

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



LETTER FROM CO-DIRECTORS

Dear Friends,

2022 was a record year for Forward Justice Action Network. This year we officially launched the organization as we are committed to being a catalyst for transformative change by supporting social justice movements at the forefront of creating a “Third Reconstruction” in the United States.

We are so excited to share with you here all that we have accomplished and the beginnings of what we hope to vision as we move forward and determine what advocacy in a new political paradigm looks like in the third reconstruction.

In North Carolina, in partnership, we led a coalition to advocate for new district attorneys in three key areas Wake County, Durham County, and Forsyth to usher in a new criminal justice reform agenda.

Across the South, we brought together 100 social justice and community leaders in our region to reclaim what it means to build self in power and to build power in the South. We did this by organizing our inaugural 2022 “Grounding the South” Conference in New Orleans at the headquarters of our partners at V.O.T.E.

We supported the National Poor People’s and Low-Wage Worker Assembly and Moral March on Washington, DC, the largest gathering of poor and low-wage people in DC since the last Poor People’s March in 2021.

We are thrilled with all we have done this year. Still, we know this is just the beginning of what is possible as we continue to organize, advocate, and build our political power to realize racial justice movement agendas. We ask that you join us in our mission to change the South to change the nation.

Sincerely,

Ashley, Caitlin, and Daryl

Table of Contents



Our leadership



A catalyst for transformative
change



Advocating for federal voting
rights protections



Four county district accountability
campaign



Join the work ahead



Our Leadership

Founded in 2019, we serve as a strategic partner for nonprofit organizations, coalitions, and networks at the forefront of movements organizing for a more just, equitable, and free South. Our work catalyzes success for movements and expands democratic opportunities for people affected by injustice. Our key strategies include communications, narrative change, legislative and legal advocacy, community organizing, and base-building.



**Ashley
Marshall**



Caitlin Swain



**Daryl
Atkinson**



Attica Scott



Grounding the South

A catalyst for transformative change

Forward Justice Action Network (FJAN) is committed to being a catalyst for transformative change at the forefront of creating a “Third Reconstruction” in America. We began the work of connecting movement partners and building power in the South by hosting the inaugural “Grounding the South Conference” in New Orleans at the headquarters of our partners at V.O.T.E. We connected with people and partners in the South who share our vision of a world that’s more loving and equitable, coming together to build a Third Reconstruction, build political power, and reimagine community justice and safety.

We are grateful that we had the opportunity to gather in New Orleans to build and reconnect with family, friends, and peers in the region. In partnership with SpiritHouse, Voice of the Experience, and Repairers of the Breach, we created a space where we filled the air with movement song and celebration, honored our loved ones and comrades who’ve transitioned, and shared space to name the challenges of our time and visions for how we move the work forward.

One of the key outcomes of the gathering was to support the Mississippi Rapid Response Coalition and the residents of Jackson, M.S., who did not have clean drinking water for months. We sent local organizers home with water to take back to their community, collecting donations on site, uplifting the issue on our social media channels, and connecting them with partner organizations that mobilized to provide ongoing local support on the ground.

Grounding the South DAY 1: Reinvest

Building our political power

HONORING LAND PLACE People

REMEMBERING For those who have transitioned

THE SOUTH NEEDS OUR STORIES

WE MUST CORRECT THE NARRATIVE

WE NEED TO EQUIP THE PEOPLE we are engaging with all the ways to strengthen the narrative.

WE MUST CORRECT THE NARRATIVE

PRIVATIZED leads to rate hikes

TEFLON DUMPING IN TO OUR WATER

CHEMICAL DUMPING IS KILLING US IN A BIG WAY.

Greatly affects the South MILLIONS DON'T HAVE WATER

What is the soundtrack of your era? I've seen the lights what's going on?

Sing What do you use to keep your head above water? redemption song water our day

What does it feel like? the air the people the land

Help us bring our brothers and sisters back into the fold. We need their voting power. We are here to help you do that.

Two years ago residents of North Carolina fought to make sure individuals could vote. This was one of the most historic victories for the state. Free is free in North Carolina for the first time.

We are here shaping the whole dynamic. For the first time some of us are trying to make sure that this is a movement that doesn't just stop. We can get burnt out in running on fumes. We need to do a better job of caring for ourselves.

what are we doing to sustain ourselves?

We have the highest number of incarcerated individuals in this country in the south. If we can bring back these individuals to vote we can shift the narrative of the South.

It's a scientific fact, oppression will age you.

