

# ANNUAL REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-21



**LOYOLA**  
UNIVERSITY MARYLAND

The Karson Institute  
for Race, Peace & Social Justice

**MORE THAN READY.  
LOYOLA READY.**

A photograph of a diverse crowd of people at an outdoor event. In the foreground, a person's fist is raised in a power salute. The background is filled with other people, some wearing hats and sunglasses, suggesting a sunny day.

**BENDING TOWARDS  
SOCIAL JUSTICE**

# Letter from the Director

Dear friends of the Karson Institute,



Founded in October 2020, the Karson Institute for Race, Peace & Social Justice provides a scholarly space for professors, students, social justice workers, and activists to come together to research, discuss, debate, and explore answers to America's most urgent questions on inequality, injustice, and racial inequity. We know that as a nation, we are stronger together. Still, decades of racial injustice, social inequity, and systemic acts of violence against the Black and Brown community have separated us. Throughout history, there have been moments of awakening where we have taken up these broader questions and attempted to settle them; but, we have found that moments can only lead to movements when there is an infrastructure in place to support operationalizing the work.

We believe that we are in the midst of one of those moments and that The Institute will be a place to house the research, train our students, and operationalize the movement for racial and social justice. Our goals are to tell the stories that led us to this moment and capture the currently described stories. Granted, some of these stories are not new; indeed, America has a long and complicated history of wrestling with the questions of racism and white supremacy; but, our goal is to capture them and share them with our institution, Baltimore City and the world. As an institution, Loyola has long been committed to addressing these difficult questions and providing opportunities to implement solutions.

During the COVID shutdown, the Karson Institute hosted virtual conversations about race and social justice virtually and on campus. We successfully launched three Centers: the Center for Public Engagement; the Center for Research and Culture; and the Center for Teaching and Learning to contribute to the social discourse and academia of racial equity and social justice and incorporated Spanish translations for our culturally and linguistically diverse audiences.

We named María T. Colompos-Tohtsonie as the Institute's inaugural doctoral fellow and Senior Fellows Rev. Dr. Van B. Gayton and William H. Murphy, Jr. These three have reinvigorated how we explore the topics of inequality, injustice, and racial inequality. We selected our first education partner, City Neighbors High School. Even with all of our work, we still have much work to do, and that work is made possible by the Karson Team: Colompos-Tohtsonie, MPPA and Courtney Carroll, who work behind the scenes with grace and skill to make sure things run smoothly. As we celebrate our first anniversary, we are delighted to begin Year Two of our Master Plan. I invite you to join with us and lean into this Karson moment of change.

Sincerely,

*Karsonya Whitehead*

Karsonya "Kaye" Wise Whitehead, Ph.D.  
Founder and Director, Karson Institute for Race,  
Peace & Social Justice

## Karson Institute Steering Committee Members

The Steering Committee meets once a month to hear updates on what is new and exciting in the Karson Institute as well as the challenges we face. They offer their insights and wisdom as well as their time, talents, and resources to support the Karson Institute.

### Steering Committee Members

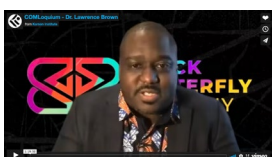
Cheryl Moore-Thomas, Ph.D.  
Rodney Parker, Ph.D.  
Stephen E. Fowl, Ph.D.  
Rev. Timothy Brown, S.J.  
John Kiess, Ph.D.  
Martha Wharton, Ph.D., J.D.  
Afra Hersi, Ph.D.  
Kevin Atticks, Ph.D.  
Raven Williams, MA

### Staff

María Colompos-Tohtsonie,  
MPPA, Assistant Director  
  
Courtney Carroll, Strategic  
Communications Analyst  
  
Herbert "Jay" Dunmore,  
Project Manager



# Spotlight Events in the Karson Institute



At the Karson Institute, we hosted a number of events, which featured prominent speakers, scholars, community leaders, government officials, and activists. Our events were not only open to our students, faculty, and alumni, but due to the virtual environment, we were able to invite and welcome Baltimore City, K-12th grade schools, and universities around the country. The events highlighted on this page are just a handful of the annually occurring events that are organized and hosted by the Karson Institute.

