

2021- 2022 Final Report of the Growing Democracy Project

***This report is a compilation of our Fall 2021 and Spring 2022 Race and Democracy Reports and updates on our other series*

Fall 2021 Race & Democracy Report produced by Jo Cottrill, Intern
With co-PIs, Drs. Ashley Nickels and Casey Boyd-Swan

Spring 2022 Race & Democracy Report produced by Brooke Moeller, Project Assistant
With co-PIs, Drs. Ashley Nickels, Casey Boyd-Swan, and Shemariah J. Arki

Edited by Alana Lazarides, 2023 Summer Research Assistant

Goals:

Our primary goals for the project are to: 1) build civic capacity by bringing together diverse constituencies; 2) create spaces that amplify the multiple forms of political and civic expertise and knowledge, especially of systematically marginalized voices; and 3) demystify politics, policy, and governance.

Mission: Provide space for communities to share experiences and expertise, learn from one another, as well as empower communities and facilitate social change.

Background:

The Growing Democracy Project was launched in 2019 by Ashley Nickels and Casey Boyd-Swan, with support from the New Partnerships Fund of Centennial Center of APSA. We began with a three-fold goal: co-create an open-access, online civic and political engagement curriculum; offer teach-in style workshops aligned with our curriculum; and, ultimately, build civic capacity by bringing together diverse constituencies of community members, civic leaders, grassroots organizations, and universities.

In June 2020 we launched the Growing Democracy Podcast. This project builds on our values of creating shared space for dialogue, amplifying the stories and lived experiences of communities across Northeast Ohio and the country, and demystifying the institutions and practices that shape governance and democracy. Also, in February 2021 we launched the Democracy Blog.

As with all start-ups and innovative programs—our project has evolved, but our mission and values have remained the same.

Our Theory of Change:

This project, which centers around a series of community-based conversations and workshops, seeks to address two challenges facing the field of political science: 1) bridging the boundaries between academia and community and 2) breaking down the barriers between residents and

governing institutions. Drawing on a rich history of critical social science theory, the PIs on this project are not only committed to understanding political processes through their robust research agendas, but also to shaping these structures and processes through bottom-up, community-centered praxis (e.g. Fischer, 2009; Freire, 1970; Habermas, 1970).

We know that civic and political engagement is shaped by both individual understandings and motivation (agency) as well as by institutions and ideas (structures) (e.g. Han, 2009). Through community-based workshops, co-created curriculum, and our online presence (podcast, website, and social media), we amplify the stories and lived experiences of communities across Northeast Ohio (and the country) in order to broaden our understanding of civic and political engagement and demystify public institutions. We expect participation to enrich people's understanding of democracy and motivate participation (individually or collectively) in the democratic process. By creating spaces for critical discussions and meaningful learning, our ultimate goal is to foster a more robust democracy, from the grassroots to grasstops, inclusive of various organizations and institutions that center the most marginalized in their work.

Core Values:

1. *Social Justice*: We are committed to challenging and disrupting social injustice and oppressive systems as well as to working for positive, peaceful social change on behalf of, and in accompaniment with, vulnerable, marginalized, and oppressed groups.
2. *Democracy*: We are committed to, and value, deep participatory democracy. We believe in the promise of radically re-envisioning a more just and equitable governing system that values both the wisdom of lived experience and the knowledge of technical expertise. We value democratic practices that foster collaboration as well as create space for difficult dialogue.
3. *Nonpartisan*: We are nonpartisan (as opposed to bipartisan). We do not endorse a specific party or candidates. We do, however, see the value in engaging in conversation with partisans to examine their understandings, experience, and approach to civic and political life.

Programming Overview:

Since our launch, we have worked in collaboration with community partners (a group of 13 people we refer to as our advisory collective, as well as partnering organizations throughout Northeast Ohio) to modify, adapt, and evolve our programming to meet the needs of the community and adapt to changing socio-environmental conditions (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic).

