



FirstRepair  
Advocating For Local Reparations, Nationally

NAARC

NATIONAL  
AFRICAN-AMERICAN  
REPARATIONS  
COMMISSION

7th Annual  
NATIONAL

Plaque  
The National African American  
Reparations Commission  
Honoree  
Deen Couser  
Melissa Miller  
November 10, 2023

Plaque  
The National African American  
Reparations Commission  
Honoree  
Dr. Ron Daniels  
November 10, 2023

Plaque  
The National African American  
Reparations Commission  
Honoree  
Carmela Kevonius  
Paula Ace  
November 10, 2023

Plaque  
The National African American  
Reparations Commission  
Honoree  
Bobo Priddy  
November 10, 2023

Plaque  
The National African American  
Reparations Commission  
Honoree  
Dr. Sheryl Davis  
November 10, 2023

Plaque  
The National African American  
Reparations Commission  
Honoree  
Carmela Kevonius  
Paula Ace  
November 10, 2023

THE UNIVERSITY  
OF CHICAGO  
INSTITUTE  
OF POLITICS

INSTITUTE  
OF POLITICS



# FirstRepair

Advocating For Local Reparations, Nationally

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



# Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Partners and Friends,

This year marked three years of informing local reparations nationally, with expanded international activity and a long list of successes. Our dedicated team experienced continuous momentum, opening the year with the PBS premiere of The Big Payback (now streaming on Amazon), continuing with our second United Nations Permanent Forum on People of African Descent Side Event, and closing the year with the third Annual National Symposium for State and Local Reparations. These events were three of 79 presentations we delivered throughout the year, across the country, and across the world. I am excited to share more about that work in this 2023 Annual Report.

We are fortunate to be a part of a dedicated community of reparations practitioners, activists and allies, and mission-aligned funding partners. I am grateful.

Additionally, I was invited to present to new audiences like The International Downtown Association, Kilpatrick Townsend and Stockton and the American Institute of Architect – Illinois, resulting in new reparations allies and partnerships. New audiences are valuable opportunities that have increased public and institutional support for Black reparations.

I am proud to report, since I led the passing of the nation's first tax funded local reparations initiative in 2019, FirstRepair has contributed to over 100 reparations initiatives. This includes 226 local leaders representing 76 unique initiatives that participated in our annual symposium November 30 - December 2, 2023, in Evanston, IL.

Here are a few additional highlights that are key in our sustainability and our movement practice:

- Monthly National Strategy Sessions
- Reparations Toolkit and Discussion Guide
- Improved Infrastructure and Expanded Board of Directors

FirstRepair kicked off the year with a staff retreat where we set an ambitious, creative, and SMART vision for 2024, which we will achieve only with your continued partnership and support.

I remain in awe of the community of leaders we serve alongside and although there are organized efforts to halt racial redress, there is promising progress and reparations is now.

My heartfelt gratitude, love, and commitment to all that serve and support this movement.

Onward,

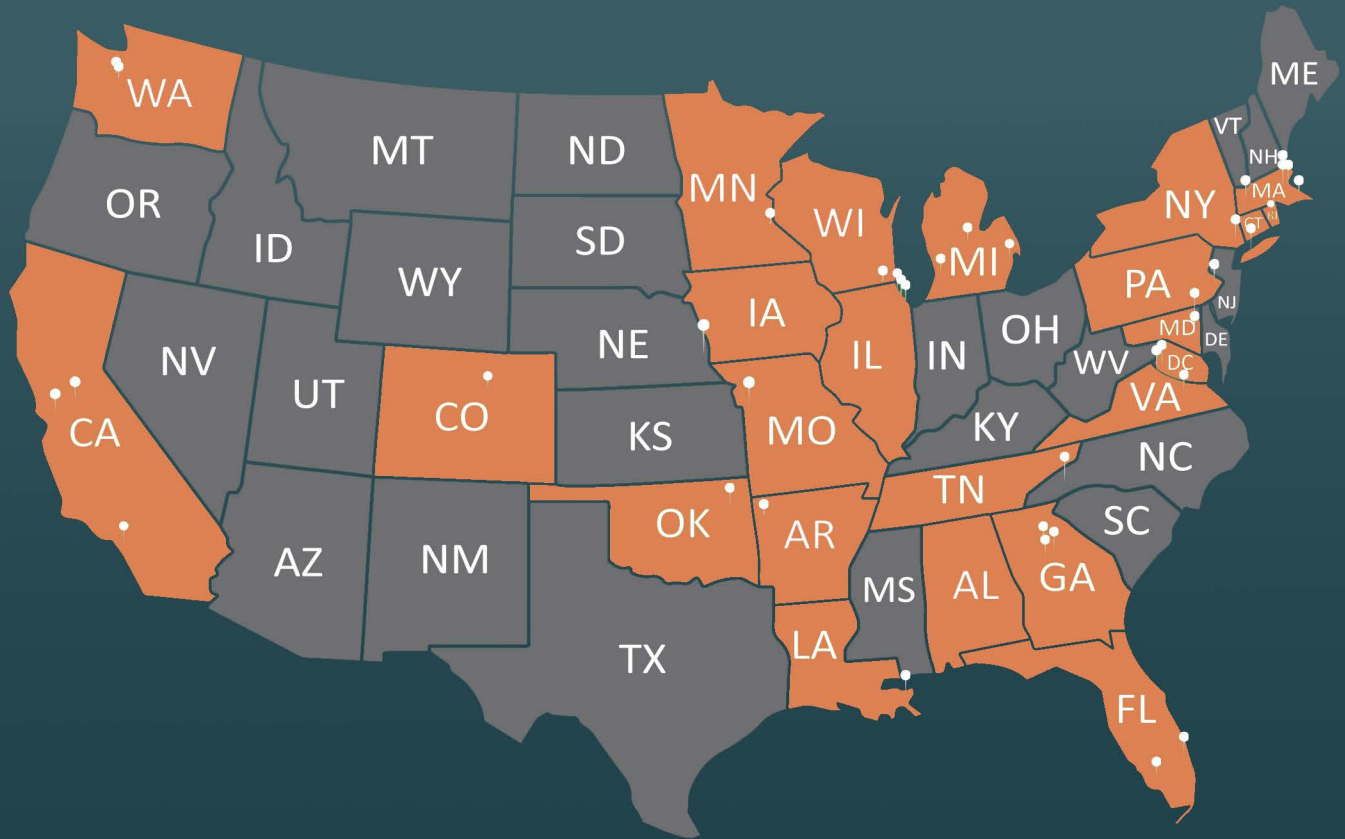
**Robin Rue Simmons**  
Founder and Executive Director