## COMloquium Series

The COMloquium Series are monthly conversations hosted by Dr. Wise Whitehead in conversation with a guest(s) discussing relevant and timely issues around racial, social, and healing justice. The goals are to provide a starting point for engaging with these issues, both on campus and around the country; explore solutions on how to foster understanding of the causes and consequences of systematic sources of injustice; analyze the inter-relationship between race and social justice; and, identify and discuss potential strategies for resolving violent conflict and building and sustaining peace. Guests included authors, activists, artists, teachers, columnists, politicians, and community leaders. For more information about the COMloquium Series, visit <https://www.loyola.edu/join-us/karson-institute/center-public-engagement/comloquium-series>.

## Student Talk Backs

This space is designed for college and high school students and provides a site for them to add their collective voices to the ongoing conversations about race and social justice. Each month, students are invited to submit a 90-second video (recorded on their phone) answering a specific question so that they can “talk back” and “speak up” on the issues. For more information about the Students Talk Back, visit <https://www.loyola.edu/join-us/karson-institute/center-public-engagement/students-talk-back>.

## City Neighbors High School

The Karson Institute selected City Neighbors High School\* in Baltimore, MD as our inaugural KI Education partner. Under the direction of Dr. Wise Whitehead, teachers and staff will spend the year being trained in culturally responsive teaching and instruction; racial equity training, and the social construction of race; creating and maintaining classrooms of excellence and exclusion; and, curriculum and lesson plan development. The training has been custom designed to support the equity and inclusion initiative already happening at CNHS. City Neighbors High School is a public charter high school located in the Glenham-Benhar neighborhood of Baltimore, Maryland, United States. Opened in 2010, City Neighbors High was the third school launched by the larger City Neighbors Foundation program, a Baltimore-based charter organization. For more information about the City Neighbors High School program, visit <https://www.loyola.edu/join-us/karson-institute/center-teaching-learning/city-neighbors-high-school>.

## Koffee & Konvo

Koffee & Konvo is a monthly lunchtime conversation for students, faculty, and staff hosted by Dr. Wise Whitehead and Reverend Timothy Brown. The Koffee & Konvo series is held on the third Wednesday of every month from 12:00-1:00 p.m. EST. These conversations cover a variety of topics including critical race theory, EDI (equity, diversity, and inclusion) principles, and culturally responsive pedagogy. People of all backgrounds are encouraged to join these important conversations to expand their knowledge of race and diversity within the United States. For more information about Koffee & Konvo, visit <https://www.loyola.edu/join-us/karson-institute/center-public-engagement/koffee-konvo>.

Learn about upcoming events at <https://www.loyola.edu/join-us/karson-institute/upcoming-events>

# CONNECTING THE ACADEMIC AND THE ACTIVIST

## Initiative Blueprint

### Initiatives

### Initiatives to Guide Planning Activities

### Projected Outcomes

#### ONE

Create partnerships with educational think tanks throughout the United States to address racial and social inequality, injustice, and inequity

Solidify partnerships with educational think tanks that align with Loyola University Maryland's Diversity Vision of 2021 and the Karson Institute's mission

Produce partner projects with educational think tanks to broaden the Karson Institute's agenda

#### TWO

Continue to foster a growing research fellow base with faculty colleagues from both inside and outside of the university

Conduct and support empirical research on a variety of issues that lie at the intersection of race, social justice, peace, education, and advocacy movements in the United States

Produce publications with senior research fellows and scholars and academic organizations

#### THREE

Collaborate with government officials, lawyers, and policy practitioners (as needed) to mold social justice tenets into citizenry practices and tangible strategies

Integrate social and faculty networks within the Loyola University Maryland and citizenry action footprint

Develop knowledge networks and civic action programs within the progressive policy realm to increase students' academic knowledge, political efficacy, and political participatory skills

#### FOUR

Maintain a self-sustaining fundraising apparatus

Coordinate with ALANA Services and the Office of Peace and Justice within Loyola University to recruit undergraduate and graduate fellows and plan joint fundraising events

Allocate funds to support the Karson Institute's initiatives and staffing positions





## Highlights of Multimedia Engagement

The multimedia footprint of the Karson Institute has been amplified through numerous media outlets. During the last year, the Karson Institute has been covered by the following news outlets:

- Critical RWTOP
- CityBizList
- The Baltimore Sun
- Fox 45 News
- Cision PRWeb
- Baltimore Fishbowl
- Yahoo Finance
- News Break
- Yahoo News

- NBC-4 Nation
- BBC
- UK Times Radio

The Karson Institute's social media platforms have achieved the following:

- Our Twitter and Instagram accounts have gained a combined 300 followers in the last three months.
- Tweets have been liked and retweeted by the following institutions:
  - Equal Justice Initiative
  - Conversations on Higher Jesuit Education Magazine
  - Ms. Magazine

- National Womens Studies Association (NWSA)
- Women in Higher Ed
- Ignation Solidarity
- Murphy Falcon Murphy
- Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
- Visit Baltimore
- National Museum of African American History and Culture
- Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH)

## Sustainability of Activities

In the last month our tweets have reached over 22.4K people on the platform.

Our Student Talk Backs and our COMloquim events are being used by K-12th grade teachers as primary source materials.

The impact of the KI is being felt both nationally and internationally.

Our Director is regularly spotlighted on local and national news networks.

The Karson Institute's Director writes a bi-weekly column, *Conversations with Dr. Kaye*, in the *Afro* newspaper as a place to engage with some of the issues that are being talked about and discussed around the country.

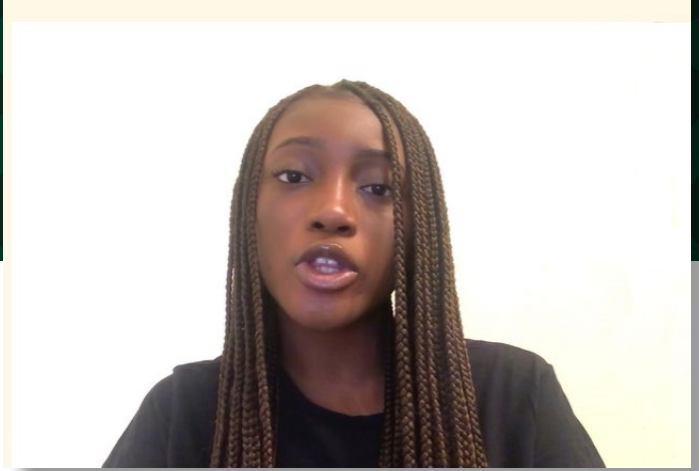
In the past year, we have partnered with The Baltimore Sun, Maryland Public Television, WEAA, NWSA, ASALH, and Ms. Magazine to produce diversity materials and products for television, radio, and print media.

On average, our Twitter page earns two link clicks a day. We have launched month-long campaigns highlighting Black History Month, Women's History Month, and Latin-x Heritage Month.

October question: Am I antiracist?



November question: What is the future of democracy?



# Center for Public Engagement

**T**he Center for Public Engagement (CPE), which is the most active center within the Karson Institute, aims to provide a conversational space to discuss relevant and timely issues around racial, social, and healing justice by hosting a wide range of dialogue sessions.

People of all backgrounds are encouraged to join in on these important conversations to expand their knowledge of race and diversity within the United States.

The CPE consists of authors, activists, artists, columnists, scientists, politicians, community leaders, scholars, government

officials, and policy practitioners who contribute to the social discourse of racial equity and social justice.

The CPE includes the following:

- A starting point for engaging racial inequalities and systemic oppression, both on campus and throughout the United States.
- An opportunity to explore solutions on how to foster understanding of the causes and consequences of systematic sources of injustice.
- Pathways to analyzing the intricacies between race and social justice by scaffolding oral histories.

- Identifying potential strategies for resolving violent conflict and sustaining peaceful accords.
- Providing a conversational space to discuss relevant and timely issues around racial, social, and healing justice.
- Presenting, onthly dialogue sessions, including the COMloquium series, Koffee & Konvo lunchtime talks, and Student Talk Backs, with scholars, selected guests, and faculty members.

