

# ***OUR DEMOCRATIC MISSION***

***TRANSITIONING  
THE GREENSBORO POLICE  
DEPARTMENT  
FROM  
DOUBLE STANDARDS AND  
CORRUPTION  
TO  
ACCOUNTABILITY AND  
PROFESSIONALISM***

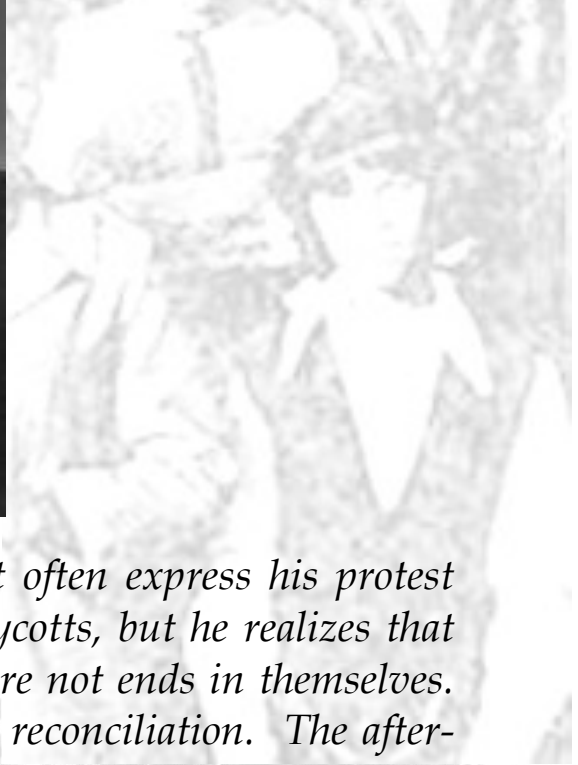
***AN ENVISIONING AND DISCUSSION PAPER***



Organizing for justice, equality, dignity, worth, and the enormous potential of all people...

**WE WANT GREENSBORO TO BECOME A MUCH MORE BELOVED COMMUNITY. WE WANT TO LEARN HOW TO BE A HELP TO ONE ANOTHER IN ORDER TO LIVE OUT OUR FULLEST POTENTIAL. THIS IS THE SPIRIT IN WHICH WE ISSUE THIS DOCUMENT.**





*"The nonviolent resister must often express his protest through noncooperation or boycotts, but he realizes that noncooperation and boycotts are not ends in themselves. ... The end is redemption and reconciliation. The aftermath of nonviolence is the creation of the beloved community, while the aftermath of violence is tragic bitterness."*

**-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.**

*A Testament of Hope, pp. 7-8*



# PREFACE

Despite having three different mayors, three different city managers and three different police chiefs since 2006, many citizens believe there continues to be a police culture in Greensboro that operates without transparency, uses double standards, promotes inequality before the law based on race or ethnic background, abuses investigatory power, and protects police misconduct. As a result of this culture, there are now over 45 civil and criminal lawsuits brought against the Greensboro Police Department (GPD) by current and former police officers, as well as many uninvestigated or inadequately investigated civilian complaints and cases.

In this the first of three discussion papers on crucial aspects of democracy—racial equity and social justice, sustainable economic justice, relevant education with community values—we present 14 case studies that illustrate the serious problems of police corruption, racism and misconduct in our city. We also present a call for Greensboro citizens to work together to craft a viable and long lasting solution to the problems plaguing our police department.

We have come together to work on difficult problems before. We can do it again. Later in this document, we share an example—the K-Mart struggle between 1993 and 1996—that demonstrates what can be accomplished when we work together as a community on a common problem. We invite you to study this document and to discuss it with others. Then, let us join together to make our city great.

# Message from Beloved Community Center Board



Organizing for justice, equality, dignity, worth, and the enormous potential of all people...

Mailing: Post Office Box 875, Greensboro, NC 27402  
Office: 417 Arlington Street, Greensboro, NC 27406  
Homeless Hospitality House: 437 Arlington Street  
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[chair@belovedcommunitycenter.org](mailto:chair@belovedcommunitycenter.org)

January 21, 2013

Dear Citizens of Greensboro:

We believe Greensboro is on the front end of a major crisis that has the potential to hold our city and its residents hostage unless definitive action is taken. We further believe that at the center of this crisis is the Greensboro Police Department (GPD). We have documented for your examination 14 cases related to police misuse and/or abuse of power. Many of these cases reflect racial prejudices combined with police powers. This is both a historical and dangerous combination. We ask you not to *rush to judgment* but take the time to read this document carefully, especially the cases.

There is urgency to this work, as there are over 45 civil and/or criminal cases brought by current and former police officers now pending against the GPD. There are many other unaddressed complaints brought by civilians. We do not need to wait for more wrongful imprisonment or loss of life. Certainly, we do not need for this to spin into greater chaos and disruption.

We are convinced that it is time for Greensboro to fully face its long-standing police problem and to work out creative democratic ways to resolve it. In the spirit of helping our city to face and resolve these problems, we authorized and have worked with our staff to prepare this document. It is our hope that the content of the pages offered will serve as a catalyst that draws our entire city into meaningful action.

The document speaks candidly and, we hope, clearly. You might not agree with every detail or every suggestion; however, we hope that you agree with the basic direction it is urging us to take. The document is calling on all of us to work together in a spirit of sincere truth seeking, with humility and determination, to help our city become the very best that it can be.

Finally, on pages 39 and 40 there are suggestions of ways you can immediately get involved. We urge you to examine that section carefully and choose to make the sacrifice of being actively engaged. Let us all work towards building new bridges of knowledge, understanding and compassion. Let us, together, transition our city into a new era, characterized by greater democracy, greater justice, better human and race relations, and with economic and social progress for all.

Sincerely yours,

Patricia Priest  
Chairperson, Board of Directors

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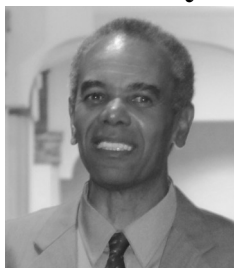
# The Board of Directors of the Beloved Community Center of Greensboro, Inc.

**Mrs. Patricia Priest**  
*Chairperson*



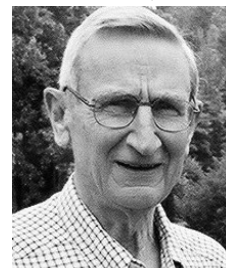
*Refugee Services Consultant*

**Mr. Dale Tonkins**  
*Vice-Chairperson*



*Small Business Owner*

**Rev. Z. N. Holler**  
*Chairperson Emeritus*



*Retired Presbyterian Minister*

**Mrs. Deborah Underwood**  
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*University Transportation Researcher*

**Atty. Dayna Cunningham**  
*Assistant Treasurer*



*Univ. Economic Development Director*

**Mr. Jonte Miller**



*Student Organizer*

**Dr. Kathleen Casey**



*University Professor*

**Rev. Neils Chapman**



*Labor Union Official*

**Dr. Maria Palmer**



*Multi-Cultural Program Consultant*

**Ms. TeShone Jones**



*Community Organizer*

**Mrs. Carolyn Allen**



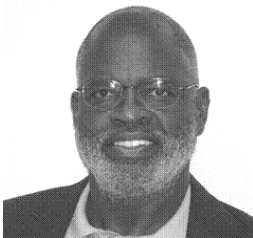
*Former Mayor of Greensboro*

**Rev. Alma Purvis**



*Retired Public School Educator*

**Mr. Edward Whitfield**



*Foundation Director*

**Ms. Mildred J. Brown**



*Community Volunteer*

**Mr. Steve Sumerford**



*Community Volunteer*

**Mrs. Debra Tyler-Horton**



*Diversity Program Coordinator*

**Bishop Alfred C. Marble**



*Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina*

**Atty. Anita Earls**



*Social Justice Lawyer*

# Part I

## What We Are Trying To Do

*... A quality of interaction, **ubuntu** is a thread, which runs through people's relationships with family members, neighbors, and strangers. The African proverb (which translates), 'a person is a person by means of other people,' suggests that one's own humanness depends upon recognizing the humanity of others and their recognizing yours. (Francis Wilson and Mamphela Ramphela, *Uprooting Poverty: The South African Challenge*)*

The purpose of this document, produced by the Beloved Community Center (BCC) of Greensboro, North Carolina, is to serve as a catalyst and a call to the residents of Greensboro to immediately intensify and elevate the work of transitioning this city into a new era in which all of the city's 273,000 people may thrive. We intend to inform, encourage, and engage the residents of Greensboro, while seeking the support of the nation, in order to construct a process that allows a broad range of people to work together towards the goal of making Greensboro the best city it can be.

We see this initiative as one consistent with BCC's mission, "... to foster and model a spirit of community based on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s vision of a 'beloved community.' In this spirit we work towards social and economic relations that affirm and realize the equality, dignity, worth and potential of everyone."

We have taken the initiative to set out a vision and suggest a process for moving forward. We are very clear, however, that the work of changing our city for the better is everyone's work; *moreover, it is work that we must learn to do together.* We want to become a much more beloved community. We want every single person to be affirmed and to be helped to live out their fullest potential. This is the spirit in which we issue this document. We have

spoken candidly and, we hope, clearly in this document. Though painful for some, we believe it is both helpful and necessary for Greensboro to face its historical narrative.

We believe Greensboro is on the front end of a major crisis. The crisis is growing both deeper and broader as much of the leadership and a large segment of the population slumber in denial or are stuck without a sense of what can be done. Trust is declining while cynicism is growing. Our current predicament involves an economy that no longer functions for many Greensboro residents.



**A local town hall meeting on issues of democracy and education sponsored by Community Dialogue on Education**

The crisis involves our education system, which is not equipping our young people to rebuild neighborhoods and communities. It does not adequately encourage the creative thinking and imagination that we so desperately need at this moment. The crisis also involves a law enforcement/police culture that is increasingly mistreating and abusing its most vulnerable citizens and residents.

*All of us, therefore, are challenged to think afresh.*

We are challenged to raise disturbing questions. Are we destined to continue down this road? Do we have to keep our heads buried in the sand, denying the magnitude of human suffering and destruction occurring daily all around us? Do we expect this problem to be solved in our city by anyone other than the people of the city?

As we hope to show, the pathway to a new progressive era in Greensboro is blocked by the dehumanizing, debilitating, and dangerous legacy of racism that is deeply woven throughout the cultural fabric of our city and of our nation. While racism is pervasive in the culture of Greensboro, its *headquarters*, where it is most deeply entrenched, is within the Greensboro Police Department (GPD). It persists as a subculture of corruption and double standards.

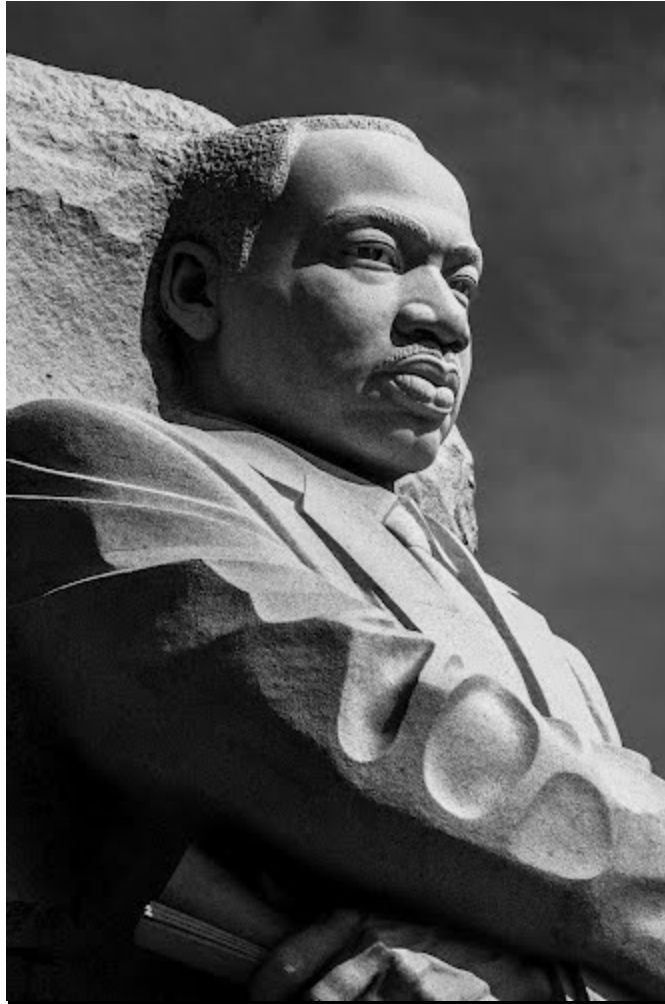
The police department (together with other law enforcement entities) is not just any public institution. Among its duties is its directive to provide public safety for the community. It is unique in that it is an institution that has been granted the power to make arrests, to bring charges against people, and to use physical force. Misbehavior within the police de-

partment can result in people being unjustly imprisoned and even having their lives unjustly taken. With such power, it is our view that the police must be held to high standards with the highest integrity. Regrettably, we are certain that this is not currently the case. Given the city's structurally weak city council, the public must itself play a greater and greater role in correcting this flaw within this critical public institution. That is part of the democratic process, and it is an essential part of our democratic duty.

The work of greater police professionalism and accountability is very important public and democratic work. As we do this work together, helping each other along the way, we are convinced that the GPD will become a better police department and we will become a better people. We will also strike a powerful blow against all forms of racism, as well as other forms of domination, operating in the culture of our city.

