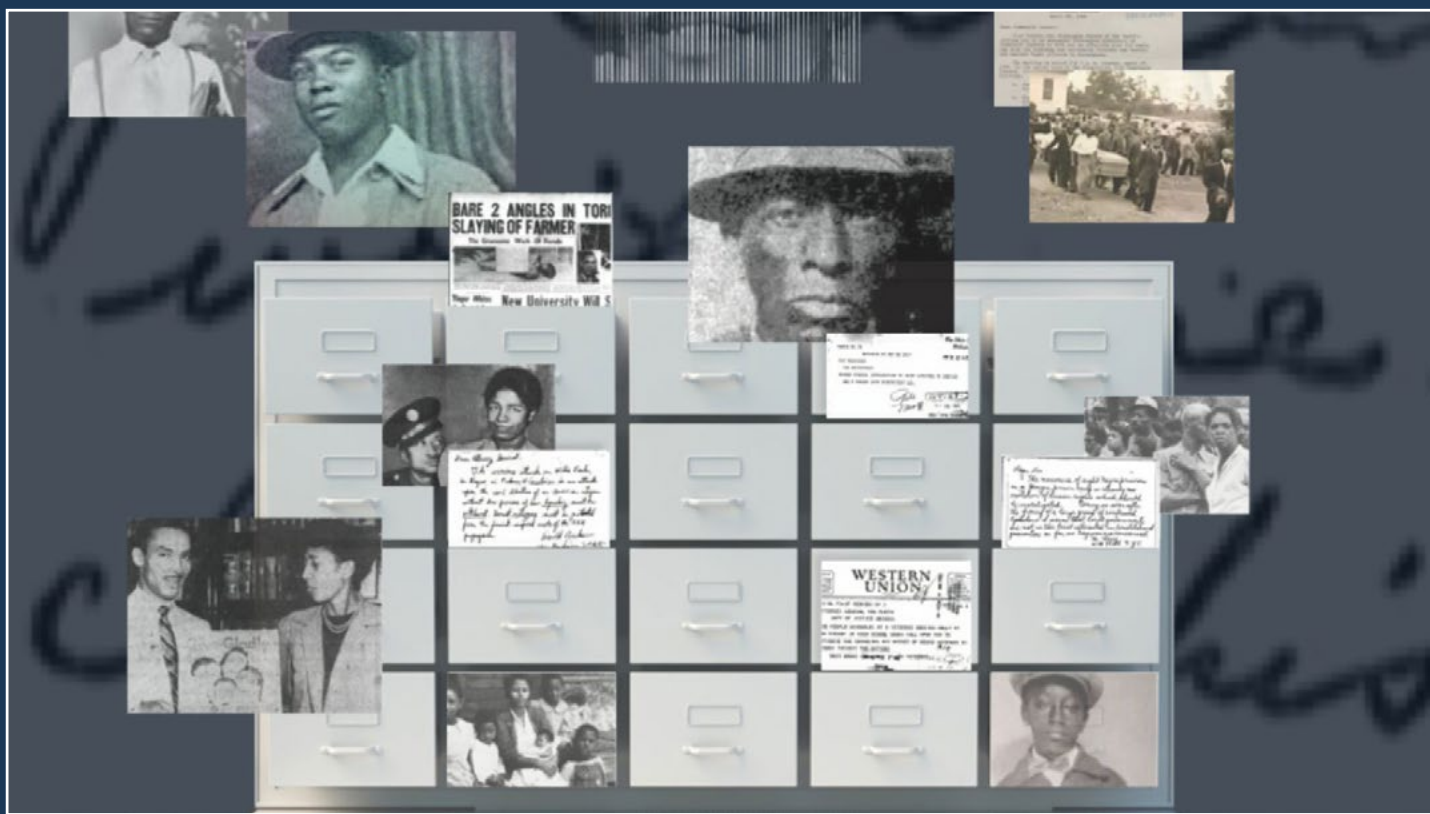
Research Collaborators: Jeffrey Adler, Charles Chavis, David Cunningham, Shytierra Gaston, Diane Harriford, Jennifer Llewellyn, Monica Martinez, Margaret M. Russell, Geoff Ward, Nan Elizabeth Woodruff.

Student Researchers (2023): Marisa Belthoff, Genevieve Brown, Meghan Coughlin, Avery Emison, Shahinaz Geneid, Noelle Gulick, Olivia Johnson, Anna Kennedy, Raissa Lima, Quintia Martin, Obioma Okonkwo, Keneya Onuaguluchi, Denisse Ruiz Clifford, Sophia Sheng, Sydney Wideman.

CRRJ Supporters

CRRJ is supported by a generous bequest from Northeastern Law Professor Hope Lewis (1962-1992) and from Blossom Stephenson (1927-2021). CRRJ is grateful for grants from the Commonwealth Fund, the Ford Foundation, Joshua Mailman Foundation, Liberation Ventures, the Mellon Foundation, and the Zitrin Foundation.

We are grateful for the support of many alumni of the law school and the program and many other individual donors.



CRRJ Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive <https://crrjarchive.org>

We rely on donors like you to continue our work. Donations are used for litigation expenses, field research, and reconciliation and restorative justice projects. With your help, we can continue training tomorrow's civil rights lawyers, filling in the gaps in US history, and informing our national dialogue on racial redress and criminal justice.

Visit <https://bit.ly/3TzBo3w>

to donate to the Civil Rights & Restorative Justice Project, or send us a check made out to Northeastern University, with CRRJ in the memo, at the address below:

Northeastern University Civil Rights & Restorative Justice Project

Mail address:
118 Cushing Hall
360 Huntington Avenue
Boston, MA 02115

Physical Address:
65 Forsyth Street,
Boston, MA 02115

CONTACT:

Email: crrj@northeastern.edu • Tel. (617) 373-3495

Website: crrj.org

Visit our Archive at <https://crrjarchive.org/>
To receive more information and updates about
CRRJ, please sign up for our listserv here:
https://bit.ly/subscribe_CRRJ.