Below is a more detailed outline of our four main programs:

1. *Co-created civic and political engagement curriculum*: In 2019 we convened faculty, staff, students, and community members from throughout Northeast Ohio to co-create a

civic and political engagement curriculum. Our curriculum is built on 5 inter-related modules, focusing on skills and practices for creating sustainable change:

Module 1: Self-Aware Civic Leader

Module 2: Defining Problems, Identifying Solutions

Module 3: Demystifying Politics, Policy, & Processes

Module 4: Individual Action to Collective Action

Module 5: Tools & Strategies for Action

We are still in the process of building out this curriculum. The planning sessions were suspended due to COVID but will resume once it is safe. In the meantime, we are working with current and former students and interns to develop concept pages to supplement the curriculum.

2. *Community Workshops*: Using the curriculum modules as a roadmap, the Growing Democracy Project workshop series tackles some of the toughest issues facing Northeast Ohio. Our workshop series is intended to be community-based and focus on civic leadership, community politics, political engagement, social activism, and community engagement. We borrow from the teach-in approach, emphasizing the importance of unpacking [local] contexts and experiential learning. Our goal is to bring together often disconnected groups to facilitate network building, the formation of long-term relationships, and to encourage participation from community residents, civic leaders, students, and academic experts.

3. *Growing Democracy Podcast*: The podcast was launched in June 2020. We had just canceled our slate of community workshops and were brainstorming ways that we could continue to amplify lived experiences and demystify politics and government. We began with the theme of “Governing During Pandemic.” We now have four series:

Series 1 – Governing During Pandemic

This series introduces listeners to local and public officials, along with community activists, who are adapting and responding to the shifting needs caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This series currently has 13 episodes. Examples of different topics covered include how a local mayor is dealing with the challenges of the pandemic while trying to run a suburban city, how a local health department is dealing with the pandemic through contact tracing, and how a regional food bank is handling the increased demand caused by the pandemic.

Series 2 – The Power of Civic and Political Engagement

This series introduces listeners to local elected officials, public officials, and community activists who discuss what civic and political engagement means to them. The series currently has 11 episodes. Examples of some of the guests include the undergraduate student body president of Kent State University, a veteran community organizer, and an Assistant Professor of American Indian History, who all give their definitions of what civic engagement means to them.

Series 3 – Gap Filling

This series introduces listeners to organizations that are filling the gaps when government and governmental institutions fail. This series currently has six episodes. Examples of some of the topics covered include criminal justice reform, homeless outreach, and a program for citizens to document their local government's official meetings to help provide transparency for the community.

Series 4 – Serving the Public Interest

Our latest series introduces listeners to elected officials and public administrators who are serving the public interest of their communities. This series currently has two finished episodes and two in the editing process. Guests include a local county commissioner, a former state representative, and a county treasurer.

4. *Democracy Blog*: In February 2021, at the request of an advisory collective member and with the support of an intern, we launched the Democracy Blog as another space for us to amplify voices and demystify institutions.

2021-2022 UPDATES:

I. Growing Democracy Podcast:

The Growing Democracy Podcast initiated its sixth series this spring: Race & Democracy in Northeast Ohio.

Our fifth series, ***Demystifying Policy-Relevant Research***, was a collaboration with the Northeast Ohio Scholar Strategy Network. This podcast series focuses on making sense of how research informs and makes sense of politics, policy, and governance. We spoke with local scholars about their research, civic identities, and efforts to encourage policymakers to pursue evidence-based change.

Ep. 1 – Sharona Hoffman

Ashley and Casey speak with Professor Sharona Hoffman, Co-Director of the Law-Medicine Center at Case Western Reserve's School of Law. The conversation centers around the use of Artificial Intelligence in medical decisions, specifically thinking through how the use of AI can lead to discriminatory outcomes.

Ep. 2 – Wendy Regoeczi

Ashley and Casey speak with Dr. Wendy Regoeczi, professor and chair of the Department of Criminology, Anthropology, and Sociology at Cleveland State University. The conversation centers around new reforms in the Cuyahoga County criminal justice system addressing domestic violence.