Believing as we do that there are other communities seeking to do similar work, we have chosen to share this document not only with the people of Greensboro but also with friends and other interested parties around the state and the nation. We hope to develop partnerships with others, sharing perspectives and projects, summing up lessons, and borrowing from each other's experiences, as together we seek to live into the fullness of our human potential.

In the spirit and words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., let us move forward together believing that we can *"hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope,"* right here in Greensboro!



*"With this faith, we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope." —Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. - 1963 March on Washington speech*



# Part II

## A Quest for Truth: Case Studies of Police Corruption and Double Standards

*"We swallow greedily any lie that flatters us, but we sip only little by little at a truth we find bitter." (Denis Diderott, Le neveu De Rameau)*

### OUR USE OF THE TERMINOLOGY SUBCULTURE OF CORRUPTION AND DOUBLE STANDARDS

In this document we consciously use the phrase subculture of double standards and corruption. By subculture we in no way mean to imply that all police officers are corrupt or engage in double standards when carrying out their duties. Nor do we intend to imply any lack of appreciation of the need for good police work, especially the good and difficult work carried out daily by most Greensboro police officers.

We are convinced, however, that there has existed for a long time a leadership element in the GPD that is corrupt and that systematically employs double standards. This leadership element has evolved into a way of life over many years and is now tarnishing and reducing the effectiveness of the entire department. It is this subculture, or way of life, and its leadership that we are addressing. As residents of Greensboro, we are all undoubtedly concerned and troubled by the assertion of "corruption" within one of our vital public service institutions. We have summarized 14 cases that reflect the subculture of corruption and double standards pervasive in the GPD. If we, as individuals and as a city, can do our best to set aside our preconceptions and read these cases carefully, we believe the body of information presented will convincingly speak for itself.

### THE CASE OF MR. LAMONTE ARMSTRONG

On June 29, 2012, Mr. LaMonte Armstrong walked out of prison a free man for the first time in 17 years. His freedom was largely the result of the efforts of the Duke University School of Law Wrongful Convictions Clinic. While imprisoned, Armstrong missed 17 Christmases with his family, 17 birthday celebrations, 17 years of having the freedom to eat what he chose, and 17 years of sleeping in the comfort of a bed at home rather than on a cold prison cot. He missed much of the opportunity to further develop himself. Why did he



**LaMonte Armstrong, finally released in June of 2012, spent 17 years in prison based on a flawed GPD investigation. Yet, incredibly, Chief Miller refused to investigate the discredited and flawed investigation.**

He missed much of the opportunity to further develop himself. Why did he

miss all of these moments? Armstrong missed them because, in 1995, he was wrongfully convicted of the murder of North Carolina A&T State University Professor Ernestine Compton.

In the initial investigations of the 1988 murder, the GPD ruled out Armstrong as a suspect. The GPD interviewed Armstrong repeatedly during this period. They even used an informant to try to draw general information about the crime from Armstrong, without Armstrong's knowledge. After Armstrong demonstrated that he knew nothing about the murder, police realized that no evidence existed linking him to it. You may wonder how Armstrong ended up charged with this very crime seven years later. When police subsequently charged the informant himself with Compton's murder, the informant changed his tune. He then testified that Armstrong had murdered Compton and took the plea deal that the GPD had offered him in an unrelated case in exchange for his cooperation.

After the GPD charged Armstrong, the prosecution and police made the unlawful decision *not* to provide Armstrong's defense attorneys with documents and recordings that pointed to Armstrong's innocence. Among this evidence was a statement in which people acknowledged seeing Compton alive *after* the police reported that Armstrong had killed her. Thus, not only did the GPD arrest Armstrong with questionable evidence of his guilt, they also, along with the prosecuting attorneys, withheld evidence that likely could have prevented Armstrong from spending 17 years in jail for a crime he did not commit. The informant has since recanted his testimony, admitting that he testified against Armstrong to obtain the plea deal. Recent palm print analysis technology demonstrates that the informant himself is most likely Compton's murderer.

The GPD accepted the informant's changing story

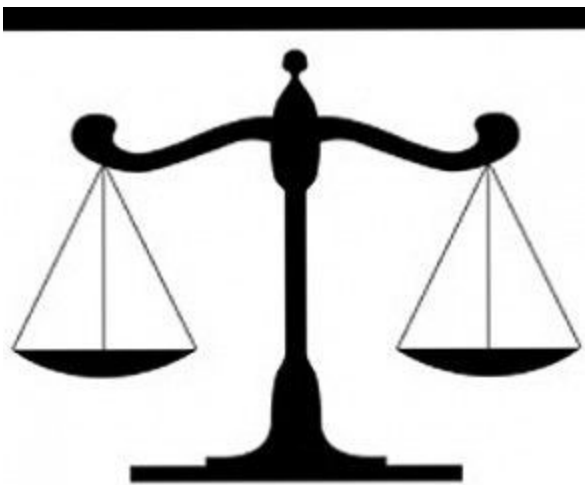
and they worked in concert with the prosecution to stop Armstrong's defense team from their legal right to obtain evidence that suggested the possibility of their client's innocence. This calls into question the department's integrity, and the nature of their priorities. Did the GPD, and does it now, value their responsibility to uphold the law above all else? Do they take seriously their supposed commitment to ethical behavior in investigations? The Armstrong case leaves us with too much doubt regarding the answers to such questions. Moreover, the effects of this misconduct impacted, not only Armstrong and his family, but

also the family and loved ones of Ernestine Compton. They thought justice had been served, but now they must relive the horror of her murder and hope that this time, the GPD conducts all aspects of its work properly. If this lack of professionalism occurred in Armstrong's case, it could have occurred in others.

The questions that arise with regard to Armstrong's case get at the heart of the source of community trust (or lack thereof) in the GPD. How committed is the GPD to ethical, legal action versus high arrest rates?

Which is more important to them, solid police work and upholding the law, or closing high profile cases by any means necessary? What values are emphasized within the culture of the GPD, if they were willing to arrest someone based on evidence that they *knew* was coerced from a person they *knew* had questionable connections to the murder in question? Given this case, how can we trust that other men and women have not also been wrongfully sent to jail by the GPD?

**Perhaps the biggest and most deep-seated failure in the aftermath of the Armstrong case is that there still has been no investigation of the *initial flawed investigation*. What kind of police department would not investigate clear and intentional errors that took away 17 years of a man's life? Who are the detectives and supervisory po-**



**Greensboro can never grow into its full potential of greatness until the scales of justice are balanced. There must be equal justice for all.**

lice personnel who worked on this case? Their unethical and seemingly illegal behavior draws into question other cases, which they processed. Are these same officers still a part of the GPD? How long did each serve after the 1995 wrongful conviction? How many cases might these same officers have tainted? The current Police Chief, Kenneth Miller, has been silent on Armstrong's case. Chief Miller fails to uphold his sworn duty to the public by refusing to investigate those responsible for the wrongful charging of and conviction of Armstrong. The Guilford County District Attorney appeared to characterize the wrongful investigation by GPD as one where Mr. Armstrong was framed. *All of this information points not to just one or two people in the department but to a culture of corruption and double standards within the GPD. The citizens of this city deserve answers!*

How can we trust that other men and women are not also missing the opportunity to spend time with loved ones and perhaps even working to better their own communities because they sit in prison for a crime that they did not commit? We must hold ourselves and our police to higher standards.

**The Case of Mr. Michael Slagle**

In May of 2012, District Attorney Douglas Henderson had Michael Slagle released from prison due to the indefensible and unspecified actions of the GPD. Slagle had been charged with the brutal beating of Ms. Deborah Moy, the murder of her boyfriend, musician William "Billy" Ransom Hobbs, Jr., and then burning them inside their home afterwards. In order to proceed with first-degree murder and other charges, the investigating detective, his or her sergeant, lieutenant, captain, assistant chief, chief of police, and the prosecuting attorney must all agree on the merit of the charges. In other words, multiple people had to approve Slagle's charge before the case proceeded to court.

Disturbingly, neither DA Henderson nor the GPD will publicly state the specific actions of the GPD

that led to the DA's decision to release Slagle. Despite their not coming forward, a few clear factors seem apparent in DA Henderson's decision: 1) that the GPD acted outside its realm of authority; 2) that the problematic actions of the GPD stemmed from more than mere procedural or paperwork errors; and 3) that the disturbing actions of the GPD occurred on multiple levels within the department. If these factors were not true, it is doubtful that Henderson would have any compelling reasons to worry about sharing more information with the public about a mistake in such a high-profile case.



**DA Douglas Henderson, pictured above, released Michael Slagle, who was charged with a gruesome murder and arson, from jail in May 2012. Yet, DA Henderson will not state publicly the indefensible and unspecified actions in GPD's investigation that prompted his decision.**

This information leads us to ask what factors prompted DA Henderson to take this initiative in such a horrific crime. Why would we not be told something about the behavior of the GPD that is tied to a crime of such magnitude? Evidently, at least one area of the GPD, an area with the authority to investigate murders and make arrests and charges, faces a profound lack of ethics. Further, that entity demonstrates questionable commitment to the law and to the well-being of the Greensboro citizens whom they are sworn to protect.



**Chief Miller, pictured above, will not publicly disclose the specific indefensible and unspecified actions by the GPD that explain the release of Michael Slagle, once accused of murder and arson.**

In light of all of the above, *the decision by the DA to keep the wrongful actions unknown to the public points to a greater culture of corruption within all branches of Greensboro law enforcement.* Why would Chief Miller and DA Henderson not come forward and say clearly what errors were made, who made them, and why they were made? We can see no justification for silence. Instead, it seems tied to unprofessional police conduct, at best, and corrupt or criminal police conduct at worst. Why has Chief Miller not investigated the GPD's actions that led to Slagle's release?

As Greensboro citizens, we must object. A culture of corruption as profound and deep-seated as is suggested by these hazy and troubling events goes to fundamental issues of safety, justice, and citizenship for all Greensboro residents. It even affects the very fabric of family life. Will the family members of Moy and Hobbs ever have closure? These people had to face cruel emotional ups and downs unnecessarily because members of the GPD could not uphold their duty to act within the lines of professionalism and, possibly, the law. The irony presented in this situation is whether Slagle is himself a victim of police misconduct or whether Slagle is a killer loosed back into the community because of the lack of professionalism and corruption within the GPD?

**The Case of Mr. Lamont Pride**

On December 12, 2011, Mr. Lamont Pride shot and killed New York Police Officer Peter Figoski. Had the GPD upheld their legal obligation to apply the law evenly, circumstances may have differed greatly.

Pride had previously and repeatedly encountered law enforcement in both New York City and Greensboro. He fled Greensboro to New York after he shot and attempted to kill a Black Greensboro resident.

Pride faced charges of assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill, inflicting serious injury, felony conspiracy, and possession of a firearm by a felon. In New York, officers arrested Pride on two occasions for possession of weapons and drugs, before he fatally shot NYPD Officer Figoski. Both times, NYPD informed the GPD that they held Pride and requested that the GPD send officers to extradite Pride to North Carolina. Pride could then be arraigned for his attempted murder of a Greensboro resident. Both times, the GPD refused to extradite Pride, allowing him to remain on the streets, ultimately a primary factor that led to the death of Officer Figoski.

This tragic series of events leads one to wonder why the GPD failed to extradite Pride. Surely, if Pride's warrants had involved the attempted murder of a prominent citizen such as Mayor Perkins or former Mayor Jim Melvin, the GPD would have sent officers to retrieve him immediately. **And yet, Pride did face charges for attempting to murder a less noteworthy, African American citizen of Greensboro. Does the GPD not value the lives of Greensboro's lesser-known citizens? Does it not value the lives of the Black men and women in the city?** Can we trust them to uphold the law and justice no matter who is violating the law or who is victim of its violation? It seems that the answer to this last question is no. *We hasten to affirm that we value the lives of all. The specific example above was used only to help all of us see more clearly the double standards and corruption within the GPD.*



**This Did Not Have To Happen**

New York Police Officer Peter Figoski might still be alive but for the GPD's uneven application of the law that objectively left Pride in the position to kill him.

Moreover, it seems as though Figoski might still be alive today, but for the GPD's uneven application of the law that helped to ensure Pride's ability to harm others. We cannot hold the GPD entirely accountable for the death of Figoski, but we can and must hold them accountable for uneven application of the law. Justice for our city depends on it.

### The Case of the Police Locker Room Incident

Not all of our distress regarding the conduct and culture of the GPD has to do directly with misconduct on a specific case. Some of our concerns stem from reported incidents and interactions between officers themselves. One such incident occurred in the locker room between two officers, whose verbal disagreement suddenly became life threatening.

According to a GPD officer, he walked into the locker room to discover two of his colleagues engaged in an altercation. The situation escalated to the possibility of physical violence when one officer pulled a taser and the other officer pulled a loaded gun, pointing it at his fellow officer. While such an extreme decision should trouble anyone in Greensboro, the response of Chief Miller and the GPD only adds to our concern.

Clearly, Chief Miller and the GPD should have required the officer who pulled the gun to have a psychological evaluation as part of a larger assessment of whether or not he could perform his job with the calm coolness required in potentially life-threatening situations outside of department walls. The GPD took minor disciplinary action but did not charge the officer with a crime, among other things, of assault by pointing a gun. In addition, the GPD attempted to disallow public knowledge and awareness of the incident. After minor discipline for the crime he committed, the officer was allowed to return to patrolling the streets of Greensboro.

