A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER

Dear Woodson Center Community,

The Woodson Center began in 1981 in response to what I saw as a tremendous unfilled need in our country: to strengthen, resource, and learn from the millions of unsung heroes who were working in our most challenging neighborhoods to effectively address problems others dismissed as intractable.

The last forty years have been filled with formidable obstacles, as we discovered that elevating the work of these grassroots leaders threatens vested interests across the political and ideological spectrum. But they have also been filled with unimaginable victories, as we saw countless individuals, families, neighborhoods and entire communities transformed.

The strange and volatile cultural moment we find ourselves in right now presents new challenges and opportunities for the work of the Woodson Center. On the one hand, the relentless focus on race is a dangerous distraction from the real work of addressing rising urban violence and other challenges to peace and upward mobility. On the other, our grassroots leaders hold the actual answers the nation is longing for: their work is the living embodiment of American values and virtue in action.

In light of this, I am so excited to share with you all the progress we were able to make last year, as well as a look at what we have in store for 2022. We resourced well over a hundred neighborhood groups with grants to expand their work in the midst of the pandemic. Our 1776 Unites black-led scholar network continued to push back against the tidal wave of racial grievance, amplifying the voices of our neighborhood leaders. Our inspirational Black History and Excellence Curriculum exceeded 25,000 downloads with users in all 50 states, and an animated series based on our lessons is in pre-production. Our newest initiative, Voices of Black Mothers United, gathered families of homicide victims from all over the country to push back on police defunding and to make neighborhoods safer, becoming active in 22 states.

As we celebrated our 40th anniversary last July and I announced my official plans to retire from day-to-day operations, my heart overflowed with gratitude to see all we have been able to accomplish so far. But I can say without a doubt that even greater challenges and victories lie ahead of us. Our programming, infrastructure, and finances are stronger than they have ever been, and I believe with all my heart that the next forty years will be greater than anything we have seen. And I’m so excited and grateful for you to be part of it.

--Bob Woodson
President and Founder,
The Woodson Center
The Woodson Center celebrated its 40th Anniversary in 2021, a milestone that – in addition to reflection on the enduring significance of our past accomplishments – saw the launch of several new programs to meet the changing needs of the communities we serve as well as the great nation that makes that service possible.

These include the continued work of our 1776 Unites movement and its accurate, character-building black history and civics lessons; the expansion of our Community Affiliates Network (CAN) of grassroots activists and neighborhood partners; a vibrant social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram; support for values-aligned institutions like The Piney Woods School; dynamic public discussions with figures like J.D. Vance and Clarence Page; school board testimony in defense of high standards for all students from Woodson Center Senior Visiting Fellow Ian V. Rowe; and the launch of our new Voices of Black Mothers United initiative, which amplifies the voices of courageous women who have lost children to violent crime and are speaking out for changes to make our cities safer – and opposing reckless calls to defund the police.

We’re excited to share this overview of the Woodson Center’s new and continuing activities and accomplishments in 2021, and look ahead to what’s next for us, our partners, and our essential supporters in 2022 and beyond.
Black American Scholarship for the Common Good

Launched in February of 2020, 1776 Unites is a nonpartisan and intellectually diverse alliance of writers, thinkers, and activists focused on solutions to our country’s greatest challenges in education, culture, and upward mobility. In 2021, our scholars and activists continued to make the case for the application of free market principles to social problems in their research, writing, community work, public appearances, and in media outlets from Left, Right, and Center, including the Wall Street Journal, Morning Joe, Fox & Friends, the Atlantic, and USA TODAY.

On February 18, we held a first anniversary celebration featuring moderator Kelly Wright of Black News Channel, Brown University Professor Glenn Loury, Woodson Center Visiting Scholar Ian Rowe, and Founder Bob Woodson. They discussed a myriad of topics, including how a great education must include the stories of Black triumph of which all Americans should be proud, and how America should be defined by the promises in its founding documents that eventually came to be for all.

In January 2022, 1776 Unites celebrates its second anniversary.