Ep. 3 – Michael Palmieri

Ashley and Casey speak with Michael Palmieri, Research Associate at Kent State University's Ohio Employee Ownership Center. The conversation centers on the ways employee ownership can be used as an economic development strategy to create individual and community wealth while creating space for greater political and civic engagement.

Ep. 4 – Dr. Meghan Novisky

Ashley and Casey speak with returning guest Dr. Meghan Novisky, Assistant Professor at Cleveland State University. The conversation centers around the impact of COVID-19 on incarcerated individuals, the failure of policy responses to protect these individuals, and how research can center the voices of those it studies.

Ep. 5 – Dr. Jay Chen

Ashley and Casey speak with Dr. Jay Chen, Associate Professor at Cleveland State University. The three talk about the causes behind current supply chain disruptions and the ways in which his work can impact public policy.

Our sixth series, ***Race & Democracy in Northeast Ohio***, focuses specifically on the intersections of race & democracy in Northeast Ohio and features expertise from academics, activists, youth organizers, authors, and our new podcast hosts (Dr. Anuj Gurung and Dr. Shemariah J. Arki). The series includes two of our top-played episodes on SoundCloud—Episode 3 with 184 listens and Episode 2 with 156. Since January 2021, The Growing Democracy Podcast has received over 5,760 plays on SoundCloud, reaching thousands of listeners across the US and UK. The most up-to-date episode listing is available [here](#). Below is a listing of GDP's series 6 episodes with brief descriptions.

[note: statistics listed are from June 14, 2022]

Ep. 0 – Introducing our new hosts

The introduction of two new co-hosts: Dr. Shemariah Arki and Dr. Anuj Gurung. The four hosts discuss what to expect in the new series. Series 6 centers on the theme of Race & Democracy in Northeast Ohio, and is a collaboration with the School of Peace and Conflict Studies and the Center for Pan-African Culture at Kent State University. Posted: September 13, 2021. Current listens: 135

Ep. 1 – Power of Storytelling

Elaine Hsiao (Associate Professor, Kent State University, School of Peace and Conflict Studies) discusses the power of storytelling with Ashley and Anuj. The episode begins by exploring the Power of Storytelling and focuses on storytelling as a research tool, a bridge for creating human connections, and the role it plays in building community. Posted: October 18, 2021. Current listens: 146

Ep. 2 – 3Rs: Race, Racism, and Racialized Systems of Oppression

Casey and Shemariah talk to Professors Nishani Frazier (Associate Professor of American Studies and History at University of Kansas) and Ayesha Bell Hardaway

(Associate Professor of Law at Case Western Reserve University School of Law) about 3R's: race, racism, and racialized systems of oppression. The conversation focuses on defining and understanding racial justice, as well as how racialized systems of oppression make racial justice increasingly challenging.

Posted: December 13, 2021. Current listens: 156

Ep. 3 – Socially Constructing “the Other”

Ashley and Shemariah talk with Suparna Bhaskaran (non-resident Fellow at the Institute on Race, Power and Political Economy at The New School, OSU) and Tessa Xuan (Statewide Co-Director, OPAWL) of Ohio Progressive Asian Women's Leadership (OPAWL) about the social construction of identity. The conversation focuses on defining and understanding social construction of identity and intersectional solidarity, and how “othering” is used as a tool to divide.

Posted: February 28, 2022. Current listens: 184

Ep. 4 – Organizing Youth

Ashley and Casey talk with Akii Butler (Ohio Organizing Collaborative) and Erik Gomez (Director of Governmental Affairs for Undergraduate Student Government at Kent State). The conversation focuses on recent work opposing Ohio HB327 (Bill Title: Prohibit teaching, advocating, or promoting divisive concepts) and what it is like to be a student/youth of color doing organizing work in predominantly white spaces.

Posted: March 28, 2022. Current listens: 65

Ep. 5 – Race, Religion, and Democracy

Casey and Shemariah talk with Dr. Khyati Y. Joshi (Professor at Fairleigh Dickinson University, author: *White Christian Privilege*). The conversation explores topics of religious privilege and the intersections of race, religion, and democracy. Dr. Joshi provides personal anecdotes and expertise on how the US institutionally prioritizes White Christianity.