If this (White) officer felt so angry in a police environment that he pulled a gun on a fellow officer, what might he do on the streets in a situation with a few

Black males he considers threatening? Would he arrest them simply because he was angry? Would he shoot them and claim self defense? Nothing can be more serious than situations of literal life and death. Nothing can be more serious than the mental state of a police officer armed with a gun and tasked with upholding the law and protecting others. Thus, this incident and the department's response are very, very serious. What is his state of mind now? Now that he was not charged, how dangerous is he to unsuspecting citizens, even while off-duty? We should not have emotionally unstable and unsure men and women carrying a gun, with the authority to kill. This man



**One officer pulled his taser against a fellow officer, and then the other officer pulled his gun inside a police environment. Yet, no psychological evaluations were conducted. What might be the actions of those same officers on the streets at night when faced by a few Black males they consider threatening?**

has the ability to make life-or-death decisions about other people and other people's lives. Do we trust this man to make those decisions on the street? The deeper question is the internal investigative mechanism that *picks and chooses* which cases to investigate and how they will be investigated, not on the merit of the case, but rather based on who is involved. Again we point to double standards.

Moreover, the actions of Chief Miller and the GPD suggest that they feel that their department has something to hide. Why did they not force him to seek

psychological help as they did former Captain Charles Cherry (discussed later in this paper)? If appropriate charges had been filed for the behavior of these officers this would be a matter of public record. If these are the disciplinary decisions they are making, isn't the GPD supporting an environment of violence that trivializes the lives of fellow officers, let alone other Greensboro residents? The unclear answers to these important questions should give us all great pause. Chief Miller, the GPD, and the leadership of Greensboro must supply answers.

**The Case of  
Police Officer Robert Reyes**

Robert Reyes is a Latino former Greensboro Police Officer who, on October 29, 2009, while he was still a part of the GPD, filed a misconduct complaint. The content of his complaint, as well as the GPD's response to it, further revealed some of the ugliness of the GPD's culture. Officer Reyes verbally reported to his sergeant that a White officer in the department verbally threatened and used excessive force against an African-American arrestee. Reyes wanted and expected the supervisor to correct and redirect the officer's misconduct. Instead of taking corrective action, higher-ranking officers in the GPD retaliated against Officer Reyes by harassing, intimidating, and embarrassing him. An example of the retaliation was the lowering of Reyes' evaluation rating.



*Latino Officer Robert Reyes was unjustly terminated by the GPD*

Officer Reyes did not take the bait and react to the provocation, but, nevertheless, his evaluation rating was lowered. The lowering of his rating prompted Officer Reyes to file an appeal, seeking information on the reasons for the un-

warranted actions against him. The department denied his appeal. Frustrated by the GPD's repeated retaliation, harassment, and intimidation of him, Officer Reyes then filed a series of grievances and complaints.

The GPD intensified its retaliation against Reyes, charging him with misconduct and suspending him. An investigation confirmed the falseness of the misconduct charges, resulting in the GPD reinstating Officer Reyes. Although Reyes was reinstated, Chief Miller and the GPD continued to retaliate against him. This continued retaliation resulted in Reyes filing further complaints of harassment, discrimination, and intimidation. Chief Miller and the GPD then performed the ultimate retaliation, terminating Reyes for alleged "insubordination."

Officer Reyes was terminated for two purported reasons. The first was that he violated personnel policies when he submitted two complaints in 2010. Second was that Reyes allowed, or permitted, Rev. Nelson Johnson to release personnel information to the media. Both of these claims are false.

Once Reyes was terminated, he filed for unemployment compensation. The GPD objected and sought to block Reyes from receiving unemployment benefits. A hearing before the North Carolina Employment Security Commission was held on September 6, 2011. Present on behalf of the City and GPD were city Attorney Jamiah Waterman and GPD Captain Brian Cheek. The Employment Security Commission found and concluded that:

*Claimant (Reyes) did not act with any malice or substantial disregard of Employer's policies when he submitted the September 3 and 23 complaints to Mr. Young's office. Claimant had a reasonable reason for such submission. Furthermore, this cannot be considered a deliberate violation of policy." (Par. 16 page 2)*

*Thereafter, after Claimant was told not to submit any further documentation to Mr. Young's office, Claimant did not. The complaints ending up in Mr. Young's office cannot be attributed to Claimant; Claimant submitted those complaints to the*



**The North Carolina Employment Security Commission found the reasoning of the GPD to be flawed and without merit.**

*proper chain of command. Claimant cannot be deemed insubordinate in the manner, because he did not act in defiance of orders given by Mr. Young and Mr. Miller.” (Par. 17 Pages 2&3)*

The Employment Security Commission found the reasoning of the GPD to be flawed and without merit. Although Officer Reyes got his unemployment compensation the decision of the Employment Security Commission did not cause the GPD to reconsider its decision to terminate him.

The second allegation against Officer Reyes was that his spiritual advisor, Rev. Nelson Johnson, released confidential personnel information to the press. Incidentally Rev. Johnson was present at the Employment Security Commission hearing to refute any such claim. Neither the City Attorney Waterman nor Captain Cheek raised that claim at the hearing. Further, Rev. Johnson stated that any such claim was unequivocally and totally false with no basis in truth. He went on to say that no truthful investigation could validate the false claim that came out of the City Manager’s office.

The allegation against Rev. Johnson came from former City Manager Rashad Young’s office, by way of the flawed investigation of Chief Miller and the GPD’s Professional Standards Division. Rev. Johnson wrote and submitted a complaint to the Mayor and City Council on September 30, 2011. He has also made several recorded public requests, asking for correction of an untrue official GPD investigation, with an “absolutely false assertion” [lie] made against him. Rev. Johnson has also requested that disciplinary action be taken against those responsible. Yet, he has re-

ceived no letter of acknowledgement regarding his complaint. Mayor Robbie Perkins met with Rev. Johnson in March of 2012 about this matter. Privately the Mayor said he would follow up. He has not as of this writing.

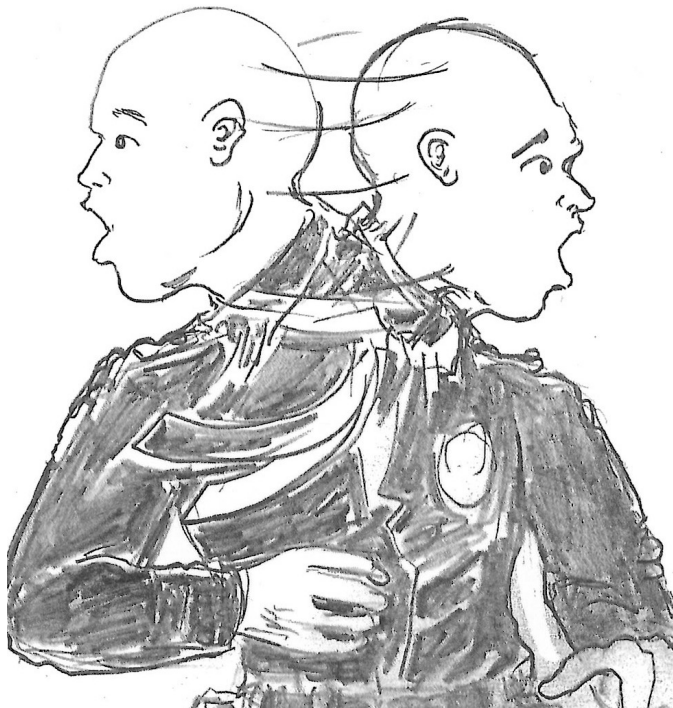
The sum of these actions demonstrates that if, as the GPD claims, its investigation yielded the information that Rev. Johnson released personnel information and if its investigation provided the information that Officer Reyes was insubordinate, then the investigative methods of the GPD are deeply flawed. Greensboro citizens have to question all GPD investigations, whether internal assessments regarding employees or external inquiries regarding citizens. On the other hand, if the investigation did not yield the results claimed by the GPD, then the GPD must feel it has something to hide. In spite of repeated written and verbal requests, no investigation has been produced. This pattern of lack of accountability is frightening.

If the problems described above only involved a few police personnel, those acting inappropriately could easily be corrected or dismissed and the greater culture of the department would not warrant any sort of massive overhaul. *However, the lack of response by Mayor Perkins and the City Council, the City Manager’s office, and Chief Miller points to deeper troubles.* If the department continues to operate in this manner, no citizen of Greensboro, especially the poor and people of color, can rest assured that justice is being served in their city. In the meanwhile, former Officer Reyes must try to find a way to survive without a steady means of income. Officer Reyes has been tremendously wronged.

It should be noted that Officer Reyes has a daughter with cancer and has no health insurance as a result of the false and retaliatory actions by the GPD. Clearly, the treatment of Officer Reyes is not isolated but is symptomatic of the larger subculture of corruption and double standards deeply embedded in the GPD.

## The Case of Police Officer Deborah Thomas

Deborah Thomas is an African American female and a former Greensboro police officer whose case illustrates the culture of corruption and flawed investigative methods of the GPD. In 2009 Thomas filed a complaint of a hostile work environment in which she faced discrimination, retaliation, and harassment. The department failed to investigate her complaint. Failing to investigate complaints or even to acknowledge receipt of complaints in some cases is an entrenched pattern within the GPD. When Thomas raised this issue, she was re-assigned to a less desirable work assignment, prompting her to file another complaint against her supervisor. Thomas' supervisor himself investigated this complaint. Thomas' supervisor informed her that he received direction from the City Manager's office to investigate *himself*. Deborah's supervisor recorded the conversation in which he plainly says that he was directed by Former City Manager Rashad Young to investigate himself. The recording has been played for the



Should I convict myself or acquit myself? Sergeant Daren Davis said he was authorized by the former city manager to investigate himself. This sets up the ultimate conflict of interest.

City Council and is currently on YouTube; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5hoCuShIqg>.

Not surprisingly, the supervisor cleared himself and all other implicated parties and currently refuses to answer any questions about the investigation's validity. *We ask you to think about this just a little longer. He cleared himself!! This is truly incredible. How can Greensboro's citizens trust an investigative method in which certain people are allowed to investigate themselves for their own misconduct?* Who decides whether an officer is eligible to investigate himself? Furthermore, what does this mean when former City Manager Rashad Young, current City Manager Denise Turner-Roth, and Police Chief Ken Miller all condone and support this investigative method? What does it say that once the Mayor and City Council are informed of this outrageous behavior, they condone it and do absolutely nothing? *What other conclusion can Greensboro citizens draw from this chain of events except that the culture, especially the investigative mechanism within the GPD, reeks of corruption?* How can any officer or person be expected to honestly file complaints when all evidence demonstrates that they will not be properly investigated, if investigated at all?

A recent report from the Police Chief about "*a smaller number of complaints*" no longer seems like a statistic Greensboro citizens should applaud. Instead, it seems possible that Greensboro police officers and citizens, who do have complaints, are remaining silent because they know such complaints are futile. Moreover, officers may fear losing their jobs if they voice a problem or perhaps uncover some of the corrupt actions within the department. If police officers cannot trust the investigative methods of their own department, how can citizens of Greensboro trust the GPD?

~

*It is the spirit and not the form  
of law that keeps justice alive.*

Chief Justice Earl Warren



## The Case of Police Officer Ahmed J. Blake

A.J. Blake is a Latino former police officer whose experience points to disturbing levels of both corruption and racial discrimination in the GPD. In January of 2009, Blake and his fiancée attended a party at a police club, frequented primarily by white police officers, where Blake and his fiancée were the only persons of color at the party. The party degenerated into a drinking contest between police officers with a scorecard on the wall recording the drinks. The local media reported that the police club has a history of practicing “swinging” (sexually exchanging wives and girl friends). When former Police Chief Bellamy was asked about the police club being a swinging club, he said that as long as it did not affect the work of police officers it was of no concern to him.

In any event, Blake’s fiancée became upset with the character of the party and demanded to leave. Later in the evening, as they went outside to leave, the couple began to engage in a verbal disagreement. An intoxicated white woman noticed them arguing and for some reason felt compelled to “defend” Blake’s fiancée, as she and



**Officer A. J. Blake was unjustly terminated twice from the GPD.**

Blake headed to their car outside. Accordingly, the white woman onlooker aggressively approached Blake and tried to attack him. In response, Blake extended his hand in front of him, attempting to slow her down and stop her attack. The GPD arrested Blake and charged him with assaulting both his fiancée and his attacker.

Tellingly, Blake’s fiancée stated she had not been assaulted and, therefore, did not want to press

charges against Blake. Nor did she have a valid reason to press charges against Blake. Blake, a trained black belt karate teacher, was accused of leaping in the air and kicking his fiancée. Infrared tests on her clothing confirmed that there were no signs of assault. Moreover, Blake vehemently denied assaulting anyone. No sober witnesses were present at the alleged assault who could speak to any of the night’s events, and no one witnessed Blake hitting the intoxicated white woman whom he allegedly assaulted. Blake repeatedly related that he held out his hand to stop her attack, but did not hit, nor level any force against, the intoxicated woman.

Among all the reasons that Blake should not have been charged, perhaps the most important and compelling is that Detective Schwochow who investigated the alleged assault affirmed that there was no justification for the accusation of assaulting his fiancée. Detective Schwochow thus supported Blake’s fiancée’s statement of Blake’s innocence. Nevertheless, ignoring the evidence Detective Schwochow’s commander ordered him to charge Blake with assaulting his fiancée. Without the assault charges on the fiancée, the case for the other woman was without legal merit, and nonexistent. After being charged, Blake was suspended without pay and later fired.