## Acomplishments

During the last year, the CPE hosted 34 dialogue sessions:

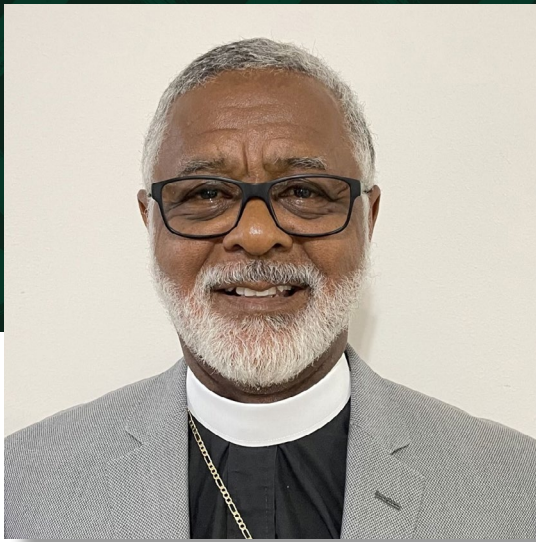
- 16 COMloquium events
- 12 Student Talk Backs
- 6 Koffee and Konvo

The CPE hosted COMloquiums with notable guests including:

- Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top leading expert on infectious diseases
- Jerika Richardson, the Senior Vice-President of the National Urban League

- The Honorable Kweisi Mfume (D), U.S. Representative, 7th Congressional District
- Dr. Clayborne Carson, Ph.D., professor of history at Stanford University, and former director of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute





# Center for Research and Culture

**T**he Center for Research and Culture (CRC), provides a scholarly space for researchers that fosters collaboration among scholars across numerous disciplines to address the needs of operationalization for racial and social justice.

By providing a forum for collaborative scholarship and instruction, the CRC stimulates research and engages with scholars to integrate and increase knowledge bases of race, social justice, and peace within the United States.

The CRC consists of research fellows, research assistants, and undergraduate and graduate students who conduct and support empirical research on a variety of issues that lie at the intersection of race, social justice, peace, education, and advocacy movements in the United States. The CRC advances research that illuminates the causes, consequences, and potential means of ameliorating racial injustice, social inequity, and systemic acts of violence. The CRC brings together education scholars from the following disciplines:

- History
- Sociology
- Psychology
- Communications
- Policy and Public Administration Studies
- Multiculturalism
- African and African American Studies
- Gender Studies
- Legal Studies
- Peace and Justice Studies

## Accomplishments

During the last year, the CRC named their inaugural Senior Research Fellows and doctoral fellow:

- William Murphy, Jr., Esq
- Van Gayton, D.Min
- María Colompos-Tohtsonie, Ph.D. Candidate.

The Karson Institute Senior Research Fellowship is specifically designed for senior scholars and professionals to come together to research, explore and build upon the equity, diversity, and inclusion work that they have done, either in the academy or in their field. The Karson

Institute's Senior Research Fellows are scholars of national or international acclaim who are researching race, peace, or social justice issues. They will be in residence at the Karson Institute for the current academic year and will present two lectures during the year that will be open to the public to discuss their research. The Karson Institute Doctoral Research Fellowship embodies doctoral candidates and students who conduct research and cultivate knowledge networks in establishing a research and data-driven scholarly environment.







# Center for Teaching and Learning

**T**he Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), works to help educators and administrators throughout the United States excel in their teaching, to enhance the culture of teaching, and, in turn, to increase the sociocultural perspectives of education. The CTL focuses on integrating the following aspects in effective teaching methodologies:

- **Critical Race Theory:** by recognizing that racism is embedded within educational systems and institutions that replicate racial inequality and embracing the lived experiences of people of color within scholarly spaces.

- **K-12 Program and Development** that focuses on creating professional development materials and resources for educators and administrators to effectively integrate critical race theory into culturally responsive instruction. The work is:
  - Student-Centered: by fortifying culturally responsive teaching techniques and positioning learners at the core of effective course design, including learning objectives and assessments.
  - Evidence-based: by identifying and disseminating teaching professional development strategies supported by empirical research.

- Equitable and Inclusive: by implementing universal design principles, advocating for sociocultural perspectives within learning spaces, and understanding the effectiveness of equity, diversity, and inclusion policy audits.
- Actionable: by reinvigorating practical teaching and learning strategies that foster educator development and spark genius amongst scholars.

## Acomplishments

During the last year, the CTL achieved the following:

- The Karson Institute partnered with Ms. Magazine, Ms. Magazine in the Classroom, and the National Women's Studies Association to create a critical race theory primer (released on October 15)

- The Karson Institute started monthly professional development training with the staff and teachers at City Neighbors High School.
- Our Doctoral Fellow (Colompos-Tohtsonie) made policy recommendations in the field of culturally responsive teaching practices for teachers of

students who have different socio-cultural backgrounds and created a equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) policy audit for schools to implement.

