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BCRI NAMES NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS Diverse Community-Based Group Set to Guide BCRI's Growth and Mission

Birmingham, AL (August 27, 2019) — The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute (BCRI) has announced the ratification of the majority of its new Board of Directors, a 19-member body comprising community leaders who are committed to guiding the BCRI in its strategic mission to “enlighten each generation about civil and human rights by exploring our common past and working together in the present to build a better future.”

The Board announcement comes after a rigorous five-month process that began in March with a community-wide self-nomination phase, followed by vetting of candidates, interviews and then final selection. Selection criteria were based on factors including a full understanding of the BCRI's mission and purpose, prior community service and board experience, leadership in the civil and human rights community, and specialized skills in key professions. The new Board slate received approval from the Birmingham City Council at its regular meeting on Tuesday, August 27. Two additional seats are pending Council approval on next week's regular agenda.

The newly elected BCRI Board includes:

Cassandra W. Adams, Samford University, Cumberland School of Law; Tamera Coyne-Beasley, MD, University of Alabama at Birmingham; Nyeshia Cheyenne Black, PhD., Noire Analytics; William H. Burgess III, The Burgess Group; Yolanda Clayton, Alabama State University & Alabama A&M University/Clayton and Associates, LLC; Robert Dickerson, Birmingham Resource Center; Daryl R. Grant, KPMG Advisory Services; Rosilyn Houston, BBVA USA; Danny Markstein, Markstein; Angela D. McKenzie, Regions Bank; J. John Oros Jr., Greater Birmingham Convention and Visitors Bureau; Jonathan Porter, Alabama Power; Richard A. Rice, The Rice Firm, LLC; John D. Saxon, John D. Saxon, P.C.; David A. Thomas, Starbucks; Rev. Gwendolyn C. Webb, Hopewell Missionary Baptist Church/Foot Soldiers International, Inc.; and Rev. Thomas L. Wilder Jr., Bethel Baptist Church.

As part of its Vision 2020 strategic plan, the BCRI seeks to continually increase its annual attendance numbers, promote the success of the developing Civil Rights National Monument, facilitate superb programming that optimizes the Institute's own educational, curatorial and archival assets, and build a healthy, adaptive and sustainable institution that is both financially self-sufficient and nationally significant, according to Andrea L. Taylor, BCRI President and CEO.

“We are confident that this new Board is capable and committed to help navigate an increasingly challenging environment in the nonprofit arts and cultural sector. These individuals represent a diverse scope of experience, expertise, and local and national reach that will propel BCRI into the future,” Taylor said.

“As the BCRI moves toward the November anniversary of our founding, we'll have a number of opportunities for the community to meet and greet this new board and to feel included in our path forward,” she said.

About the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute (BCRI). An affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, and part of the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument, the BCRI is a cultural and educational research center that promotes a comprehensive understanding for the significance of civil rights developments in Birmingham that changed our world. Celebrating its 26th anniversary, BCRI reaches more than 150,000 individuals each year through teacher education (including curriculum development and teacher training), group tours, outreach programs (school and community), award-winning after-school and public programs, exhibitions and extensive archival collections. For more information, visit www.bcri.org.