It is significant to note here that *Latino Officer Blake was suspended without pay*. Contrast that with the case of White Officer Earnest Tate, who was charged with domestic assault on a female. *White Officer Tate was suspended with pay*. Officer Tate was found guilty in district court and appealed his case to Superior Court, where then District Attorney Douglas Albright dismissed the charges. Through this sequence of events Officer Tate’s pay was never suspended. Officer Tate’s case was prior to Blake’s case. Contrast this further with White Officer Thomas L. Eastridge’s case that occurred after Blake’s case. Officer Eastridge was charged in Surry County with assault on his wife. He was not suspended but brought to work and put on administrative duty. Although charged with as-



**A.J. Blake pictured attending one of the many GPD hearings that seemed predetermined to fire him.**

sault, Officer Eastridge never lost his pay. *Judge for yourself whether these examples show a pattern of double standards or not?*

It is significant to mention that Officer Blake had made previous allegations that the Greensboro Police Gang Unit had mistreated Latinos

and minorities in the course of their police work. Specifically, Officer Blake reported that these officers had used racist epithets, used double standards, and perhaps overused force. One of the reasons that Blake apparently faced assault charges is that the GPD used the charges as an opportunity to discredit, quell and dispel Blake and his allegations of discrimination against Latinos. By discrediting Blake the department did not have to investigate his claims of racial discrimination within and outside the department.

In a jury made up of six men and six women with six blacks and six whites, Officer Blake was found not guilty of the assault charge. What happened to the commanding officer and the chief of police who tried to frame Blake for assaults that he did not commit? Nothing. They faced no disciplinary action whatsoever. However, after the whole ordeal Blake was unable to return to work on his regular job. Blake's supporters within the community brought tremendous pressure on the interim city manager to reinstate Officer Blake, especially in light of the court's not guilty verdict. Blake was in fact reinstated to his job. Once Blake returned to work, however, the hostility and retaliation intensified. Capitan Wolfe, who was in Blake's chain of command, greeted him in the presence of his fiancée and child by calling him a "sack of sh-t." Captain Wolfe was not disciplined. Later, a number of uniformed white officers (some on-duty) came to the city council meeting and pub-

licly denounced the retiring white interim city manager for reinstating Officer Blake. Taking such an action in uniform is insubordination. Absolutely nothing was done to these officers even after strong complaints were registered from the African American community.

The GPD was thwarted in its first effort to remove Blake. Yet, Blake was terminated a second time, allegedly for "malicious gossip" because of statements he made that were actually true and that he had already been adjudicated for and found not guilty. This action marked the second time Blake was fired for essentially the same thing. The GPD has subsequently blacklisted Blake at police departments around the country, thus preventing him from being able to get a good job and earn a living in his chosen profession.

The actions of the GPD related to Blake are troubling for a number of reasons. Of all the negative behavior towards police officers who stand up and raise complaints, the treatment of Blake is among the most devious, brazen, and painful. Officer Blake has lost his home. This ongoing ordeal has put tremendous stress on his eight-year-old daughter as he strives to make ends meet. Every attempt to get a job with any law enforcement agency or any other area that requires a reference from his last job has been blocked by the GPD. The GPD, working in the background, has been successful in getting the State of North Carolina to revoke Officer Blake's license to serve as a law enforcement officer in the State. The revocation of Blake's license is being appealed to Superior Court.

A.J. Blake did his job as a police officer well. He did nothing wrong; he, in fact, reflects the highest level of integrity within the GPD. Because he raised complaints about the anti-Latino prejudice within the department, the GPD unleashed the wrath of the subculture of corruption and double standards against him.

No one close to the GPD can trust its internal investigative mechanism, especially when the subculture that controls the department is threatened. The treatment of Blake has likely instilled fear and discouraged other officers who may have honest

concerns about GPD's operations from speaking out. Everyone suffers in such an environment. No institution, department, agency, or even individual can move forward and become better without addressing obvious and exposed injustice, racism, corruption, and double standards. The same goes for the GPD.

Regrettably, the overall culture of the current GPD leadership appears to be more concerned that they might be forced to address systemic issues related to its investigative methods, racial discrimination, and its secrecy related to police operations and complaints than they are with safeguarding Greensboro and providing transparent, evenly-applied enforcement of the laws for all Greensboro citizens.

## The Case of Police Officer Joseph Pryor

Joseph Pryor is an African American former Greensboro Police Officer. His experience in the GPD underscores the intensely problematic investigative methods of the department and hints at the profound level of corruption across multiple areas and levels within the department.

While running after a African American suspect, Terrance Jermaine Lipscomb, with two of his white fellow officers (Officers Cox and Atkins),



Two white officers caught and arrested Lipscomb. African American Officer Pryor never made contact with Lipscomb. Yet, the GPD criminally and administratively investigated Officer Pryor and ultimately terminated him on a fabricated technicality.

Pryor fell and hurt his knee to such an extent that he had to take five weeks leave to heal.



Former Officer Joseph Pryor unjustly terminated by the GPD.

As Pryor lay on the ground suffering from the knee injury, Officers Atkins and Cox caught and arrested Lipscomb. Mr. Lipscomb complained later that Officer Pryor had kicked him in the abdomen, resulting in medical injuries.

Pryor, along with his two fellow officers, all denied that story; after his fall, Pryor was incapacitated, and could not run, let alone stand on one leg and kick someone forcefully. Officers Atkins and Cox acknowledged that they did, in fact, use sufficient force to execute the arrest. Strangely, however, the GPD did not investigate the physical blows (knee strikes and closed fist blows) the suspect sustained from the Caucasian officers involved, but instead chose to perform a *criminal* investigation of Pryor.

The investigation cleared Pryor of any wrongdoing, largely because the two white officers who caught up with and arrested Mr. Lipscomb, testified that Pryor did not strike or make any physical contact with the arrestee. Because a criminal investigation of Officer Pryor had been carried out, Professional Standards (IA or the internal investigative mechanism within the GPD) then had to perform a follow-up investigation of Pryor.

For unspecified reasons, the Internal Affairs (IA) investigation (an administrative, non-criminal investigation) omitted the testimonies by Officers Cox and Atkins. It, therefore, yielded supposedly inconclusive results as to whether or not Pryor kicked the suspect. By ruling that Pryor's actions with regard to the suspect could not be fully determined, the Internal Affairs investigation directly opposed the more stringent criminal investigation and left an ambiguous record for Officer Pryor.

In response to this bizarre and upsetting turn of events, Pryor filed a grievance to clear his name completely of any wrongdoing. The grievance pointed not only to the gravity of Pryor's knee injury, but also pointed to other improprieties (for example failure to consider Officers Cox's and Atkins' testimonies) in the GPD that enabled the incongruent results of the two investigations.

Investigators in the police department wrongfully used Pryor's grievance to then fire him on a fabricated procedural technicality. Pryor subsequently learned that someone or some people in the GPD affixed his signature (copied, forged, or scanned) to a document that he was accused of signing.

Mr. Lipscomb persisted in his claim that he was injured as a result of his arrest. It should be noted that after Pryor's grievance, the GPD reinvestigated Pryor's case. The GPD's investigation concluded that Lipscomb's witnesses were lying and Lipscomb was found to be in collusion with his witnesses. In spite of the finding of the criminal investigation of Pryor, as well as the administrative investigation of Pryor, Mr. Lipscomb brought civil charges against the City of Greensboro and former Officer Pryor. He did not bring civil charges against Officers Cox or Atkins.

We know this is complicated and bizarre, but bear with us as we weave our way through this web of confusion. Pryor received a letter from the GPD legal team. The letter stated that the GPD legal team would represent Pryor regarding Mr. Lipscomb's civil suit, but implied that Pryor's pending federal lawsuit against the City (alleging discrimination) could be a conflict of interest. Pryor, not trusting the GPD legal team, chose to retain his own lawyer. Pryor's lawyer and the lawyers for the city jointly negotiated with Mr. Lipscomb's legal team. Unknown to Pryor and his lawyer, the City settled on behalf of the City of Greensboro, but left former officer Pryor to defend himself at his own cost, even though the city's own two investigations (criminal and administrative) affirmed that Officer Pryor was not guilty of any inappropriate action and that Mr. Lipscomb had lied.

This situation left Pryor not only fired, but also saddled with a legal suit that arose from proper performance of his duties as a police officer. Forcing Pryor to pay his own legal fees represents a radical departure from police protocol and points to the GPD's malicious intent and retaliation with regard to Officer Pryor. It would have cost Pryor over \$12,000 to get the expert witnesses needed and to pay other costs related to adequately defending himself in the civil suit. Pryor conducted a cost benefit analysis and chose to settle the claim and to pay the \$5,000 Lipscomb was asking for in the suit.

The community heard of this appalling turn of events and demanded that the City immediately repay Pryor the \$5,000, which he spent to settle the case. The community outcry, coupled with a complaint of misconduct that exposed the City's retaliation and discrimination against Pryor, forced the City to reimburse Pryor \$5,000. The complaint of misconduct raised specifically against City Attorney Mujeeb Shah-Khan, Police Attorney James Clark, and City Manager Denise Turner-Roth has not yet been investigated.

Pryor's experience as a black officer in the GPD understandably raises profoundly troubling questions about the investigative methods of the GPD, as well as the ethical values that guide the department. Moreover, this series of events calls into question the process through which the department responds to internal and outside critiques, as well as their commitment to racial equality both within and external to the department.

These questions become all the more urgent and necessary considering the statement made by the Greensboro Assistant City Manager, Michael Speedling, regarding the investigation of Pryor. Mr. Speedling stated in a media publication that the Professional Standards Division was either "discriminatory or incompetent" when they investigated Pryor's case. Why have no corrective measures been taken to address these serious issues, especially in light of the facts of this case? The informed citizens of Greensboro have the authority, power, and obligation to hold our elected officials and police officers accountable to the highest standards of operation and demand

meaningful, long-lasting changes in the culture and operating policies of the city government.

### The Case of 87 Year-old Ms. Eva Foster

The problematic practices within the GPD have recently come to the forefront of public consciousness with the media reports on the negative experience of one of Greensboro's former educators, 87-year-old Ms. Eva Foster (an African American woman of the community).

On September 21, 2009, then-85-year-old Ms. Foster, went to the store to cash a check and pick up some items. Before the end of the night, a White police officer with the GPD forced her to the floor and handcuffed her with such force that her wrist was fractured. Why, you ask? Ms. Foster had committed no crime, she was not under arrest, she was not the subject of an investigation. She coop-



**A white officer, yet to be identified, said he handcuffed and "assisted" then 85 year old Eva Foster to the floor. Her wrist was cracked. The City made a \$15,000 settlement but has not investigated the incident and claims nothing improper was done.**

erated with police, but suffered purely as a result of being an innocent bystander to an overzealous raid on an illegal gambling operation. Simply put, Ms. Foster was in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Following the raid, Ms. Foster, following the direction of then Mayor Yvonne Johnson, spoke

with then Chief Bellamy. Ms. Foster raised concerns about the medical bills she faced resulting from her handcuffing. Chief Bellamy responded to Ms. Foster's concern in a way that should trouble all of Greensboro's citizens. First, any use of "physical restraint resulting



87 Year-old Ms. Eva Foster

in injury" requires a follow-up investigation by the GPD, according to GPD Directive 1.6. No such investigation has occurred to this date - over three years after the incident. Second, instead of recognizing Ms. Foster's concerns as a formal complaint, Chief Bellamy directed her to the Insurance Advisory Board to assess whether the city should pay her bills. In light of the fact that no investigation had been done, how could the Insurance Advisory Board know whether the city should pay her bills?

Clearly, had Ms. Foster not received such abusive treatment by police, she would not have had her wrist fractured or endured the humiliation of the entire situation. Moreover, it seems fairly duplicitous that the GPD did not conduct the mandatory investigation of this complaint. Ms. Foster clearly sought out the department to address a problem. They should have investigated her complaint to ensure her fair treatment and as a measure of instilling trust that the GPD exists to serve Greensboro's citizenry.

Had the GPD investigated her complaint, there would never have been a backlash and Ms. Foster and the community would not have had to continually press for a substantive response to her concern. Furthermore, the officer's actions were, at best, use of excessive force and, at worst, an assault. In addition, Ms. Foster's 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment Constitutional Right (Unlawful Seizure) and her 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment Constitutional

Right (Equal Protection Under the Law) were violated.

One wonders why the GPD would create a greater hassle for itself than necessary. Was it purely the racial dynamics of the case, that a White officer had used excessive force against an elderly Black citizen? Had the officer used excessive force previously? Chief Miller has refused to investigate the violations against Ms. Foster, committed by an unidentified White officer. Because Chief Miller will not investigate, we cannot know anything beyond the fact that the GPD haphazardly follows procedures for investigative methods.

By January of 2010, the GPD had yet to substantively respond to Ms. Foster, and she followed up with the Professional Standards branch of the department. At this point, multiple officers in supervisory roles should have recognized the need to investigate the use of force, as well as respond to Ms. Foster as a citizen complainant. Yet again, the department directed her to the Insurance Advisory Board and tried to sideline Ms. Foster and her concerns.

After literally *years* of trying to rectify her situation, Ms. Foster filed a civil law suit on October 11, 2012. In choosing not to investigate Ms. Foster's claims as a legitimate complaint, despite her repeated voicing of the issue, multiple people in the GPD knowingly and consistently violated Ms. Foster's 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment *constitutional right* to equal protection under the law and due process; they failed to treat her as an equal citizen of Greensboro, whose complaint demanded and still demands an investigation – no matter the results.

Viewing Ms. Foster's experience in light of another case presented here – that of former Officer Joseph Pryor – only underscores the GPD's corruption and lack of commitment to equality. When Mr. Lipscomb complained about Officer Pryor, a Black officer, Pryor was immediately and almost obsessively investigated. Why was the White officer (whose name we still do not know more than two years later), who was involved in Ms. Foster's injury, not at least per-

functorily investigated? Moreover, Mr. Lipscomb received a settlement from the city despite the fact that Officer Pryor was cleared of criminal and administrative fault, without question.