Posted: April 4, 2022. Current listens: 73

Ep. 6 – Growing Community through Theatre

Casey and Anuj talk with Katie Beck, the Co-Artistic Director of Gum-Dip Theatre in Akron, OH. The conversation explores the changing face of Akron, OH – and Katie reflects on how community identity can be reinvented and reimaged with tools of storytelling and theatre.

Posted: April 18, 2022. Current listens: 61

Ep. 7 – Race, Religion, and Resettlement

Casey and Anuj talk with Madhu Sharma (Executive Director at International Institute of Akron) about the intersections of race, religion, and resettlement in Akron, OH with a particular focus on current events. Madhu shares her personal experiences of facing discrimination and the multitude of challenges that racially & religiously minoritized populations face when resettling in Ohio.

Posted: May 6, 2022. Current listens: 40

Ep. 8 – Community Empowerment and Intersectional Solidarity

Ashley and Shemariah talk with Midtown Cleveland staff Aisia Jones (Director of Community Empowerment) and Samira Malone (Neighborhood Planning Manager). The conversation emphasizes the importance of Black women in local activism, municipal politics, and neighborhood planning. The guests share their experiences with intersectional solidarity in organizing and activism.

Posted: May 17, 2022. Current listens: 53

Ep. 9 – From Community Organizing to Organizing Organizations

Ashley and Casey talk with returning guest Jerry Peña (founder & senior member, Gradient A Human Equity Think Tank). Jerry shares his experience as both a community organizer and a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion consultant for organizations - the conversation also focuses on community organizer responses to current events.

Posted: June 7, 2022. Current listens: 36

II. Stakeholder Engagement and Community Outreach

This year, the Growing Democracy Project emphasized stakeholder engagement through social media outreach (Twitter, Instagram & Facebook) and monthly newsletters.

- Twitter: @Growingdem
- Instagram: @Growingdemocracyoh
- Facebook: @Growingdemocracyproject
- [August Newsletter](#)
- [September Newsletter](#)
- [October Newsletter](#)
- [November Newsletter](#)
- [December Newsletter](#)
- [February Newsletter](#)
- [March Newsletter](#)
- [April Newsletter](#)
- [May Newsletter](#)

In the fall, we collected community feedback during our community workshop event. We have not yet conducted any stakeholder interviews beyond those that were conducted in the summer of 2020.

Of the 30 people in attendance at the Fall event, “Race, Space, and Political Boundaries,” only three (10%) completed evaluations. All three attended both the panel and map-making workshop, and all three provided positive feedback— that they were highly satisfied with the event. All three strongly agreed with the statements “I gained new insight on social action/public institutions related to race and democracy,” and “I have increased knowledge about the role of public institutions.” All agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I have increased

knowledge about civic and political engagement.” Two people strongly agreed and one indicated neither agree nor disagree with the statement “I feel an increased interest in civic and political action.”

We also asked participants about their favorite part of the event and what they would like to see changed in the future. Two indicated that the panel was their favorite part, while one said “the three different mini events.” When asked what to improve, one person said “more audience” and the other wrote “it would have been great for more people to show up - but I know some people are still wary.” In response to the low number of participants and the call for “more audience,” we are evaluating our options for hosting an outdoor event in the spring. We hope that this will garner higher levels of turnout.

In Spring 2022 we also conducted a stakeholder survey which was distributed in the monthly newsletter and posted on social media. We received 11 responses. The survey revealed that 55% of those surveyed heard about the Growing Democracy Project from direct contact with a Growing Democracy organizer, presenter, or intern, making word of mouth a powerful tool for name recognition. All who completed the survey attended a Growing Democracy Project event, listened to the podcast, or used materials from either our website or newsletter. These online materials were created to adapt to the context of a global pandemic, but continue to create accessible opportunities for community engagement even as COVID-19 regulations ease.