PANEL DISCUSSION

GRAPHIC RECORDING BY 26-LETTERS.COM

SpiritHouse

REPAIRERS OF THE BREACH

FORWARD JUSTICE

VOICES WITH EDUCATE

VO TE

Grounding the South

DAY 2

Building our political power

We've built this movement by telling stories that inspire

Accept the things we can not change, have courage to change the things we can, and the wisdom to know the difference

we have to go from being recognized TO BE RECKONED WITH

LAW

we must elect judges that align with our VALUES

we are making strides The First Black Sheriff in Georgia

see the solution BE COURAGEOUS

PANEL DISCUSSION

Building relationships is really important. How do we increase our impact when it comes to building relationships.

Leadership takes a number of different forms with diversity. A lot of people showing up in different ways. Refranchising and unblocking the vote.

You've got to have something to hold. You've got to have something to connect. Need to connect with the people that know the issues. We need to think about all of the issues that face us, and connect to them.

We have to work together. We need to share resources and help each other along the road. We need to also share what's around the corner and help people understand how to react.

KNOW WHO YOU ARE

With all our great wisdom we gotta know our power and the right way to go. We can't lose the courage to move forward, because otherwise we're just spinning our wheels.

Our organization directly impacts people. We are making progress.

We have to make sure people have the most basic needs. And if you don't we're just talking noise.

We have to work together. We need to share resources and help each other along the road. We need to also share what's around the corner and help people understand how to react.

The bright spot that I would point to is the shift of the perception that people have of work. This directly affects how people perceive us. We can be seen.

GRAPHIC RECORDING BY 26-LETTERS.COM

Grounding the South

DAY 3

Building our political power

we heal trauma through music

I am here for our Community

What empowers me is standing in a place and knowing that 10,000 people went before me. To know that I am in the line of people making a difference means a lot to me.

Don't just Accept what has been given to you.

it looks different for each and every person.

REAL COMMUNITY IS LOVE

It's our duty to fight for our FREEDOM

healing ourselves and our community

What ever you do, do it with PASSION

WE MUST FIGHT FOR Environmental Justice

Sometimes we can be the very ones perpetuating the system

social justice is all about helping our people.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IS A VOICE IN THE COMMUNITY

PANEL DISCUSSION

What we seek to do is be sure people are living to work, worship, and recreate.

The thing about the political process is that there are layers of decision making beyond voting. You can impact the system more broadly than just voting.

We can do our part to make sure that people in our community are fed, and that teachers are available for education.

Social justice is an equitable distribution of wealth. How do we make sure we look at who makes up our community, who has been consistently put down, and how do we raise them up?

Social equity means that healthcare should be extended to all. We are the only country in the developed world who doesn't have health care for all its citizens. We must change that.

GRAPHIC RECORDING BY 26-LETTERS.COM



FEDERAL ADVOCACY



Advocating for Federal Voting Rights Protections

June 2023 will be ten years without federal protections for voting rights in this country. Under this reality, we stand in the gap to ensure our people are safe and protected when they exercise their vote. But we know federal protection is a must. In this long struggle for voting rights, we are in deep partnership with the National Poor People's Campaign to advocate on the federal level for the need to pass federal protection for voting rights through the Freedom to Vote Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Act.

For a fair and accessible democracy, we need automatic Voter Registration, and Election Day should be a holiday, Same Day Voter Registration, Voting Restoration for Individuals previously incarcerated for felony convictions, Ban for Partisan Gerrymandering, and so much more.

We were proud to stand with thousands of people from across the country at the Mass Poor People and Low Wage Workers' Assembly and the Moral March on Washington and to the Polls on June 18th to call and demand we center the poor in our laws, policies, and politics.

We know it is not enough to unite in D.C. and not hold our elected officials accountable in our home states. We vowed to organize around the 7 Steps To The Midterms, A Movement Declaration to Reconstruct American Democracy, for our votes are not supports but demands to be heard and to take action. We vote for our people and our lives. We vote to summon a Third Reconstruction that can birth us out of an impoverished democracy and usher in a new world.

We are proud to join this movement to fight for a nation that leads with love, truth, justice, and equal protection.





North Carolina



2022 DURHAM COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY CANDIDATES

I will use my prosecutorial discretion to establish and enforce office-wide policies to:



Expunging criminal offenses committed by 16 and 17 year olds

Support all motions to waive court costs when the defendant had been found indigent and take advantage of all opportunities for prosecutor initiated mass court debt relief and criminal record clearance.

Reduce the number of children referred to juvenile court for school-based misdemeanor offenses.

YES		
YES	YES	YES
YES	NO	Declined to Answer



MAKE SURE TO VOTE IN THE MAY 17TH PRIMARY ELECTION



THE HILL News Policy Business Opinion Events Jobs THE HILL TV Newsletters

THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY CONTRIBUTORS ARE THEIR OWN AND NOT THE VIEW OF THE HILL

Cheney blasts DeSantis over Ukraine comments: 'Weakness is provocative'

CAMPAIGN - 10M 375 AGO

Five things to know on Equal Pay Day

EQUALITY - 10M 475 AGO

Why the US is going full throttle on hypersonic missiles

DEFENSE - 13M 225 AGO

Biden administration withdraws approval for road through Alaskan refuge after previously defending it in court

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT - 23M 405 AGO

Access to abortion pill on trial in Wednesday hearing

For Black voters, democracy is eroding in the South

BY ASHLEY MARSHALL, DARYL ATKINSON AND CAITLIN SWAIN, OPINION CONTRIBUTORS - 12/14/22 1:30 PM ET



Associated Press/Derald Herbert
A woman verifies her identification to vote through a computer screen at a voting station.