After an outcry from the community and tremendous community pressure, Ms. Foster and the City of Greensboro reached a financial settlement, awarding Ms. Foster \$15,000. Of course the GPD and city attorneys claim the GPD did no wrong just as they did when the city was found liable for wrongful death in the Klan - Nazi Civil suit.

As of the writing of this document, Chief Miller has yet to investigate the excessive use of force. The uneven application of justice, both within the department and among the citizens of Greensboro, emphasizes the need for comprehensive reform of the culture and practices of the department.

### The Case of GPD's "Ban" on Faith Community Church

Faith Community Church is located at 417 Arlington Street. Rev. Nelson Johnson and Rev. Lucretia Middleton are co-pastors there. Although the Beloved Community Center (BCC) owns a facility at 437 Arlington Street, used as its Homeless Hospitality House, the BCC rents space for its administrative offices from Faith Community Church at 417 Arlington Street. Though the church and the BCC are located in the same building, they are separate legal entities. Rev. Nelson Johnson also serves as Executive Director of the BCC.

In October of 2010, Chief Kenneth Miller became Greensboro's third Police Chief in the last ten years. Sometime in late 2010 or 2011 Chief Miller, without discussion with the church or the BCC, "banned" GPD officers from conducting interviews at the church building with citizens about complaints against GPD. It is customary for interviews of such complaints to be conducted at a place chosen by the person making the complaint.

To suggest that the Faith Community Church/BCC is "banned" as a place for citizens to speak with Greensboro Police Officers does not make sense. Could it be that the GPD is reacting to criticism of its operations as corrupt, racist and abusive? When Rev. Johnson engaged Chief Miller after a city council meeting about this, asking why the Chief had imposed the "ban," the chief said because the location was not a "neutral" site. When pressed on what he meant by a neutral site, the Chief explained that he was concerned that his officers would be secretly taped and put on YouTube out of context.



**Faith Community Church was "banned" by Chief Miller as a place where GPD could interview citizens with complaints on GPD. The ban was lifted later without an official explanation.**

This statement is not logical because in police interviews of complaints both parties are free to record the discussion anyway. There is no need for secrecy when both parties routinely tape each other. Further, Rev. Johnson shared that the only secret taping he was aware of at the church was conducted in his office by two female GPD employees. These two women were later exposed in the mainstream media as not only secretly taping Rev. Johnson but also several other African American leaders. None of this has ever been explained by the GPD.

Rev. Johnson wrote Chief Miller a detailed letter strongly objecting to the "ban." The full text of the letter can be accessed at [<http://www.scribd.com/doc/120456795/September-2-2011-Letter-to-Chief-Ken-Miller>] Without further ado the chief removed the ban in late 2011. We have no idea what policy, law, or investigation allowed the ban to be imposed in the first place. Nor do we know what policy, law, or investigation guided the Chief in removing the ban. There was no justifiable reason for the ban.

Despite this incident, the BCC has not changed its policy with regard to expressing criticisms of the GPD, as warranted.

~

*Justice delayed is justice denied.*

William Gladstone

**The Case of GPD Accusing The Beloved Community Center of Being a "Drug Drop" Site**

The *Greensboro News and Record* published a news article March 6, 2012, alleging that Faith Community Church/BCC was a *drop site* for a drug delivery from Texas. Subsequent discussion with Chief Miller confirmed that the GPD did, in fact, allege that it had information that a drug drop was scheduled to occur at 417 Arlington Street. Chief Miller added that the GPD was planning to work with the US Postal Service to intercept the drugs.

The notion that the BCC serves as a drug drop site is even more intriguing and troubling. Rev. Johnson was out of town when he learned that a news article appeared alleging that the BCC office was the site of a drug drop. The BCC Board was convened and a meeting arranged with Chief Miller. The Chief came to the BCC office



**The GPD falsely claimed that the BCC was a "Drug Drop" site.**

with two assistants and put before the BCC Board three pictures of people that he said were arrested in Austin, Texas with drugs and then released. One of the men in the pictures was a member of Faith Community Church; the other two frequented the homeless hospitality house. These men supposedly had information on them that the drugs were to be delivered by the US Postal Ser-

vices to 417 Arlington Street, the location of both the church and BCC. The Chief said there was a break down in communications, so GPD officers failed to be at the drop off site to intercept the drugs on the Saturday the supposed drugs were to be dropped. The Chief said they were looking for these three men who may have already received the drugs.

This was indeed troubling to all staff and Board members, as we did not believe that a story with such details would have been invented. Rev. Johnson located the church member and learned that he had not been to Texas since he was in the U.S. Marines in 1979. Together with a lawyer, Rev. Johnson took the man to police headquarters, where they met with the Chief. The church member affirmed before the Chief that he had not been in Texas since his 1979 trip while in the Marines, had not been arrested there, and knew nothing of what the Chief was talking about.

The lawyer asked the Chief for evidence. Was there a report from Texas? Where was it? What did it say? The Chief deferred to the Assistant Chief. The Assistant Chief said he had gotten the information from a certain GPD sergeant. The sergeant was called in and said he had gotten the information from a certain GPD undercover agent. The undercover agent was also called in and said he had talked to Texas law enforcement officials but he did not write anything down so there was no written report. At this point it became clear that nothing existed from Texas. Furthermore, this discussion had degenerated into absurdity.

In light of this meeting, Rev. Johnson asked Chief Miller to write a letter of apology and have it published in the local media. He agreed. A watered down explanation, "Beloved Center Not Part of Drug Probe, Police Say," appeared in the March 9, 2012 edition of the *Greensboro News and Record*.

While the article provided some relief to the BCC, it was objectively a "cover up" of the depth of what had occurred. Deeply disturbing questions remain. Were there ever any drugs? How did the supposed GDP internal communi-

cations break down cause them to miss the time and place for the so-called drugs to be delivered? Was there an arrest in Texas? If these events occurred there must certainly be a record. If no arrest occurred, where did the BCC address come from or, more to the point, where did such a story come from? Was the entire episode an invention of the GDP? Greensboro deserves better. And, the public deserves to know the truth. Ultimately the "drug drop" allegations proved baseless. This bizarre incident reflects both unprofessional police work and, even worse, it shows corruption within the Department.

**The Case of Street Group  
Leader  
Jorge Cornell**

Jorge Cornell's issues with the GPD must be seen in light of all that we have discussed thus far. His arrest and recent conviction on federal racketeering charges have achieved a much higher level of publicity than many of the other cases mentioned thus far.

Precisely because of this publicity, which was, for the most part, negative, there is great room for misunderstanding as to the actual facts surrounding the actions and motivations of both Cornell and the GPD. We will illuminate the sequence of events that led the GPD to carry out an intense three-year campaign of harassment, provocation and arrests on false charges, with Cornell as the primary target.

Cornell moved with his family from New York to Greensboro in order to provide his children and family with a new, better life. He worked for several years as a truck driver for a company that installed burial vaults and as a forklift driver for another company. Shortly after arriving Cornell noticed the mistreatment of Latinos in Greensboro, particularly by the GPD. A deeply compassionate person, he felt compelled to respond in an attempt to foster greater justice, especially for Latinos in the city. Therefore, Cornell started a chapter of the Latino organization he knew best, the



Almighty Latin King and Queen Nation (ALKQN). He had been a part of this organization in New York.

Although ALKQN has an unattractive national



**Rev. Gregory Headen and Rev. Nelson Johnson, representing the Pulpit Forum, join Jorge Cornell at a press event announcing that he was constantly harassed, provoked, and unjustly arrested on numerous occasions by the GPD. He submitted a 22 page Title VI complaint to the US Justice Department. The complaint has never been investigated.**

reputation, Cornell worked to ensure that his chapter served a different purpose and forbade all types of normally understood gang activity, including drug use or sale, provoking violence, and stealing. In fact, many who refused to give up such activities were asked to leave the organization. Given that many of the young people attracted to Cornell and the ALKQN had been abused, scarred, and had criminal histories, Cornell had a daunting task. In addition, he remained a part of the national organization and sought to change the direction of the national organization to mirror his more positive chapter of the organization in Greensboro.

A charismatic and caring personality, Cornell achieved significant successes in Greensboro generally through his leadership of ALKQN. He forged a peace treaty among street groups and sought out clergy to try to stem the tide of street

violence in Greensboro. Cornell was frank, forthright, and outspoken in his criticism of the GPD. For this he incurred the wrath of the entire GPD. Four African American clergymen, in one of numerous meetings with city and police officials, asked GPD Chief Timothy Bellamy directly whether the Greensboro ALKQN "was a violent organization?" The Chief answered, in this private meeting, that they were not known to be violent in Greensboro. Yet, Cornell was personally charged with 18 felonies in Greensboro without a single conviction. This makes no sense. How could such a thing continue to happen even with strong community protest?

In addition to his work outside of mainstream city politics, Cornell ran for City Council twice and filed a Title VI complaint with the Department of Justice against the GPD for discriminatory treatment of Greensboro's Latino residents, including himself. Cornell, along with 36 other Greensboro citizens, whom he helped unite in calling for higher standards of justice in the city, went to Washington to meet with officials in the Justice Department. These citizens hoped to impress upon the Justice Department the need for federal intervention to force the GPD to end their longstanding tradition of civil rights violations.

Among the volume of evidence Cornell and others presented to the Justice Department was the statistic that the conviction rate for felonies in North Carolina is about 68 percent. The rate of conviction of Greensboro ALKQN, however, is only 11 percent. For example, Cornell himself was charged *18 times in Greensboro* without cause and without a single conviction. This

speaks volumes about the systematic way in which the GPD targeted this group and other vulnerable communities. Despite the Justice Department's assurances of a follow-up investigation into such issues, they took no subsequent steps and the Title VI complaint went unanswered.

GPD, would have been exposed. Thus there would have been no basis for RICO charges.

Cornell's lawyer, Attorney Michael Patrick, learned that the GPD lobbied the Justice Department on several occasions to bring RICO charges but was refused. Apparently, after the GPD's ongoing campaign of provocation, harassment and arrest on false charges created a record, the Justice Department agreed to bring RICO charges against Cornell and the ALKQN. The RICO charges were not only retaliatory and vindictive, they also deflected attention away from the charges brought to the Justice Department against the GPD by citizens of Greensboro. Even after this three-year long campaign by the GPD, now joined by Justice Department, the jury deliberated four days and reported several times that it could not make a decision.



**A delegation of 37 people from Greensboro met with the DOJ in Washington DC October 1, 2010. The multiracial delegation included seven clergy, ten students, several college professors, four current and former police officers, Jorge Cornell and four member of his group as well as several neighborhood and community leaders.**

One year following this effort, the Department of Justice prosecutors charged Cornell and 13 other ALKQN codefendants with violating the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) statute. Members of the ALKQN who have been called to testify against Cornell have reported being coerced to do so in order to reduce their sentences for petty crimes they did commit. Many of those who testified against Cornell had been expelled from the organization for not complying with the strict, non-criminal practices that Cornell advocated.

On Wednesday November 21<sup>st</sup>, (the day before Thanksgiving) at approximately 2:30 PM, the jury again reported that it could not make a decision. The judge pressed the jury for

a verdict, telling them that the government had spent a great deal of money on the case and another would cost a lot more money. Under what we have termed a "Thanksgiving Eve pressure verdict," the jury hastily returned an irrational verdict of guilty (e.g. conviction on a charge for which no connection to one of the defendants was ever made) for Cornell and two other members of the ALKQN group of six being tried. Cornell now faces what could amount to a life sentence. He will likely be sentenced in February or March 2013.

In court it was disclosed that several Kings were paid sums as high as \$14,000 for their testimony. Moreover, Cornell's lawyer learned through the discovery process that the Justice Department failed to investigate Cornell's Title VI claim even though they are legally required to do so. Had the Justice Department investigated the 22 pages of Title VI complaint, as required of them by law, many of the false claims about Cornell and the ALKQN, generated by the

It would take a 200-page plus book to adequately tell the many episodes and full story involved in the vindictive and malicious campaign waged by the GPD against Cornell and the ALKQN. We will share one additional story drawn from an eight-page paper, called a *Paradigm Shift*, developed jointly by the Pulpit Forum (a citywide African American clergy association), the BCC, and Cornell. The central theme of the document was stated on the front page in its title:

*A Proposal to Engage Street Groups Or "Gangs" as a Potential Resource for Safe Communities, Justice Making and Community Building*

The *Paradigm Shift* proposal put forth a plan on how the community, the ALKQN, the school system, the clergy, the BCC, and the police could work together to reduce violence and promote community building. The plan was discussed with then Mayor Yvonne Johnson, former City Manager Mitchell Johnson, and former Police Chief Timothy Bellamy. The Mayor expressed support for the plan. The City Manager was willing to consider it. The Police Chief, in our opinion representing the subculture of corruption and double standards, strongly opposed the plan.

In spite of the GPD's opposition to the *Paradigm Shift* proposal, Cornell was appointed to the Guilford County Public Schools Safety Committee, where he did good work. He was hard at work developing a non-profit organization that would provide jobs for unemployed youth. He drew on his relationships with members of the Greensboro clergy and fostered relationships with other citizens of influence in Greensboro to establish a innovative type of employment agency that would provide jobs for motivated young people with criminal records. Working with members of the clergy, elected officials, grass-roots community leaders, college professors, students and others, Cornell formed Community United Staffing (CUS). Board members included City Councilman Jim Kee, consultant Randy Johnston, School Board Member Deena Hayes, Rev. Nelson Johnson, and Rev. Randall Keeney. Cornell had secured an arrangement with at least two companies to hire felons, as long as they were trained and recommended by Community United Staffing.

We believe it can be safely said that, except for the vindictive, three-year, unrelenting campaign of harassment, provocation, entrapment and false charges brought against Cornell by the GPD and eventually joined by the Justice Department, Cornell would be a free man today.