The majority of survey respondents (71%) answered that they were “very satisfied” with the events they attended and 78% listened to the Growing Democracy Podcast. This suggests that the podcast is a great way to reach constituents. Survey respondents offered feedback that the episodes gave them “hope, around people being able to make a difference” and that they “love the topics and the conversations with real people ‘doing’ democracy in the surrounding area.” Overall, the survey results were overwhelmingly positive, particularly concerning the events and podcast episodes.

Finally, the Growing Democracy Project initiated coalition-building efforts with Kent State University faculty, student and on-campus organizations, and other local community organizations throughout Northeast Ohio. Notably, many collaborators expressed interest in Growing Democracy’s photovoice project, including numerous Kent State faculty members and on-campus organizations, Center of Pan-African Culture, Ohio Progressive Asian Women’s Leadership (OPAWL), North Hill CDC, League of Women Voters Ohio, the Anti-Racism and Equity Institute, and Cuyahoga Arts & Culture.

III. Photovoice Project

Photovoice is a community-engaged art exhibition that asks community members to take photos to describe their community. This participatory action research methodology provides insight to researchers, policymakers, and educators through visual methods. Photos can help participants and researchers better communicate and understand the needs of a community.

Starting March 1, 2022, the Growing Democracy Project opened its photovoice project for rolling submissions through October 15, 2022. Once submissions are collected, we will host an exhibit on Kent State University's campus. An in-person exhibition aims to generate dialogue around the intersections of race and democracy to foster a deeper understanding of community perspectives. Additionally, photo submissions will be coded and analyzed for further data contributing to Growing Democracy's Race & Democracy research lab.

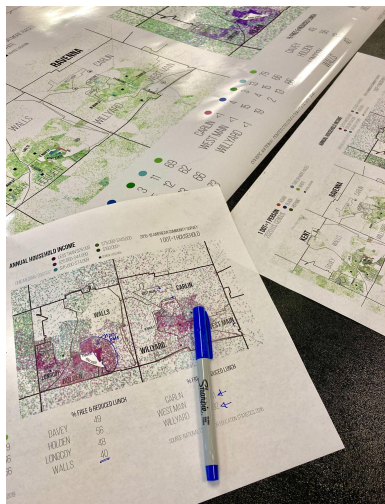
Growing Democracy Project assistants, Paige Scott and Brooke Moeller, helped conceptualize the Photovoice Project on Race & Democracy in Northeast Ohio that asks: What does race & democracy look like to you?

Currently, the photovoice submission form can be accessed on GD's [website](#), along with frequently asked questions and resources on photovoice.

IV. Events

During the Fall 2021 semester, we hosted one in-person event, "Race, Space, and Political Boundaries," on September 21st. The event was broken into three parts: panel discussion, tour, and workshop.

Our panel discussion took place in Oscar Ritchie Hall and was streamed online with a video recording posted on the Growing Democracy YouTube page. The panel of speakers discussed redistricting, gerrymandering, and partisan gridlock in Northeast Ohio, with a focus on race.

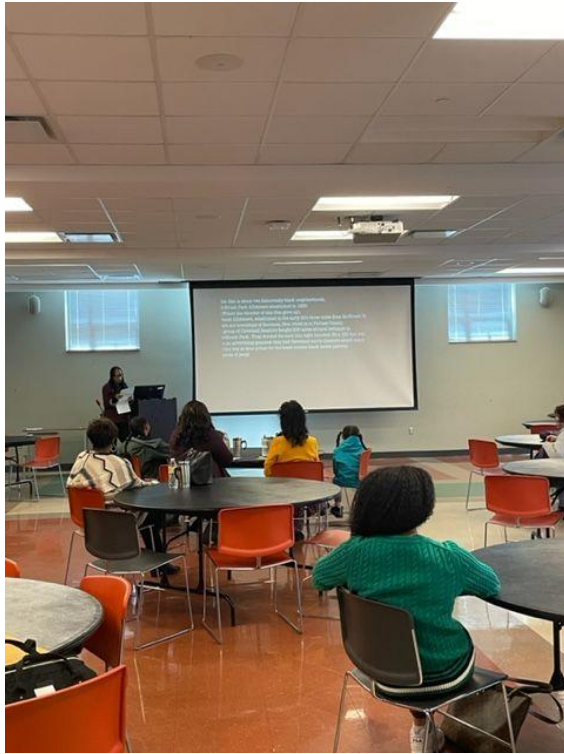


The panel discussion was followed by a student-led tour of the Center for Pan-African Culture and Uumbaji Art Gallery. We closed out the event with a map-making workshop, providing a hands-on opportunity to explore local boundaries in Northeast Ohio