- The Karson Institute, in partnership with ASALH, will edit the 85th anniversary edition for the Black History Bulletin.







## Karsonya Wise Whitehead, Ph.D. Biography

Dr. Karsonya “Kaye” Wise Whitehead is an associate professor of communication and African and African American Studies at Loyola University Maryland and the founding director of The Karson Institute for Race, Peace & Social Justice. She is the host of the award-winning radio show *Today with Dr. Kaye* on WEAA, 88.9 FM and the 2021 recipient of a Regional Edward R. Murrow Award for Excellence in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

She is the author of four books, including *Race-Brave: new and selected works*; *Notes from a Colored Girl: The Civil War Pocket Diaries of Emilie Frances Davis*, which received both the 2015 Darlene Clark Hine Book Award from the Organization of American Historians and the 2014 Letitia Woods Brown Book Award from the Association of Black Women Historians; and *Letters to My Black Sons: Raising Boys in a Post-Racial America*. She is a K-12 master teacher in African American history; an award-winning curriculum writer and lesson plan developer; and an award-winning former Baltimore City middle school teacher.

In 2021, Dr. Whitehead was selected by the Baltimore Business Journal to receive the Leaders in Diversity Award. In 2020, Dr. Whitehead was selected by *The Daily Record* as one of Maryland’s Top 100 Women. In 2019, she received the Collegium Visionary Award from the College of Holy Cross; the Exceptional Merit in Media Award (EMMA) from the National Women’s Political Caucus; the

*Baltimore Sun* named her as one of Baltimore’s 25 “Women to Watch in 2019”; and *Essence* magazine included her on the 2019 “Woke 100 List,” of “black women advocating for change.” As one of only a few daily drive-time afternoon radio shows hosted by a black woman, *Today with Dr. Kaye* received the 2021 and 2020 Chesapeake Associated Press Award for Outstanding Editorial or Commentary; the 2019 Chesapeake Associated Press Award for Outstanding Talk Show, and the second place Award for Outstanding Editorial or Commentary. In 2020, the *Baltimore Sun* selected Dr. Kaye as the Best Radio Host.

In February 2016, Dr. Whitehead received the Joan B. Kroc’s Institute for International Peace Studies “Distinguished Alumni” Award for her work as a peace activist, scholar, filmmaker, writer, and poet. In 2014, she received the 2014 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Progressive National Baptist Convention (PNBC); was selected as one of the top 25 women professors in Maryland by Online Schools Maryland; and in 2013, received Loyola University Maryland’s Faculty Award for Excellence in Engaged Scholarship for her work documenting the stories of women who are temporarily experiencing homelessness.

Dr. Whitehead also received the 2006 Gilder Lehrman Preserve America Maryland History Teacher of the Year Award (sponsored by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History) *CONTINUED...*

### *Karsonya Wise Whitehead, Ph.D., Biography Continued*

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and the Maryland State Department of Education); was one of 50 alumni to receive the Distinguished Black Alumni Award from the University of Notre Dame, Indiana (2005); and was a winner of both the Langston Hughes, David Diop, Etheridge Knight Poetry Award (1999, 2000) and the Zora Neale Hurston Creative Writing Award (1998) from the Gwendolyn Brooks Creative Writing Center at the University of Chicago.

Prior to her work in academia, Dr. Whitehead was a documentary filmmaker with MetroTV, a PBS-affiliate, and a senior producer for Music Television Networks (MTV). In 2001, she directed and produced *Twin Towers: A History*, a documentary film that describes the technical problems that were overcome and challenges the ironworkers faced in constructing the landmark buildings, and recounts the daredevil stunts that the buildings attracted. The film was nominated for an Emmy in 2002—Dr. Whitehead's third nomination. It has since become the second-largest selling film about 9/11 and airs regularly on PBS stations around the country.

Dr. Whitehead writes a bi-monthly column, "Conversations with Dr. Kaye," for the Baltimore *Afro* newspaper based upon her deep ethnographic study within the Black Butterfly neighborhoods of Baltimore City. She is also one of the most sought-after keynote speakers in the country, having given over 500 keynotes worldwide.