Additionally, Greensboro would now have a vibrant employment agency. Community United Staffing would be training and providing jobs for young men and women, who may have violated the law in the past, but who are seeking to rebuild their lives and become productive citizens. This initiative would be effectively reducing crime and building the unity of our community. The implication is that the subculture within the GPD, far from reducing crime, is criminalizing our youth and actually blocking efforts to help them.

Owing to police misconduct, press reports and prejudices associated with the word "gang," it is understandable that there are many questions in people's minds about Cornell. However, as we work together in the coming months, we intend to show not only the truth of our assertions, but also, with your help, to return Cornell to the community where he can continue his positive community work and his life with his two young daughters.

**The Case of Police Captain Charles Cherry**

Some of the most recent public outcry about problems within GPD have come from former African American GPD Captain Charles Cherry, a 23 year veteran on the force. Gradually realizing the depth of the problem, Cherry has worked tirelessly to educate the community about the police department's culture of corruption and double standards. Cherry has dedicated himself to carefully document the misconduct of the GPD in order to promote a dialogue that will begin the process of change. This meticulous work of compiling the factual data will contribute to the movement of Greensboro into a new era as a more just, equitable and compassionate city.

Cherry's growing understanding of the depth



**Former Captain and former GPD Chief of Staff Charles Cherry has been relentless in his quest to expose and correct the double standards and corruption within the GPD.**

of the problem in the department, along with his strong desire to realize productive change, was precipitated in large part by GPD's deplorable treatment of him, despite his excellent record of service. Before Cherry began submitting what he thought were easily resolvable grievances, he enjoyed an esteemed reputation among Greensboro's leading citizens, including current Mayor Robbie Perkins, for over 23 years.

As Captain, part of Cherry's job involved assisting subordinate officers with any issues they were experiencing in the department. As a command level officer, Cherry cared deeply for those with whom he worked and the residents of Greensboro for whom he worked. Cherry made every effort to work things out between officers and their superiors before filing official grievances. He did not send up frivolous complaints. Above all, Cherry hoped to help facilitate a smoothly operating department committed to upholding its duties of justice and fairness, a commitment his record demonstrates.

Yet, those above Cherry in command responded to his efforts to improve the department by requiring him to see a psychologist as part of a "fit

for duty" evaluation. Suddenly, after 23 years of service, including a period spent as Chief of Staff of the GPD, Cherry was told he needed a psychological evaluation. He was directed by his superiors to see a specific psychologist, designated by the City. However, Assistant Police Chief Dwight Crofts (Cherry's supervisor) and Assistant Chief Anita Holder, served as part-time consultants for this same psychologist.

However, the order to Cherry for a psychological evaluation came only after he had written seven grievances in three months, alleging discrimination within the department. Crofts and Holder were both implicated in these grievances. Fearing that he was in the process of being "set up," Cherry chose to see another respected medical professional, outside of the City's list. That person gave Cherry a very positive evaluation and expressed shock that anyone would question Cherry's sanity or ability to perform his job to the high standards he had always achieved.

Not satisfied with the first psychological evaluation, the GPD insisted that Cherry see "their" psychologist. Under threat of suit for conflict of interest the city-designated psychologist withdrew himself from assessing Cherry. A third psychologist (not in Greensboro) was mutually agreed upon by the GPD and Cherry. This psychologist evaluated Captain Charles Cherry as being "fit for duty" and in excellent mental condition. He also questioned why Cherry had been sent to him in the first place. Even after Cherry saw two medical professionals, both of whom found him mentally fit for duty, the GPD persisted in a variety of efforts to thwart Cherry's attempts to improve the GPD from within by doing his sworn duty and reporting misconduct.

One shocking example of such attempts by GPD occurred at a command staff meeting. In the meeting, former Chief of Police Timothy Bellamy stood up and spoke in a threatening voice saying that anyone who thought there was corruption in the GPD should "turn in their paperwork and get the hell out." What a way for a police chief to respond to legitimate grievances. This move was particularly aimed at Cherry who was the only person in attendance who had filed grievances

pointing to departmental corruption. While Cherry sat there stunned, many white police commanders cheered in response. In a further demonstration of both desperation and corruption, Cherry's commanding officer, Assistant Chief Crotts, sought Cherry out and told him (i.e., *ordered* him) to stop filing grievances. Cherry responded by asking if the quality of his work had dropped or if he had broken any rules by filing the grievances. While his commander said no, Cherry did not miss his commander's larger goal of intimidation.

Another example of intimidation was Assistant Chief Crotts assessment of Cherry as unprofessional because Cherry reported by email the criminal act of another commander. Instead of investigating the commander who was in violation, Assistant Chief Crotts placed a negative note of conduct in Cherry's personnel file for writing an "unprofessional" email. The department finally felt like it got what it needed to get rid of the threat Cherry had become to them after Cherry sent an e-mail previously approved by his superior, Assistant Chief Anita Holder. The e-mail, approved by Assistant Chief Holder, explained to Cherry's subordinates why he was placed on administrative duty. The GPD used this email,



GPD Assistant Chief Dwight Crotts was Captain Cherry's supervisor. Also, a grievance has been filed against him for violating personnel privacy law while orchestrating a process to terminate Officer Reyes.

claiming it represented "general misconduct" to fire Cherry. They pointed to Cherry's filing of seven grievances in three months as proof of his insubordination and attempt to cause dissent within the department. However, Cherry persistently tried to foster a just, ethical environment within the GPD. That his efforts were met with such blatant intimidation and retaliation only underscores the level of corruption within the department and the measures some will take to maintain the current culture.

Cherry became a troublemaker in the eyes of the leadership of the GPD and certain quarters of the

city when he began filing grievances on behalf of other officers, himself and citizens. He called attention to racial discrimination, retaliation and harassment in the department. Since Cherry was unjustly and maliciously terminated, he became a regular presenter at the twice-a-month public meetings of the Greensboro City Council. Cherry has engaged in a relentless and determined effort to expose in real time the double standards and corruption within the GPD. Some would accuse Cherry of screaming "fire" in a crowded theater. In one sense they are right. When we consider careers being destroyed and lives being crushed, the fact is that there is fire in the theater and someone must sound the alarm. This has been the role of Cherry. In time, we believe this city will come to understand that it owes a great debt of gratitude to "Citizen" Charles Cherry for his bold leadership and passionate defense of justice.

Since the termination of Cherry, Chief Miller orchestrated a plan to entrap and arrest him in retaliation for Cherry's speaking out at public community meetings. Fortunately, officers who respected Cherry for his years of service and current efforts tipped him off about the plan to entrap and arrest him. Cherry was, therefore, able to avoid the trap. Over a year ago, Charles Cherry filed a complaint about the plan to silence and discredit him by arresting and demonizing him; as has become normal practice, there has been no response to or investigation of his complaint.

As a former chief of staff of the GPD and respected leader in the community, we should heed Charles Cherry's experience and listen to his ideas for reforming the department. His ideas and his experience can serve as starting points for a healthy and much-needed discussion about how to combat the corrupt culture of law enforcement in Greensboro and move forward in a way that benefits all of Greensboro's residents.



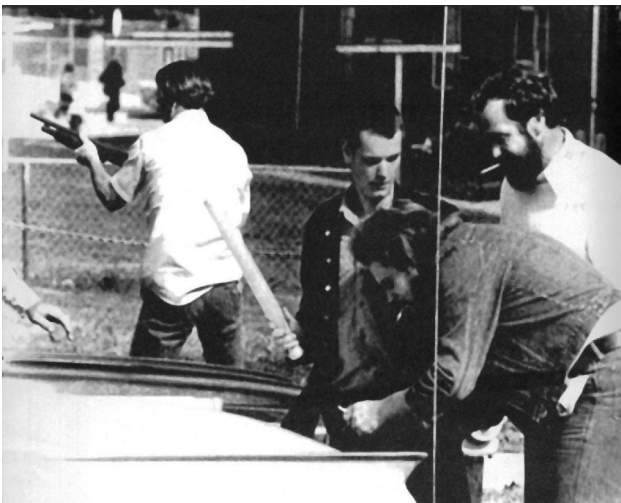
*Experience can be changed retrospectively. By changing our interpretive concepts now, we modify what we learned earlier. Thus we expose the possibility of experimenting with alterative histories.*

Michael D. Cohen and James G. March

## The Case of the Klan/Nazi Killings on November 3, 1979

On November 3, 1979, a bright, warm, sunny day, pro-labor members of the Greensboro community gathered to hold an anti-Ku Klux Klan march. That same day, a KKK and Neo-Nazi caravan drove into the predominately African American public housing community where the march was forming and attacked the marchers who were just gathering. Five people were killed, 10 others were wounded and the neighborhood was terrorized.

The leader of the Klan and Nazi terror squad was also a GPD informant who had told the Greensboro police of the planned attack and specifically noted that the Klan-Nazi group was well armed. The GPD, fully aware of the planned armed attack, withdrew all its personnel from the area -- leaving the legally permitted march unprotected. The police then invented a series of falsehoods to justify their behavior while demonizing and blaming the marchers for the attack that the police were legally bound to prevent.



Klan and Nazi shooters casually fired into a gathering crowd on November 3, 1979. The GPD, with full knowledge that the Klan and Nazis were heavily armed and planned to attack the march, pulled all police personnel out of the area. In 1985, KKK, Nazi and GPD personnel were found jointly liable for wrongful death. The GPD has never apologized or acknowledged any wrongdoing.

In a civil suit in 1985 Greensboro Police Officers, Ku Klux Klan and Neo-Nazi members were found jointly liable for the wrongful death of one person. Although found liable for wrongful death in a federal court, the GPD followed its well known pattern by never acknowledging any wrongdoing, not firing a single person, and, to our knowledge, not disciplining any officers.

Instead, the GPD anchored the greatest cover-up and demonization campaign the city has ever experienced, resulting in great confusion and bitter division. Twenty-two years later, initiated

by the Beloved Community Center and the Greensboro Justice Fund, and with the support of South Africa's Archbishop Desmond Tutu, former Greensboro Mayor Carolyn Allen, Rev. Dr. Peter Storey, Dr. Vincent Harding, and many others, Greens-



After two years of work the Greensboro TRC produced a 529 page report. Even now, it could help us understand our current situation and how we might move ahead.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission drew from and collaborated with international models and engaged in intense work for over two years to produce a 529-page report that offered 29 recommendations. The full *Greensboro TRC Report* can be accessed at <http://www.greensborotrc.org>.

Although many regard the Greensboro truth project as the most transparent and democratic process ever undertaken in the city, the entire process was, nevertheless, demonized from the beginning. Some of its leaders were accused of

devious motives, and the white majority on the City Council voted to officially oppose the process. The excellent *TRC Report*, which received international praise, has never been promoted or seriously studied by Greensboro's city leaders. None of its recommendations were ever considered for implementation by the City.

The main reason for including the tragic killings of 1979 is not to rehash the details of the case, as that is well documented in the *Greensboro TRC Report* and several books. We include this case to help us face our history and show the historical continuity of the subculture of corruption and double standards in our city and the GPD in particular. Moreover, we include this case to show an example of how diverse and dissimilar elements can come together to brainstorm and implement pathways to a

better Greensboro.

## About These Cases...

We have made great efforts to accurately reflect the substance of truth in the cases we highlighted here. We do not, at this point, trust the integrity of the internal investigative mechanism of the GPD. Therefore, we do not expect the GPD's files to agree with our accounts. Frankly, that is a great part of the reason why citizens must fashion an open democratic process that hears from all relevant voices and draws appropriate conclusions.

# Part III

## Towards Transitioning Our City: Truth, Restorative Justice, Democracy, and the Road Ahead

### Framing an Inclusive Process That Can Lead to an Inclusive Plan



What might the citizens of Greensboro do to help this City Council transition the GPD from a subculture of corruption and double standards to accountability and professionalism?

We come now to the question of what then shall we do. We have tried to capture in this document the nature, history, and magnitude of the problem of structural racism in our culture, especially as it is embedded in the Greensboro Police Department (GPD). We recognize that in spite of our best effort to offer a different perspective on the history of our city, skepticism, fear of motives and, in some cases, authentic differences remain among a significant part of our city. Therefore, we wish to proceed with caution but also with determination to see what others see and feel. We urge those with differ-

ent views to be open to what those who share the perspective of this paper see and feel.

With the above concerns in mind, we do not feel that we can or should put forward a developed plan to correct the problems we have identified. Rather, we want to set in motion a process that we hope will grow into an inclusive plan. We will sketch out an initial process that we hope grows into an overall plan. This process will facilitate broad discussions between different parts of Greensboro's population that will help us all to better understand each other. This is particularly true in relation to the double standards and corruption within the GPD. The process should seek to hear voices that are usually unheard and will include the following general steps:

1. We will disseminate this document widely, making it as easily available to as many of the residents of Greensboro as possible. This effort will include posting it online, placing 10 copies in each city library branch, as well as circulating it in hard copy as broadly as our means will allow. We will invite feedback on its contents and welcome ideas on how to use it to change the culture within our city and the GPD.

2. We will, in late January and February of 2013, undertake a round of strategic discussions with social, civic and political leaders in our city, ear-



nestly seeking their views and involvement on how we might move forward. We also strongly encourage civic, social, political, and community/neighborhood leaders to talk among themselves about the issues raised in this paper.

3. We will invite a broad range of organizations, neighborhood groups and individuals to embrace the fact that *we do have a problem within the GPD*. We hope this document will encourage a much more actively engaged citizenry that will in turn help change the GPD for the better.