We are especially proud that in the year since our scholars were first assembled, 1776 Unites has hosted weekly conference calls, some of which included our contributions from our Community Affiliates Network (CAN), enabling work on the ground to inform academic inquiry, and vice versa.
J.D. Vance, Clarence Page, and Bob Woodson:

Livestream on race, class, and upward mobility in modern America draws thousands of viewers

The Woodson Center’s decades of experience in anti-poverty work have demonstrated that fixating on race is a distraction from the real barriers to opportunity and upward mobility. In April, 1776 Unites scholar and journalist Clarence Page and bestselling author J.D. Vance sat down with Bob Woodson to discuss race and class in America. Over 1700 supporters, concerned citizens, and community activists joined us live – and thousands more watched the recording.

Our message of reconciliation, our focus on genuine solutions, and our belief in the individual agency of every American are what make 1776 Unites unique. We work without apology towards the renewal of America’s founding principles for all people.

Open Letter to Smith College President Kathleen McCartney:

Showing solidarity across racial lines by defending falsely-accused workers and holding elite institutions accountable

Bob Woodson and former Smith College employee Jodi Shaw created this joint effort to support Smith College employees falsely accused by a student of a “racist” act following an otherwise routine 2018 incident. The college’s eagerness to confirm the incident as “racist” and ignore the facts of the case to serve that narrative contributed to an atmosphere of intimidation and harassment against janitor Mark Patenaude and cafeteria worker Jackie Blair.

We sought to hold Smith College accountable, and our open letter and the ensuing coverage put pressure on President Kathleen McCartney to admit her administration’s failures. At the same time, the Woodson Center helped to raise over 13K dollars in support for Mr. Patenaude and Ms. Blair, both of whom are struggling financially as a result of the threats they’ve faced. This was an important effort in defending our shared American values of freedom and individual dignity – and more and more people from across the political spectrum are joining us!
Red, White, and Black: Rescuing American History from Revisionists and Race Hustlers

Our collection of essays, published by Emancipation Books in May 2021, sold out immediately and became the publisher’s best-selling book of the year! Contributors range from prominent journalists such as Clarence Page and established scholars like Shelby Steele and John McWhorter, to up-and-coming thinkers like Coleman Hughes and Wilfred Reilly.

“Conversations about our history and inequalities can be difficult. This is why the book Red, White, and Black matters.”

– Joe Nalven, Times of San Diego
Empowering Black History and Character Curriculum

In September 2020 we launched our revolutionary free black history and character curriculum. In 2021, it officially passed 25,000 downloads!

A peaceful and prosperous American future must be built on a shared understanding of our past that is accurate and truthful, but also celebratory and aspirational. Our curriculum is based on the Woodson Principles – transcendent virtues outlined by our founder in his book Lessons from the Least of These – and tells the stories of black Americans whose tenacity and resilience enabled them to overcome adversity and make invaluable contributions to our country. It also teaches character and decision-making skills that equip students to take charge of their futures.

2021 releases in our curriculum included lessons on these pivotal figures and events in Black history:

» the tragic destruction of Tulsa, Oklahoma’s Greenwood neighborhood, home of the “Black Wall Street,” in the Tulsa Race Massacre – and the community’s determined efforts to rebuild;
» a two-part lesson on the life and legacy of Crispus Attucks, killed by the British Army in the Boston Massacre, and widely remembered as the first man to die in the American revolution;
» entrepreneur and philanthropist Paul Cuffe, a sea captain, international trader, and trans-Atlantic abolitionist in the early days of the republic, the first free Black American to visit the White House;
» pioneer aviator Bessie Coleman, the first Black American woman to earn a pilot’s license;
» the 54th Massachusetts infantry regiment, the Civil War heroes made famous by the film Glory;
» Georgia-born track and field champion Alice Coachman, the first black woman to win Olympic gold;
» and the victories of Jesse Owens and Black American athletes of the U.S. Olympic team at the 1936 Summer Olympics in Berlin, where their performance put the lie to Nazi racial fantasies.

