



Media Contact:

Missy Goss-Coln
missy@civicatlanta.org

Coalition in Atlanta Launches First-of-its-Kind Anti-Violence Initiative to Promote Safety and Justice

National and local dollars invested to scale hyper-local interventions throughout the City

Atlanta, GA (May 23, 2023) – The Center for Civic Innovation (CCI) – an Atlanta-based social justice organization fighting to solve inequality in Atlanta – is joining with partnering organizations to convene a Safety and Justice Accelerator designed to address the systemic roots of violence in Atlanta. The accelerator – modeled after the long-running success of CCI’s Civic Innovation Fellowship Program – will equip community leaders with resources to support hyper-local interventions in communities throughout Atlanta to reduce incidents of violence in the City.

“We have to have an honest conversation about the increased prevalence of violence in Atlanta. What we are seeing is the consequence of underlying and unaddressed inequality in our city,” said Rohit Malhotra, founder and executive director of CCI. “This program focuses on investing in community leaders with interventions that get at the root causes of violence and injustice. The scale of their work has a rippling effect of increased safety across the entire City. We should all be rooting for their success.”

Partners joining CCI in this work include:

- The Injury Prevention Research Center at Emory (IPRCE)
- Everytown for Gun Safety
- McAllister Consultancy & Training
- The IVYY Project (Interrupting Violence with Youth and Young Adults) at Grady Memorial Hospital
- Microsoft, Justice Reform Initiative

Jacqueline Clemons, who serves as the director of The IVYY Project at Grady Memorial Hospital, is credited with convening this group of partners specifically to address the pandemic of violence in Atlanta through the work of the Safety and Justice Accelerator.

“It is vital that we support organizations that want to show up for our communities impacted by gun violence,” Clemons said. “We need organizations with values and strategies that amplify wellness, healing, and alternatives to traditional public safety. The accelerator will exponentially

expand Atlanta’s promise to create safer communities by investing in the organizations that have been at the helm with solid solutions for real, community-based public safety. This level of investment is long overdue.”

Participants in the Safety and Justice Accelerator will join CCI’s Civic Innovation Fellowship program, which is a cohort-based model that provides technical assistance, capital, and community support to trusted leaders in Atlanta’s communities with interventions to address the City’s social and economic challenges. Over the past nine years, over 100 leaders have participated in the CCI Fellowship program, and they represent some of Atlanta’s most inspirational – yet often undervalued and underappreciated – grassroots leaders.

Each of this year’s Fellows are dedicated to addressing the root causes of community violence with locally-based interventions. This cohort of problem solvers includes:

- **Aaliyah Strong** | Tyme to Thrive Beyond Grief (@tymetothrive)
- **Derrick and Dawn Townsend** | The Hopeful Change Project Inc. (hope2change.com)
- **Gary Burke** | Corner of Hope at Lakewood (lakewoodchurchofhope.org)
- **Jordan Murphy** | Girassol Wellness (girassolwellness.org)
- **Leonard Dungee and Chee’Tara Alexander** | Hope Hustlers (@h.o.p.e.hustlers)
- **Omar Howard** | Freedom is a Choice Inc. (freedomisachoice.net)
- **Ricky “Dip” Usher** | Wii Care Atlanta (@wii_careatl)
- **Tekesia Shields** | Mothers Against Gang Violence (@magviolence)

The six-month-long training accelerator provides an unrestricted stipend (including dedicated funding for mental and physical wellness), organizational and leadership coaching, peer advisor check-ins, community sessions, and office hours for additional support. Participants learn through the curriculum how to:

- Develop an impact model and use data to measure and communicate the effectiveness of their work
- Build an understanding of the local policy landscape to advocate to government officials and institutions
- Raise capital and form partnerships to drive organizational growth and sustainability

The Safety and Justice Accelerator launched this spring, with the cohort expected to conclude late summer.

About The Center for Civic Innovation

The Center for Civic Innovation is a community of over 250 community leaders, entrepreneurs, and movement builders committed to advancing the social and economic wellbeing of people and places in Atlanta. We provide coaching, capital, and convenings. Over the past nine years, we’ve supported the growth of over 100 community-led initiatives in Atlanta. Learn more at civicatlanta.org.

###