Karsonya "Kaye" Wise Whitehead, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Communication, African and African American Studies

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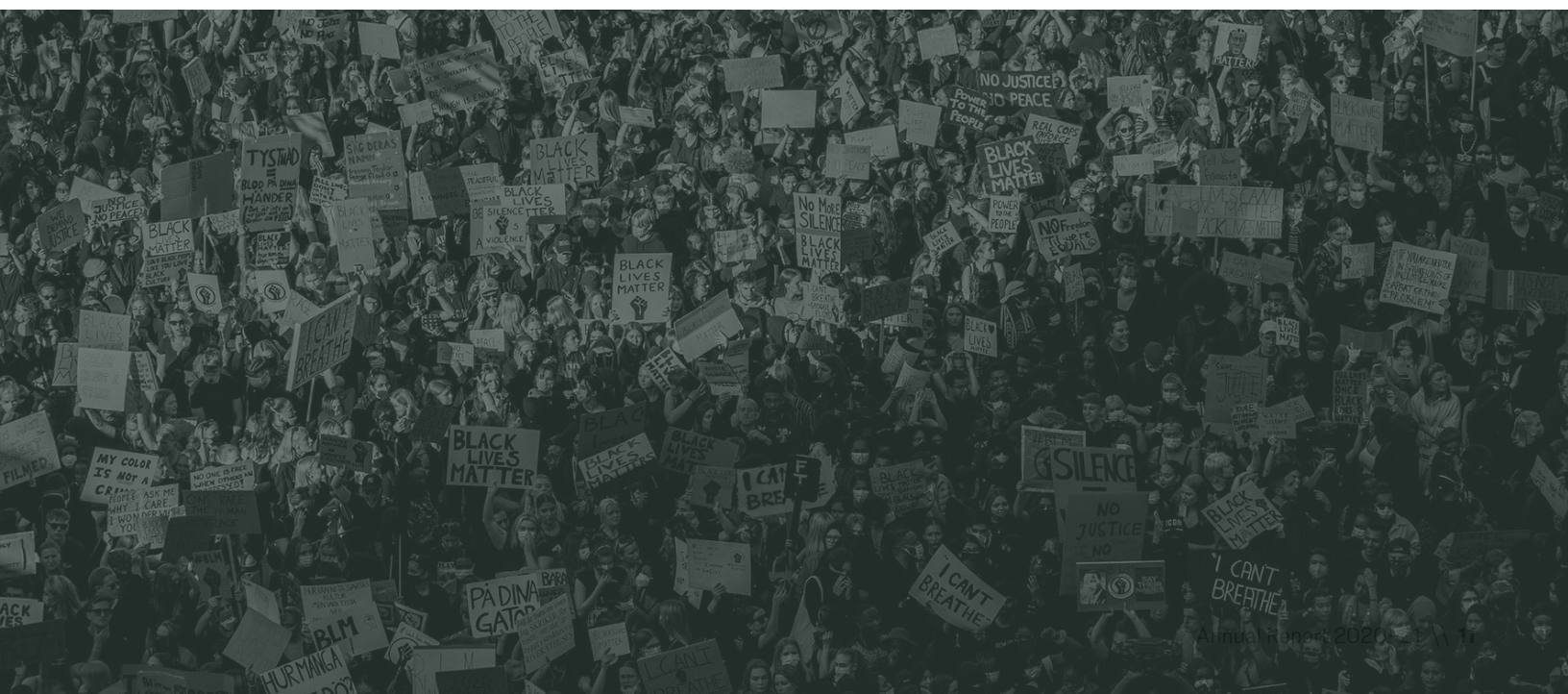
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We are tremendously grateful for the philanthropic commitment that alumni, parents, family, and friends have made to the Karson Institute in 2020-21. This past year, with the launch of three Centers, we were able to facilitate and guide these critical conversations around the country. As a result, there was also a tremendous philanthropic commitment to existing funds and scholarships further bolstered by additional support. The Karson Institute is very thankful for the continued generosity of our growing scholarly space.







# **BENDING TOWARDS SOCIAL JUSTICE**

***Get in touch with the Karson  
Institute to see how we can  
partner with you***

[loyola.edu/karsoninstitute](https://loyola.edu/karsoninstitute)

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