Panelists included two co-chairs on the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission, a Kent State Associate Professor of Political Science, and the Director of Governmental Affairs for Kent State University's Undergraduate Student Government. The map-making workshop was led by a Kent State Associate Professor of Geography.

We had 30 people attend the event, including 13 in-person guests and seven online guests. We have since had two additional views on YouTube.

In the Spring semester—in collaboration with the Center of Pan-African Culture, the School of Peace and Conflict Studies, and the Anti-Racism and Equity Institute—Dr. Shemariah J. Arki and Race and Democracy intern Erik Gomez organized hybrid events following the initial relaxation of COVID-19 regulations. The Flash, Focus, Film Festival drew in a number of Northeast Ohio attendees.



Gloria Matlock leading a discussion on her Ravenna-based documentary: *Just Another Mile*



Outdoor screening of *UnderExposed*

Over the course of two weeks, the Growing Democracy Project hosted six screenings of films (feature-length documentaries, shorts, films, and trailers) related to Race & Democracy in Northeast Ohio. Flash, Focus, Film helped facilitate community dialogues on Race & Democracy through film while bringing awareness to our photovoice project. The events were part of the Growing Democracy Project's collaborative Race & Democracy in Northeast Ohio series, contributing to our commitment to social justice through a race-conscious lens.

The six film screenings included:

Sonita — The inspiring story of Sonita Alizadeh, an 18-year-old Afghan refugee in Iran who thinks of Michael Jackson and Rihanna as her spiritual parents and dreams of becoming a big-name rapper. Following the virtual screening, attendees noted the resilience of Sonita and resonated with the documentarians' struggle to remain impartial throughout the film.

#BLM Shorts — As part of the curriculum for Black Experience 2: 1865 - Present Day, a course open to all students and part of the general diversity requirement of Kent Core (General Education Requirement), Dr. Shemariah Arki hosted screenings and discussions on a series of film shorts and trailers that narrate the progression of the #BlackLivesMatter movement in Cleveland and throughout the US. Discussions illuminated how the shorts portrayed an increased focus on the Black narrative and spent less attention on the police perspective as the movement progresses.

UnderExposed — This outdoor documentary screening enabled those still exercising social distancing precautions to participate in a discussion on the intersections of race, democracy, and art. The film featured artists from Shooting Without Bullets, Cleveland's revolutionary youth advocacy program, who joined guests for a discussion and live performance following the film. When asked what their favorite part of the event was, attendees responded:

- *"The vulnerable new perspective"*
- *"Being able to meet the artists featured in the film!!"*
- *"The intimacy and openness in conversation led by people my age"*

Excerpts from Asian Americans — This screening and discussion reviewed excerpts from a five-hour series that chronicles the contributions and challenges of Asian Americans. After each excerpt, Race & Democracy Intern, Erik, led the group in discussion. After the film, attendees stayed to continue the conversation, focusing on what it means to be a 'community'.

Just Another Mile — As one of our headliner events, filmmaker Gloria Matlock joined GDP for a screening of her Ravenna-based documentary: *Just Another Mile*. The documentary narrates stories from two historically Black Ravenna neighborhoods, McElrath and Skeels, focusing on the development of the original neighborhood allotments and the impacts of systemic racial inequalities. A discussion with Matlock revealed the importance of avoiding "single story" narrations when discussing historical perspectives.