Our K-8 content, including original animations, is currently in production and will begin to roll out in early 2022.

1776 Unites exists to give a platform to those who reject victimhood, like Kamia Bradley, our modern-day Bessie Coleman who went from homeless to flight instructor. Kamia has partnered with the Woodson Center, to use her story of resilience to encourage others that they have the power to control their own destiny.
We have also released the first two installments of our six-lesson Contemporary Scholars Series on the life and work of three contemporary African American scholars: Walter Williams, Thomas Sowell, and Glenn Loury. These lessons are made possible in part by the generosity of the Arthur N. Rupe Foundation.

In September, AEI hosted a panel discussion on our Contemporary Scholars series, focusing on the first figure in our series, the economist and syndicated columnist Walter E. Williams. Woodson Center Visiting Fellow Ian Rowe, Anthony B. Bradley of King’s College, and 1776 Unites scholar Delano Squires discussed this series and its mission to showcase the work of modern Black intellectuals in classrooms nationwide. This conversation focused on the legacy of economist Walter Williams. Mr. Squires praised the late Prof. Williams for putting “data over dogma” and his willingness to challenge conventional wisdom on race, poverty, and the power of the free market.

We don't make a cost-benefit analysis when we decide which person to apply grace towards.

We just do it.

Bob Woodson
**1776 Unites Curriculum, By the Numbers**

(as of 12/31/21)

- **25,393** curriculum lessons downloaded since September 2020 launch
- **13,900** registered users for our curriculum
- **53** lessons downloaded daily, on average
- **3,321** downloads for *The Woodson Principles*, our most popular lesson
- **632** highest number of single-day downloads, April 30, on release of *Tulsa: Triumph and Terror*

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**Johns Hopkins Institute for Education Policy gives our curriculum high marks for encouraging “critical thinking and healthy classroom discussion” and for our “incorporation of multiple perspectives.”**

The Institute evaluates each unit for its presentation of distinctive viewpoints and for the presence of teacher-facing instructions that support a deliberative classroom (referred to as “Open Classroom Climate”).

With all aspects of the report combined, the analysis enables a clear picture of which knowledge domains are reinforced, overrepresented, and/or ignored within our curriculum, as well as in which grades the reinforcement occurs and with what quality or bias. The Institute provides budget-sensitive, high-level recommendations that may include adoption of new materials, amendments to existing materials, or targeted professional development.

**Project Description**

Funded by the Woodson Center and centered around Woodson Center Principles, the 1776 Unites project is a series of open-access lessons on Black achievement, historical events, and contemporary scholars. Each lesson includes lesson plans and a presentation for the teacher along with primary and secondary source materials in various formats for the students. At the time of the Institute’s review, the project included 14 lessons, however, it continues to undergo further development.

The Institute reviewed the student-facing materials that comprise the 1776 Unites online social studies project. Each resource, both text and non-text, was evaluated individually, in the context of its unit, and in the curriculum's cumulative knowledge-building capabilities.

It is important to note that 1776 Unites was not released as a standard social studies curriculum, but as an online project or set of materials. This context should be considered when discussing the findings of the Knowledge Map™ analysis.

1776 Unites achieves high quality scores for nearly all its resources. This suggests that the materials used in each unit provide substantial information, offer the possibility of high impact for students, and contain a multitude of topics. The project also scores extremely well on the Institute’s measure of Open Classroom Climate, indicating that it helps instructors encourage critical thinking and healthy discussion in the classroom. Additionally, the project earns even higher ratings for its incorporation of multiple perspectives. This indicates the project purposefully addresses both tragedies and triumphs from America’s past.

The project scores strongly for topical coverage in the Gifts & Government domain, although this is the only domain to achieve strong coverage. Although a full breadth of topical coverage would not make sense when measured against the project’s aims, instructors using the project should note where gaps occur in order to supplement them with additional, relevant materials.