4. Growing from the process above, we hope that several anchor organizations or groups will emerge that are respected in different quarters of Greensboro's population to further guide the process and devise a specific plan designed to include the broadest array of organizations and individuals to help our city move forward.

These are initial steps that we are hopeful will grow into an inclusive plan that will greatly expand the knowledge base of our city, while promoting understanding and raising the general ethical standards of Greensboro's population. We believe that progress in the area of engaging the culture of racism within the GPD will help us make progress in many other areas of our collective life as citizens who live in a diverse, beautiful city with enormous unrealized potential.

*The likelihood that there will soon be 45 or more civil and/or criminal cases unfolding against the Greensboro Police Department by current or former police officers requires a sense of urgency in addressing these problems.*

Perhaps the citizens of Greensboro, using a restorative justice lens, can discuss and craft solutions to the problem of police misconduct, corruption and abuse including:

- Making whole those who have been wronged, damaged financially and endured mental anguish; this should not be token but substantial
- Identifying and rooting out the leaders of the current subculture of corruption and



double standards within the GPD

- Recommending such measures, processes and additional oversight mechanisms so as to insure that such a subculture does not take root again and that the GPD renders high quality service to all of Greensboro residents including *equal protection of the law*.

Greensboro has experienced a rich store of initiatives recently, intended to help the city overcome its history of conflict, prejudice and discrimination. Among those initiatives, which have all involved a broad range of Greensboro residents, were the Mosaic Project, the Truth and Community Reconciliation Project, and Project Impact. There is much that we can learn from each of these efforts as we forge a democratic road to a better future. One lesson we have learned thus far is the importance of the City being officially involved in these initiatives. In addition to a broad range of citizens, the City of Greensboro needs to find a way to be officially involved in meaningful collaboration with the development of any plan that evolves.

As we grow a plan together, we do not want to lose the present focus. To sum up, we contend that there is a deeply embedded subculture of corruption, racism and double standards within the GPD. The internal investigative mechanism of the GPD is the most pronounced reflection of this culture; it is fundamentally flawed. As the cases above and many others attest, this is not a matter of understandable human mistakes here and there. Systematic double standards and corruption, rooted in racism, exist as troubling aspects of the GPD's guiding culture. This culture translates into a fundamental lack of *equal protection of the law* for Greensboro and its residents, fostering greater division and bitterness within the city.

As the literature will show, this lack of equal protection under the

law has existed for a very long time. In fact, it has operated with such continuity as to appear normal. Experience over the last forty years has shown that this problem will not be solved merely by a change of the mayor or city council. Nor will bringing in a new city manager or a new police chief change it. In the last ten years, Greensboro has had three different police chiefs, three city managers and three mayors; no substantial change has occurred. *We are thus persuaded that only an informed and aroused citizenry will be able to compel the deep cultural and systematic changes necessary for our city to achieve greatness by treating its people justly and equitably.* We propose a process that will engage the broad public, raise the knowledge and ethical level of the broad public, and make Greensboro the best city it can be.

**Kmart - A Greensboro Story of Hope and New Possibilities**

We need positive examples to provide hope that we can unite and overcome even the most difficult, stubborn obstacles. The Kmart story provides such an example. Over the last 50 plus years there has been sustained grassroots organizing in Greensboro. We all know of the 1960 Sit



Led by workers and clergy, hundred of Greensboro residents, marched, prayed, and deliberated together to hold Kmart accountable as a corporate citizen of Greensboro.

-In Movement, but, in truth, the organizing never stopped. There are dozens and dozens of stories of people's struggles, some fraught with difficulty and marginal success and many that have flowed into compelling success stories, loaded with hope and new possibilities.

*All these stories deserve to be told, especially from the perspective of those closest to the lived history.* We hope to be part of compiling and telling these stories in the coming year or so. People's stories, properly told, inspire and strengthen our resolve to press forward in the effort to forge a more just and compassionate city, nation and



Kmart workers and the broad Greensboro community joined together for justice. The signs "Don't Shop at Kmart" were part of a growing national boycott.

world. Accordingly, we have chosen to share just one historical story in this document; it is the Greensboro Kmart Story.

Between 1993 and 1996 there occurred in Greensboro one of the most significant and successful labor/community struggles in the south during the post-Civil Rights era. It involved the Kmart Corporation, at the time a \$35 billion international retail chain with 200,000 employees.

Kmart opened a regional distribution center in Greensboro in April of 1992. The Greensboro facility supplied hard-goods stock for all Kmart stores in five states, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, and Tennessee. The distribution center was massive, approximately three stories high and roughly the size of 35 football fields. Hundreds of tractor-trailers lined up, row after row loading and unloading, shipping hard-goods



Clergy and community members are pictured above, surrounded by GPD officers at a "Pray-in" at the Super Kmart on Bridford Parkway in Greensboro.

throughout the region. In 1993 Greensboro was one of 13 such facilities in the US.

Having gained more than \$1 million in concessions from local and state governments, Kmart built its facility in Greensboro and hired some 550 workers, approximately 65% Black and 35% White. The work was mainly low skilled, involving a lot of moving, lifting, storing and transporting of Kmart hard-goods. During its first few years the management staff was overwhelmingly White. The work was hard and the supervisors were harsh, intimidating, and unsympathetic. Over 200 injuries occurred during the facility's first year of operations as Kmart seemingly adopted the philosophy of "making more bricks with less straw." *In addition, the workers at the Greensboro warehouse were paid \$2.50 per hour less than the mostly white workers doing exactly the same work at each of the other 12 Kmart facilities in the US.* The Greensboro employees saw this as blatant discrimination, rooted in the southern legacy of racism and Jim Crow. A 2001 Rockefeller Foundation report *Louder Than Words*, captures the spirit and significance of the struggle, exemplified in the quote below:

*When they declared their intention to unionize, the workers locked horns with Kmart management that was determined to keep the workers intimidated and wages rock bottom. The cause of the workers proved so compelling, it inspired the African-American community in Greensboro first to prayer vigils and public protest and then to begin an educational effort and dialogue with the Cham-*

*ber of Commerce and the business community at large. The result was a union contract guaranteeing more equitable terms for Kmart workers. Greensboro developed a new sense of self—one that demands greater accountability from the giant corporations that choose to locate facilities there, and a more compassionate and clearheaded vision for community sustainability....*

The unity and determination of the Kmart workers as part of the union (UNITE) was the driving force in the Kmart campaign. The sacrifice and persistence of the workers inspired the broader community not only to join but also to claim the struggle as their own. Thus a labor struggle became the community's struggle for justice. Working closely with Rev. Nelson Johnson and the Beloved Community Center, a citywide coalition was formed that consisted of African American and White pastors, the president of the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce and a broad range of business leaders, the mayor and a few other socially conscious community leaders. This group met weekly and worked through the difficult questions facing the various interests represented as well as Greensboro as a whole. The interest of the workers, however, was always center stage.

This effort also led to "pray ins" and protest marches at Kmart stores in Greensboro and beyond. The education of the community gradually led to boycotts that spread to Atlanta, Norfolk, Houston and other cities. Through all the ups and downs, the weekly meetings between the diverse coalition members mentioned above never ceased, even as the "pray-ins," marches, and boycotts continued. The support for Kmart workers eventually included not only pastors, churches, business and political leaders but also an unusually broad range of individuals and organizations, including Black and White students, neighborhood groups and many multiracial organizations.

At one point Mr. John Lauritzen, then President of the Chamber of Commerce, and BCC's Rev. Nelson Johnson did a joint editorial in the *Greensboro News and Record*. All of these efforts

resulted in the best "first labor" contract in North Carolina in the post Civil Rights era, bringing to Greensboro \$6 million dollars in additional income.

*Most importantly, this struggle showed that the antagonisms within our community are not so deep as to be insurmountable.* Many thought the Kmart labor effort involving race in a southern "right to work" state would lead to deeper division and bitterness. In fact, it brought the whole city closer together. The Kmart victory was celebrated with a town hall meeting that brought together a beautiful diversity of people that packed the Greensboro Cultural Arts Center's main downstairs gathering room.

The meeting featured a round table discussion that included sitting Mayor Carolyn Allen; former Mayor Vic M. Nussbaum, Jr.; Alex Spears, III, Chairman and CEO at Lorillard Tobacco Company; Linda Jones, an African American grassroots community organizer; Sullivan Hamlet, a K-mart receiving switcher and president of UNITE Local Chapter 2603; Robin Barnes, former welfare mom and non-union employee of Vanguard Cellular Systems; Bill Snider, retired editor of the *Greensboro News and Record*; and Rev. Nelson Johnson, Executive Director, Beloved Community Center. WFMY (Channel 2) televised the program and set up telecast screens in the hallway of the building to accommodate the overflow crowd.

*Ultimately, the Kmart struggle may reflect the most unifying moment in Greensboro's recent history.* If we were to engage the problems within the GPD with the same integrity, resolve, and commitment, we would greatly increase the prospects for justice in our city. In spite of its initial appearance, the struggle to improve the GPD is potentially even more unifying than was the Kmart struggle.

~

*If there is no struggle, there is no progress.*

Fredrick Douglass

## Reflections on Truth, Restorative Justice, Reconciliation and Forgiveness

*Without Truth, no Healing; without Forgiveness, no Future.* (Motto of The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission)

*We must find a way to humbly and honestly face our past filled with racial conflict. Our past could become a learning laboratory for the city.* If we can make this transition as a city, it will add immeasurable meaning to all of our lives and to the lives of generations to come. Ethnic and racial relations are broadly seen as the prime motivating force, undergirding social conflict and the need for change in Greensboro and beyond. We understand racism as a particular form of social domination and exploitation that is woven through our cultural fabric. Racism plays a major role in the police subculture that sustains the pattern of corruption and double standards we have pointed out in this paper.

It is our conviction that to solve the problems posed by racism, corruption, and double standards we must raise the knowledge and ethical base of our city. It is our belief that this can only be accomplished through truth seeking, restorative justice, reconciliation, and forgiveness. These four concepts are often confused or understood differently by different parts of our population. Clarity of meaning is necessary to help insure that we are speaking a common language. In an effort to clarify its own understanding of "truth and reconciliation," the Greensboro *TRC Report* puts forward the following:

*We all want to live in a loving, just and sustaina-*

*ble community, where the rights, dignity and sacredness of all people are valued. When any person has been harmed by the actions of another, we all need to work together in order to find a way to help that person heal. This is especially important when someone harms a group of people. It becomes even more important when that harm has been both intentional and long lasting. (TRC Report, p.19)*

We believe the great majority of people in our city, upon thoughtful consideration, would be committed to striving toward Greensboro becoming a place "where the rights, dignity and sacredness of all people are valued." How



**Pictured: Archbishop Desmond Tutu, South African TRC Chairperson and a strong supporter of the Greensboro TRC and the Greensboro struggle for justice.**

can we as a city make more progress towards affirming the "rights, dignity and sacredness of all people?" The *TRC Report* continues:

*Reconciliation means to bring together those parts that were torn apart and make them whole again, to repair the brokenness in our community. Reconciliation does not happen all at once. The first step is to investigate the truth. What actually happened? This is not an easy task. Each person involved will have his or her own story about what actually happened. Each person may feel strongly that they are telling the truth, even when one person's version differs from another person's version. (TRC Report, p. 19)*

No doubt, we could all agree that there are different versions of "factual truth" related to much of what we have shared in this report. How do we overcome this impasse? The *TRC Report* is again helpful as it continues:

*However, when all the various versions of the truth are told clearly, and carefully consid-*

*ered, we can finally understand the whole truth. Communities are made up not only of people, but also of institutions. When people within a community are hurt by violence or oppression, institutions often play a role. This means that institutions must be part of the truth-telling and part of the reconciliation that follows. (TRC Report. pp. 19-20)*

The indispensable role of institutions in shaping our culture is probably the strongest argument as to why the city should be officially involved in any process that grows out of this discussion. The city houses major institutional players, including the GPD, that need assurances that any process that emerges has integrity and is rooted in fairness. Finally, the *TRC Report* asserts:

*Once we tell and understand the truth, we then can take the next steps toward reconciliation. We can describe clearly the harm that was done, to individuals and to groups. We explain how the actions of the past caused harm, and can show how that harm continues to cause problems in the community. (TRC Report, p. 20)*

It seems clear that in order to effectively resolve problems we have to face our past, which is also our present. As Duke Professor William Chafe documents in his book, *Civilities and Civil Rights*, and as we document in this paper, Greensboro has not done very well in facing unattractive dimensions of our past. Greensboro's cultural/political response to unflattering and unattractive parts of our past can be summed up in three overlapping and interrelated patterns:

- To ignore uncomfortable episodes or chapters of our history; simply act as if it did not happen and hope that it goes away. In truth, it never goes away. It simply soaks into our cultural soil and becomes another layer distorting and complicating good human relations.
- To deny the existence of difficult aspects of our history when persistently raised; or to revise and sanitize history to suit the desired image of those in power.

- To demonize and scapegoat a person, an organization or a category (race, gang, immigrant, etc.) of people if neither of the first two tactics works.