Dispatches from Cleveland — This feature-length documentary follows ordinary people—long shaken by police misconduct, social discrimination, and generational poverty—whose love for their home pushes them to work together to bring about long-term, sustainable change. When asked what their favorite part of the event was, attendees responded:

- *"The following discussion— very eye-opening about the creator & production of the film, which was so important"*
- *"The discussion afterward— reflecting on the film and film-making process"*

Attendee feedback reflected overwhelmingly positive reviews of the films and discussions. Through the festival, the Growing Democracy Project succeeded in generating dialogue around the relationship between race and democracy and fostered a deeper understanding of community perspectives.

V. Online Curriculum

The Growing Democracy Project curriculum is co-created with activists, organizers, community leaders, residents, academics, and students throughout Northeast Ohio.

As part of the Growing Democracy Project's Race & Democracy in Northeast Ohio series, research assistants developed a "living" annotated bibliography and multiple concept pages. Special thanks to our interns and assistants Jo Cottrill (intern, Fall 2021), Erik Gomez (intern,

Spring 2022), Brooke Moeller (outreach assistant, Spring 2022), and Paige Scott (research assistant, Spring 2022) for their work.

Fall 2021:

May 4, 1970, by Jo Cottrill (Race & Democracy Intern)

Race, May 4, 1970 and The Jackson State Killings, by Jo Cottrill (Race & Democracy Intern)

Ella Baker, by Amanda Clark (former GDP Project Manager & KSU alumna)

We also recently posted a blog from Sabrina Nichol (GDP summer intern) on “*Nonviolent Action as a College Student.*”

Spring 2022:

Gerrymandering, by Brooke Moeller (Outreach Assistant)

Youth Advocacy 101, by Erik Gomez (Race & Democracy Intern)

Community Development, by Paige Scott (Research Assistant)

Race and Democracy in Northeast Ohio, Annotated Bibliography, by Jo Corrill (Race & Democracy Intern) and Brooke Moeller (Outreach Assistant)

Spring 2022 Reflections:

The Growing Democracy Project's most notable achievement this semester was the Flash, Focus, Film Festival. This event facilitated impactful conversations and challenging discussions that continued even after the conclusion of the event. Growing Democracy intern, Brooke Moeller, recalls that after attending the *Underexposed* screening and discussion the conversation continued well into the evening. Many attendees gathered to further the conversation, making thoughtful reflections about the role of Shooting Without Bullets in Cleveland, the compelling impact that an in-person discussion created, and the connections that they made with the Shooting Without Bullets artists that will continue to grow.

In this way, Flash, Focus, Film was successful in facilitating impactful dialogues on race and democracy that led to the development of meaningful connections throughout Northeast Ohio. This would not have been possible without the discussions carried out by Growing Democracy Project staff Dr. Shemariah Arki, Dr. Casey Boyd-Swan, Dr. Ashley Nickels, and Erik Gomez.

While the Flash, Focus, Film screenings provided a meaningful forum for community dialogue, attendance was lower than expected. Guests reviewed that, “too bad more people don’t know about these events,” and that they would like to see “more people” and “more participants” at future events. To improve future attendance, the Growing Democracy Project aims to implement

a thorough promotion plan and cultivate meaningful partnerships with student organizations and faculty for on-campus collaboration. Efforts to develop these partnerships are already underway.

Forecasts for Fall 2022:

- Continuation of Community Development & Local Democracy (Cleveland) research lab.
- Continuation of the Growing Democracy Podcast.
- Projected photovoice exhibition in DI Hub, Oscar Richie Hall, and a traveling exhibit throughout campus.
- On-going facilitation of meaningful collaboration with university and community partners.

Thank you!

The Growing Democracy Project would like to thank Mark Lewine and the John Gray Paynther Program for their support in GDP's efforts to build civic engagement and facilitate social change. Thank you, also, to the Scholar Strategy Network of Northeast Ohio.

Thank you to all university collaborators, including the School of Peace and Conflict Studies, the Center of Pan-African Culture, the Anti-Racism and Equity Institute, the School of Multidisciplinary Social Sciences and Humanities, and all students and faculty that helped us reach new audiences and for their support in making the Growing Democracy Project's first in-person event a reality. Finally, thank you to the Growing Democracy Project staff and interns for your contributions this semester.