In April 2022, FMC Corporation became the first major crop protection company to exit its Russian business. Today, we remain...

In April 2022, FMC Corporation became the first major crop protection company to exit its Russian business. Today, we remain committed to supporting the people of Ukraine.

Four County District Attorney Accountability Campaign

In 2022, FJAN and movement partners continued to “Expand the We” in “We in the People” by educating, agitating, and organizing low-propensity voters, particularly people with criminal records and their families, to participate in upcoming District Attorney and Sheriffs elections in targeted jurisdictions across the state. Building on our foundational work in 2018, Forward Justice, Durham For All and Spirithouse spearheaded the c(3) and c(4) tables that resulted in the historic first-time election of Satana Deberry.

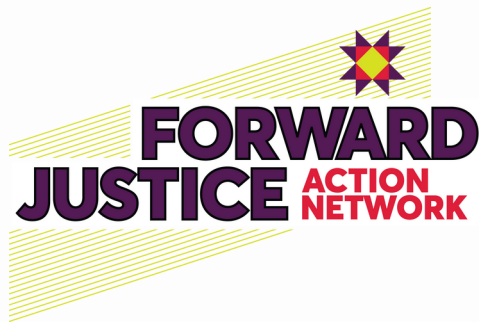
Since her election, Deberry has proven to be the most progressive prosecutor in the state. **She has the largest number of post-conviction, emergency release motions related to the COVID pandemic and the largest amount of DA-initiated debt relief for people with outstanding fees and fines.** Additionally, Durham has seen a reduction in the conviction-based prison population from the year Deberry took office in 2018 (954), 2019 (880), to 2021 (698).

In North Carolina, both the District Attorney and Sheriff are elected public officials who wield considerable power in the prosecution of all criminal matters. FJAN and our movement partners know the importance of these local elections towards fulfilling our long-term goals of organizing what FJAN Board Member Norris Henderson refers to as the “Sleeping Giant”, low propensity directly impacted voters committed to ending mass incarceration.

We implemented this strategy by engaging in voter education through report cards, mobilization, and issue-based advocacy in the District Attorney elections in Wake, Mecklenburg, Forsyth, and Durham counties. While we implemented an aggressive grassroots campaign in four counties, **we were ultimately successful in Durham with the re-election of Satana Deberry.**



2021: VIOLENT CRIMES WENT DOWN 12%



JOIN THE WORK AHEAD!



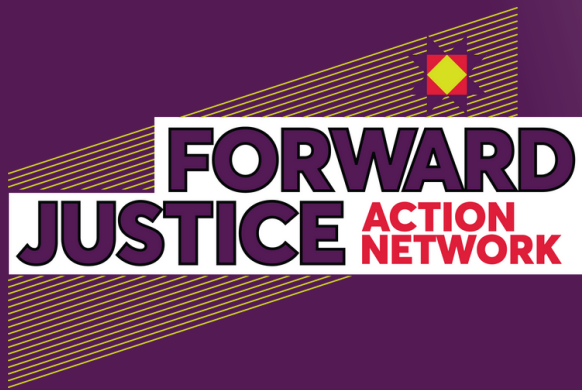
We are on a mission to mobilize and build the political power we need to sustain our victories as we work to realize our Third Reconstruction of racial justice, human and civil rights, a fair and free democracy, and economic justice.



Become a supporter of FJAN to help us scale faster by investing in our technology, expanding our team and investing in the movement work.



Sign up for a newsletter to receive insights from the Forward Justice Action Network team, hear about success stories, and stay current on urgent needs, and mobilize opportunities from our community.



STAY UP-TO-DATE



@forwardjusticeactionnetwork



@FJActionNetwrk



@ForwardJusticeActionNetwork



www.fjan.org

Thank you to our board members:

Nia Wilson, Co-Executive Director of Spirithouse

Christian Motley, Senior Advisory Results for America

Reverend Erica Williams, Director of Set It Off Movement

Norris Henderson, Executive Director of V.O.T.E

Forward Justice Action Network

One Copley Way, Suite 302

Morrisville, NC 27650

Forward Justice is a Section 501(c)(4) charitable organization, EIN 84-2032850. Financial information about this organization and a copy of its license are available from the North Carolina State Solicitation Licensing Branch at 919-814-5400.