The coherency, or degree to which the materials within a unit work together to build knowledge, varied from unit to unit. Units with stronger coherence tend to center around historical time periods as compared with units that focus on individuals.
Parents’ Resource Page

In response to countless inquiries about our curriculum from parents and educators around the country, our team created a resource page for anyone who wants to help get their local schools to incorporate our lessons into their history or civics classes. This included an open letter to school boards; a brief video with highlights from Ian Rowe’s testimonies, *Making the Case for Empowering Curriculum*, that can be shown at school board meetings; a Frequently Asked Questions page; and an in-depth webinar on how to incorporate the curriculum into any classroom environment.

These can be found by visiting: 1776unites.com/MakingTheCase
In July 2021, the Woodson Center celebrated 40 years of renewing and restoring communities across America and empowering ordinary people to transform their own lives and those of their neighbors.

The victories won by Woodson Center and its tireless affiliates have helped heal low-income cities and towns, created enduring prosperity, and touched countless lives – and continue to do so.

As we reflect on our accomplishments, we are reminded of all the work yet to be done.

From a tribute in The Daily Signal: “The anniversary celebration paid tribute to each decade of Woodson’s work and many of his organization’s victories over 40 years. Woodson founded the Center in 1981 after resigning as a resident fellow at a conservative think tank in Washington, the American Enterprise Institute.”
Bob Woodson Receives “Freedom Leadership Award” from Hillsdale College

From Hillsdale College President Larry P. Arnn: "On April 23, the great Robert Woodson delivered the inaugural lecture in Hillsdale’s Christ Chapel Drummond Lecture Series. His topic was Conservatism and Race: A Positive Path Forward.

A veteran of the civil rights movement, Woodson embraces what he calls ‘radical pragmatism’ as the best way to improve the lives of ‘the least of God’s children.’ His work at the Woodson Center seeks to ennoble and inspire the downtrodden, rather than condescend to and coddle them.”

According to the College, “The Freedom Leadership Award is one of Hillsdale College’s highest honors, and it was issued to Mr. Woodson in recognition of his long service in promoting public policies in keeping with America’s founding principles. Other award recipients include notable persons such as Margaret Thatcher, Jeane Kirkpatrick, and William F. Buckley, Jr.”

Hillsdale professor and associated vice president for curriculum David Whalen noted: “For decades, while public figures pose and wrangle about the poor and racial injustice, Robert Woodson has transformed the lives of many thousands. He does so because he understands responsibility, authentic human dignity, and the freedom through which people actually flourish. Where others just talk, Woodson has achieved near miracles.”
The Newest Project of the Woodson Center

Speaking Out for Peace – and Against Defunding the Police
Voices of Black Mothers United (VBMU) is the newest project of the Woodson Center, officially launched this year with a press conference on January 29. The event featured VBMU Executive Director Sylvia Bennett-Stone, Woodson Center President Bob Woodson, retired Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Chief Rodney Monroe, and VBMU state leaders Mary Nelson (New York), Carolyn Johnson Turner (Alabama), Donita Royal (Indiana), Shirley Muhammad (Pennsylvania), Beverly Smith-Brown (D.C. Metro Area), and Rhonda Knight (Georgia).

For decades, black mothers have disproportionately experienced a parent’s worst nightmare: the loss of a child (or even multiple children) to violence. Yet their stories – and the stories of their children – are too often ignored because these deaths didn’t happen at the hands of police officers.

VBMU is our growing nationwide network to offer support and healing to these mothers, and enable them to speak powerfully to national challenges in reducing crime and implementing police reform that strengthens and improves, instead of defunds or disbands, law enforcement. Building on the Woodson Center’s four decades of violence prevention experience, VBMU partners with law enforcement to help our cities implement proven methods to raise homicide clearance rates and reduce violence. Only a year after its founding, VBMU is now active in 21 states, with a central office in Birmingham, Alabama.