Ignore, deny, revise, demonize and scapegoat – if you follow the cases we have raised you will find some version of this progression. The last 50 years of Greensboro history is reasonably well documented so that the same progression can be uncovered. We must change this pattern. All Greensboro could benefit greatly from the words of Donald W. Shriver, Jr. in his book. (*An Ethic For Enemies-*, p 4)

*The debris [of our conflicted past] will never get cleaned up and animosity will never drain away until forgiveness enters these relationships in some political form. To dismiss this concern as a preoccupation with ancient history is to miss all the evidence for the truth that William Faulkner put on the lips of one of his characters: "The past is not dead and gone; it isn't even past." Americans, in general, find this truth hard to comprehend, for ours is a culture that disparages history in our drive to get on with the future. We tend to forget that memory, one taproot of civic peoplehood, can also be a time bomb ready to explode into political conflict.*

We have talked about truth seeking and reconciliation but what then shall we say about forgiveness? When the meaning of forgiveness is allowed to extend beyond the limitations of the religious meaning normally attached to it, forgiveness can then play a powerful role in resolving historical and contemporary political conflict as that in Greensboro. Forgiveness is about remembering; it is not about forgetting as some might assume. In fact, forgiveness begins with and is bathed in memory; inherent in memory is a sense of right and wrong, or moral judgment. Again, Shriver helps us with this issue as he sets out four components of forgiveness that might be relevant to Greensboro in the coming period:

*Forgiveness begins with memory... Popular use of the word forgiveness sometimes implies that to forgive is to forget, to abandon primary concern for the crimes of an enemy. Quite the reverse: "Remember and forgive" would be a more accurate slogan. Forgiveness begins with a remembering and a moral judgment of wrong, injustice and injury...*

*...Forgiveness gets its real start under the double impetus of judgment and forbearance [patience and restraint] from revenge. Forbearance opens the door toward a future that will not repeat the old crimes. Unaccompanied by forbearance in the very beginning, moral judgment often fuels new enmity...*

*...Empathy for the enemy's humanity...should be distinguished from sympathy. The moral stance of forgivers usually precludes sympathy with the enemies' cause and their methods of pursuing it...This combination of moral judgment upon wrong with empathy for wrongdoers may be rare in human affairs, but in fact acknowledgement of fellow humanity lays a groundwork for both construction and repair of any human community...*

*...genuine forgiveness aims at the renewal of a human relationship. Not merely an act of isolated moral high-mindedness, forgiveness aggressively seeks to repair the fractures of enmity. Therefore, forgivers are prepared to begin living with the enemy again on some level of positive mutual affirmation. In politics, that implies some form of co-existence. (A Ethics for Enemies, pp. 7-8.*

The above quotations allow us to draw the conclusion that in a political context, forgiveness is an act that unites moral truth, forbearance (or patience and restraint), empathy, and commitment to repair fractured human relations. Fractured human relationships break down community. We desperately need community. In a real sense, authentic community is the context for growing our individual and collective humanity.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said:

*He who works against community works against history. He who works against community works against the whole of creation. Therefore, if I respond to hate with reciprocal hate I do nothing but intensify the cleavage in broken community. I can only close the gap in broken community by meeting hate with love. If I meet hate with hate, I become depersonalized, because creation is so designed that my personality can only be fulfilled in the context of community. (A Testament of Hope, p. 20)*

We envision collectively turning from the past without ignoring the history of injustice or reducing its impact. This approach honors everyone's humanity, does not overlook or minimize injustice and does not turn the quest for justice into a quest for revenge. Such an approach allows justice to restore political community instead of fostering bitterness and divisiveness. We hope these ideas will help all of us in the City of Greensboro, individually and collectively, to pursue our higher humanity.

We note in conclusion that the word "enemy" as used in the quotes from Dr. Shriver would not be our word of choice. As used in the above quotes it could suggest a permanent category. We would prefer the word antagonist or adversary. We, of course, used "enemy" to be faithful to the text.

~

***Communities are truly communities when they are open to others, when they remain vulnerable and humble; when the members are growing in love, in compassion and in humility. Communities cease to be such when members close in upon themselves with the certitude that they alone have wisdom and truth....***

**Jean Vanier, *Community and Growth* p. 19**

# Part IV

## Ways to Become Involved in This Justice Making - Democratic Process

### Toward Making Our City and Nation Great

Our basic approach to helping make Greensboro the best city it can be consists of seeking greater democracy, greater truth, greater racial justice and equity, with reconciliation and healing. We are convinced that a moment has arrived in Greensboro for this mid-size southern city to make a qualitative step forward, effectively transitioning the city into a new era. However, this will require more and more citizens and supporters stepping forward with the strength of humility, commitment, and dedication to help guide our city along this exciting path. To that end, we suggest the following opportunities for engagement and committed work.

#### Apply to Be a Part of the Transition Greensboro Work Group

We are looking for 20 - 30 Greensboro locals who support the direction sketched out in this document and who are able to commit to a six-month period to help think through, in collaboration with others, how to further actualize this document's vision and potential. The persons should embrace a spirit of democracy and feel that they can make a meaningful contribution to further constructing a working process that can mature into a plan. **Apply at:** [www.belovedcommunitycenter.org](http://www.belovedcommunitycenter.org).

#### Form a Local Discussion/Study Group

Often, it is more exciting to discuss the viability and desirability of a new vision and direction with others. We would like to be in touch with groups that are interested in studying the issues and the potential presented in this document. The Beloved Community Center (BCC) will provide additional materials and need-based support from staff. Contact our office at (336) 230-0001 if you are interested in forming a group, or contact us via the Internet at: [www.belovedcommunitycenter.org](http://www.belovedcommunitycenter.org).

#### Organize a Presentation and Discussion in Your Community

The BCC is making available various staff members to make presentations and to facilitate discussions, focused around the sub-culture of corruption and double standards in the police department and how to move the department forward from double stand-

ards and corruption toward accountability and professionalism. If you are interested in this option for your place of worship, neighborhood association, school, or community group, contact the BCC at (336) 230-0001 or online at [www.belovedcommunitycenter.org](http://www.belovedcommunitycenter.org).

within your neighborhood, campus, organization, or church in order to keep your group connected to and engaged with this project. Contact our office if you are interested at (336) 230-0001 or communicate with us online at: [www.belovedcommunitycenter.org](http://www.belovedcommunitycenter.org).

### **Join the Conversation with Us Online**

The BCC hosts a blog to interact with the people in Greensboro and around the nation about the contents of this paper and related matters. If you would like to join in the online discussion, then please visit our website at [www.belovedcommunitycenter.org](http://www.belovedcommunitycenter.org) and click blog.

### **Become the Contact Person for Your Neighborhood or Organization**

We are seeking neighborhood outreach individuals to keep their communities connected with this initiative. This will include old fashioned door-to-door contact and leafletting

### **Use Your Artistic Talents**

We invite those who can provide artistic talents, including political theater, poetry, and other creative abilities to construct ways that your special gifts might support this effort. Please contact our office to explore your ideas at (336) 230-0001 or [www.belovedcommunitycenter.org](http://www.belovedcommunitycenter.org).

### **Intern at the Beloved Community Center (BCC)**

We invite youth and students to actively participate in this work. The Beloved Community Center offers internships during both the spring and fall semesters, in addition to our Annual Greensboro Justice Summer Internship. Please visit our website at [www.belovedcommunitycenter.org](http://www.belovedcommunitycenter.org) for more information and click on internships.

## **FINANCIALLY SUPPORT THIS DEMOCRATIC INITIATIVE**

This undertaking reflects our deep commitment to comprehensive democracy as the way to achieve social and economic justice. We urgently need your financial support to see this democratic process through to completion. Any amount you can donate, whether it is \$1 or \$5,000, will be greatly appreciated and will be used wisely. Tax exempt contribution can be made:

- 1. Online at [www.belovedcommunitycenter.org](http://www.belovedcommunitycenter.org)**
- 2. Mail a check to the Beloved Community Center at Post Office Box 875, Greensboro, NC 27402**
- 3. We also invite you to share any ideas you might have related to fund-raising that you are willing to help organize. Call us at (336) 230-0001 or stop by our office at 417 Arlington Street in Greensboro.**



# APPENDIX

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## **Beloved Community Center: Our Work Beyond the Struggle for Greater Police Accountability and Professionalism**

The essential substance of Beloved Community Center's (BCC) work is "community building," i.e. forging mutually affirming relationships that uphold and respect the equality, dignity, worth and potential of everyone. In this capacity we engage with individuals, institutions, structures and systems on a great variety of concerns daily, some quite controversial but we believe necessary to forging a just, equitable, nurturing community. Below are some of the programmatic components of our work.

### **Homeless Hospitality House**

Operating now for over 15 years, the Hospitality House provides showers, assists with obtaining official North Carolina IDs, provides a mailing address to receive mail, offers personal and job counseling, and serves breakfast to over 200 people four days a week.

### **Grassroots History Tours and Presentations**

The BCC schedules history tours for groups from Greensboro and from all over the country. These tours go beyond the well known historical sites and highlights sacred sites of struggle in order to provide a much richer understanding of Greensboro's social change movement. The tours are guided by a person who has been active in Greensboro's movement since 1957. BCC also schedules periodic grassroots history programs and presentations that highlight Greensboro's many unsung leaders.

### **Community Garden**

Now four years old, the BCC garden is maintained in partnership with Faith Community Church and grows a variety of vegetables. A local restaurant manages one plot and BCC, church members, volunteers, and the homeless neighbors tend to and make use of the remaining plots and produce.

### **Energy Efficiency Work**

Working in cooperation with the City of Greensboro and NC A&T State University the BCC focuses on five grassroots neighborhoods to help insure that homes are properly weatherized. In this process we also seek to build democratic neighborhood organizations that will survive beyond the life of federal government funded energy efficiency programs.

### **Farm Labor Support Work**

The BCC has an ongoing working relationship with the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) to support farm laborers in North Carolina. For the last five years this effort has been focused mainly on farm laborers employed on farms under contract with Reynolds America Tobacco, Inc.

### **Black-Brown Unity Work**

The BCC pays special attention to building unity between US citizens and immigrant populations from throughout the world, especially between Latino and African American brothers and sisters. We work with others on a variety of immigrant issues and, together with others, sponsors an **Annual Black-Brown Unity Week**.

### **Civic Engagement,**

### **Voter Registration, and Voter Education**

As a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization, BCC does not engage in partisan politics. However, we believe that an essential part of the democratic process is **ethics and knowledge** so that citizens can have a more effective voice. In addition to voter registration, the BCC works with other individuals and organizations to get-out-the-vote and to raise the level of knowledge among citizens so the entire community can better address its concerns in the political process.

### **Wednesday Table**

Join us every Wednesday from 1 PM to 3 PM. The BCC Wednesday Table is an open public space, where all are welcomed and any topic can be discussed. All participating are urged to be respectful speakers and listeners.

# Current and Upcoming BCC Working Papers on Transitioning Greensboro into a New Era

The Beloved Community Center will develop a series of discussion papers on the key issues facing our city. These papers focus attention on problems and proposed solutions. There must necessarily be concurrent engagement on many fronts including ,but not limited to, the economy of the city, its educational apparatuses, and the health of its citizens. We are convinced, however, that the largest *rock in the road* that blocks the pathway to forging a healthy and inclusive city, with an economy that benefits the city's people, and an empowering, transformative education process, is the existence of structural racism. In the next three to seven years, the BCC will work closely with city leadership, other organizations, and the people of this city, to focus on three key areas in Greensboro.

**Racial and Social Justice Democracy:** Working together with others, we will engage those negative prejudices and practices, both individual and structural, that belittle, devalue, exploit, mistreat, bully, or in any manner dominate or marginalize individuals or groups. Within this context our initial emphasis, documented in this paper, is on structural racism that is entrenched within the Greensboro Police Department (GPD), an outgrowth of its long history of corruption and double standards.

**Economic Democracy:** Working together with others to re-localize our economy such that most or much more of our city's needs, whether products or services, are produced locally. In addition, we will work toward living wage jobs (whether created by local and/or national/international entities) for all who need and are willing to work. We will also strive toward greater equality and equity in the economic sphere.

**Educational Democracy:** Collaborating with many others to equitably and democratically reform education, we will strive for the full participation of parents, grandparents, former and current teachers, school administrators, and young people to revamp and reorient our school policies and processes. Our hope is that Greensboro can create a learning environment that emphasizes high ethical values and allows us to rebuild local communities that foster democracy. We need to begin with the public school system itself.

The BCC and many other groups, organizations and individuals for many years have been and are continuing to work in all of these areas. *Though there exist different perspectives, we have to learn to bring our positive energies together in such a way that our entire city benefits.* While the BCC will continue to work in all of the above areas (and more) the focus of this paper and our work in the immediate period will be on exposing, engaging and dismantling the stubborn, difficult problem of what we term *the subculture of corruption and double standards within the GPD, most practiced through patterns of structural racism.*

# Acknowledgements

*Our Democratic Mission: Transitioning the Greensboro Police Department from Double Standards and Corruption to Professionalism and Accountability* is the product of collective labor and could not have been completed without the hard work and tireless efforts of many people. Time and or space do not allow us to list all the persons who were helpful in the completion of this work but the authors remain grateful to all the persons named and unnamed.

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Nelson N. Johnson, Claude Barnes, and Gillet Rosenblith, *Our Democratic Mission: Transitioning the Greensboro Police Department from Double Standards and Corruption to Professionalism and Accountability*, (Greensboro, NC: Beloved Community Center, 2013)



# THE CITIZEN

*An informed citizenry with high ethical standards  
is the most powerful entity in a democracy.*

As a government that is striving to become “of the people, by the people and for the people,” citizens are more powerful than city councils, large corporations, courts, and the police. This is only a theoretical concept until we believe it and act upon it. It is we, the people—the citizens—that must claim and properly use our power. This document is about exercising citizen power to clean up our police department. It is the first of several such documents. The next two documents will focus on helping to build a powerful economy with good jobs for all and helping to grow an educational system that can support a locally oriented economy and that can instill high ethical, democratic values, while equipping people to rebuild neighborhoods and communities. *(For specifics on how to get involved, see pages 39 and 40.)*



Organizing for justice, equality, dignity, worth, and the enormous potential of all people...

**The Beloved Community Center of Greensboro, Inc.**  
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