Our children were murdered in our neighborhoods, but no one knows their names.
VBMU Highlights

*Sylvia Bennett-Stone on The Glenn Show: Glenn Loury* and *Sylvia Bennett-Stone* discuss how Voices of Black Mothers United supports women who have lost children to the “pandemic” of criminal violence. VBMU director Ms. Bennett-Stone says of the grief surviving mothers face: “There’s no description for that kind of pain. There’s no economic line for that kind of pain. There’s no color line for that kind of pain. We all experience it … Sympathy is no substitute for support.”
Adapted from CBS42: “April 18 through April 24 is National Victims’ Rights Week. In recognition of the week, the Voices of Black Mothers United hosted its inaugural Focus on Victims Forum in Birmingham.”

Mothers Encounter

The Woodson Center and VBMU also hosted its inaugural Mothers Encounter, a retreat that gathered mothers of all races and backgrounds from around the country who have lost children to homicide, suicide, and substance abuse. The event, held in November 2021, received 100 percent positive feedback from all participants, who expressed tremendous enthusiasm for continuing to work together to raise awareness and educate the public about the problems that caused their children’s deaths. Uniting Americans across racial and class lines to save all of our children from deaths of despair is a central part of the Woodson Center’s strategy for 2022.
Woodson Center’s Community Affiliate Network (CAN) is a nationwide association of community-based leaders who are solving America’s most challenging social problems from the ground up.

Through the mini-grant program, these grassroots organizations can develop a project, obtain modest funding, and present the results of the project without having to navigate the cumbersome paperwork and bureaucratic barriers that often prevent smaller, more nimble organizations from being funded. CAN members participate in monthly Zoom calls in which they share achievements, best practices, and opportunities for collaboration, as well as receive training and technical support.

The CAN mini-grants program not only enables newer and less “expert” organizations to grow and scale, but it also provides a plethora of on-the-ground qualitative data that informs the work of the Woodson Center on an ongoing basis.

Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of the John and Daria Barry Family Foundation, in 2021 CAN added new members across the nation and awarded over one million in grants to organizations to do everything from reducing gang violence and fight human trafficking, to teaching professional etiquette and augmenting online education. Ongoing pandemic-related restrictions made this funding even more vital.
“This program is saving lives and helping the youth we serve to become agents of change in their communities and schools.”

Mini-grant recipient Karmia Berry, a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, founded I AM C.U.L.T.U.R.E.D. in 2017. Based in New York City, Ms. Berry’s organization serves high school youth from all five New York City boroughs. She promotes self-empowerment and appreciation for cultural richness and diversity by exposing marginalized youth of color to international travel and community culture in their own backyards and beyond. Ms. Berry works with youth who struggle with behavioral and psychological issues, such as truancy, bullying, and suicidal thoughts. In addition to providing therapy through travel, she provides holistic support including mentorship, wellness check-ins, financial literacy and college readiness programs, community service, and development workshops throughout the school year.

“I am excited to receive this mini-grant because it will enable us to fund 30 students in 2022,” says Karmia. These funds will assist travel “to Ghana, Costa Rica, and Columbia [for students] who normally would not have been able to financially afford this experience. The grant will provide our youth the financial access to five new passports and 11 new visas for the first time. It will also assist us to pilot our BRIDGE program – a study abroad program for alumni college students. We will offer financial assistance for a 3-week experience abroad to gain cultural awareness, career development, and to study a foreign language. This grant will help us provide the evidence of our service’s impact, which will help us to raise additional funds, so we never have to turn youth away.”

With only 6 percent of African American college students studying abroad, Karmia is even more motivated and determined for I AM C.U.L.T.U.R.E.D. to bridge that gap.
Mini-grant awardee Gwyneth Brown, Founder of the ACEE The Firm Foundation in Southeast Washington, D.C. ACEE encourages women and children in the inner-city communities to think more highly of themselves, their families, and their communities through innovative programs to transform their lives.

Gwyneth was inspired to start her program after surviving a gunshot wound in 2006, when she was an innocent victim caught in a crossfire. Instead of being overcome by anger, Gwyneth responded by creating an organization that could improve the lives of those in her community who do not value themselves – to the point where they will take their own life, or the life of another. “People are hurting, women are hurting, children are hurting, and my program is giving people hope, and an opportunity to feel loved, appreciated and special.”

Gwyneth used the mini-grant to fund her innovative program Love the Reprogram – Back to Childhood, designed for women ages 21 and up, who had experienced sexual and/or domestic trauma in either their childhood and/or adulthood. She was able to take a group of women from Southeast D.C. on a healing and revitalizing 2-day retreat at a hotel, “where they were, for the first time in their life, treated like queens. It was a transformative weekend, where the women who attended found healing, support, and purpose.”

Gwyneth hopes to use the next mini-grant to fund her first men’s healing retreat. We thank you for your continued support which enables our community healers like Gwyneth to pour love into the lives of those who need it the most!
“The Woodson Center was one of the few organizations that offered to meet our immediate needs.”

- Angie Dixon

Angie Dixon from Danville, Virginia is one of our newest CAN members. She runs Hoop Don’t Shoot: Save Our Youth, which uses basketball to unite kids together and reduce urban violence in her community.

With a grant from the Woodson Center, she was able to purchase a washing machine to wash the clothes of the youth in her program, along with gift cards which went toward fuel to transport the kids to and from school, church, and the gym – where she hosts the program. Hoop Don’t Shoot has been featured many times on the news, and while many viewers reached out with praises about the work Ms. Dixon has been doing, “the Woodson Center was one of the few organizations that offered to meet our immediate needs,” she said.
In 2021, the Woodson Center continued its special relationship with The Piney Woods School in Mississippi, one of only four remaining historically black boarding schools and an officially recognized National Historic Site. Founded in the Jim Crow South by education reformer Laurence C. Jones, this school has stood as an oasis of Black American excellence. This incredible school has transformed countless lives in its 110-year history, and continues this tradition of excellence today, with 98-100 percent of its graduates enrolling in college.

This year, founder Bob Woodson visited the school, addressed the student body and met with several students. The Woodson Center also funded the hiring of a special alumni coordinator, who will work to collect all the many incredible testimonies of graduates over Piney Woods’ rich history.

Strengthening Values-Aligned Institutions

American values depend on strong institutions for their preservation and transmission. The Woodson Center specializes in identifying organizations that uphold these values, and we come alongside them to strengthen and support their work. Working with these institutions is one of the best strategies for ensuring that the voices of real black Americans are heard above the din of the prevailing narrative.
Between 1912 and 1932, Booker T. Washington and philanthropist Julius Rosenwald partnered to build over 5300 Rosenwald Schools, vocational shops, and teacher’s homes across 15 segregated states.

These schools were astoundingly successful, virtually closing the education gap between blacks and whites in just a few years. According to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, “These schools now are 80-100 years old, and many suffer from abandonment, neglect, or lack of resources for continued use by the communities they once served. In 2002 the National Trust placed Rosenwald Schools on the 11 Most Endangered Historic Places list.”

The Cape Charles Rosenwald School in Cape Charles, Virginia is an important piece of history, one of thousands of remaining Rosenwald school buildings scattered throughout the South. The school closed in 1966, but the achievements it stands for still have profound relevance for today. Woodson Center helped kick off the revitalization of the Virginia schoolhouse by hosting a virtual fundraiser and awarding a $250,000 matching grant, thanks to the generosity of the John and Daria Barry Family Foundation.
## FINANCIALS

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### LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

#### LIABILITIES

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"We’re asking people to help build a foundation on which America will be restored and redeemed."

Bob Woodson  
Founder, Woodson Center
LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

We are so grateful for all we were able to accomplish in 2021, and we are even more excited for our plans for the upcoming year. They include:

Expanding our curricular offerings to include K-8 lessons.

Co-producing an animated series based on our lessons.

Getting copies of *Red, White, and Black* into over 1000 school libraries across the country.

Producing a second volume of *Red, White, and Black*.

Helping grassroots leaders design and implement comprehensive interventions in communities experiencing spikes in violent crime, including Washington, D.C.; Louisville, Kentucky; and Racine, Wisconsin.

Victims’ Rights Week Programming with our affiliated VBMU groups across the country.

Further expanding our CAN mini-grants and our training and technical support to grow and expand their work.