# OUR SERVICES

Workshops - Symposiums - Lectures - Panels - Collaborations - Toolkits



## US LOCALITIES

### WEST

DENVER, CO  
LOS ANGELES, CA  
SACRAMENTO, CA  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA  
RENTON, WA  
SEATTLE, WA

### MIDWEST

CHICAGO, IL  
EVANSTON, IL  
WAUKEGAN, IL  
DETROIT, MI  
KALAMAZOO, MI  
LANSING, MI  
ST. PAUL, MN  
KANSAS CITY, MO  
OMAHA, NE  
TULSA, OK  
BELOIT, WI

### SOUTH

FAYETTEVILLE, AR  
NAPLES, FL  
STUART, FL  
ATLANTA, GA  
DECATUR, GA  
SOUTH FULTON, GA  
NEW ORLEANS, LA  
ASHEVILLE, NC  
RICHMOND, VA  
VIENNA, VA

### EAST

WASHINGTON, DC  
BALTIMORE, MD  
BOWIE, MD  
AMHERST, MA  
BOSTON, MA  
CAMBRIDGE, MA  
JAMAICA PLAIN, MA  
MARTHA'S VINEYARD, MA  
DIX HILLS, NY  
NEW YORK, NY  
PHILADELPHIA, PA  
PROVIDENCE, RI

## INTERNATIONAL LOCALITIES

KINGSTON, JAMAICA

# PARTNER HIGHLIGHTS

The contributions of FirstRepair to the reparations movement are immeasurable. The information gained and relationships built through the National Reparations Symposiums have provided the KC Reparations Coalition inspiration and direction as we chart our course towards repair for Black Kansas Citians. Robin and the FirstRepair team are eager and accessible in ensuring reparations initiatives have the support and resources needed to achieve reparative justice.



**Janay Reliford, MSW**  
Chair, KC Reparations Coalition  
*Reparations Now!!!*

I had the privilege of attending the inaugural FirstRepair Symposium, and it was a transformative experience that deepened my understanding and commitment to the reparations cause. Beyond the wealth of knowledge gained, what sets FirstRepair apart is its ability to cultivate a sense of unity and belonging. It has evolved beyond a mere event; it's a movement that has woven us together as a family. FirstRepair is not just a reminder of our shared mission, but a powerful mantra affirming that we stand united in this crucial fight. It has created a space where we are not alone but surrounded by a community dedicated to justice and reparations.



**Kristi Williams**  
Founder, Black History Saturdays  
& Descendant of the 1921 Tulsa  
Race Massacre

Having been present at the FirstRepair Reparations conference from the start, witnessing the convergence of unapologetic brilliant minds annually to exchange ideas, knowledge, and wisdom in this movement has been both educationally invigorating and soul-reviving for the upcoming challenges. I feel stronger and wiser, now being a part of an enduring movement that moves in unison – a truly powerful experience.



**Vanessa Hall Harper**  
Tulsa District 1 City Councilor

I was honored to be one of several volunteers on behalf of FirstRepair for the recent 2023 Reparations Symposium in Evanston. I was deeply moved by the collective energy, wisdom, and inspiration shared by the 250 participants who gathered at the Orrington Hotel. I am grateful to FirstRepair for the opportunity to be an ally and supporter of this growing Reparations movement!



**Rev. Stephen Heaviland**  
Lake Street Church  
of Evanston



# MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

Thank you to the dozens of local, national, and international Media Outlets for amplifying our efforts and the local reparations movement.



PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR A FULL LIST OF STORIES



## The Big Payback

*The Big Payback* premiered on January 16, the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday on PBS.

FirstRepairFounder and Executive Director Robin Rue Simmons is featured in this 88-minute documentary directed by the award-winning filmmakers, Erika Alexander, and Whitney Dow, of ColorFarm Media. This transparent and educational film continues to be an invaluable tool in advancing local reparations and enlightening viewers on the history and possibilities of reparations for the legacies of slavery in the United States.

FirstRepair presented at 26 screenings in 2023, each followed by an action-centered panel discussion with Robin Rue Simmons and others. In addition to community screenings, we presented at the HBCU Reparations debate series that included screenings at each of the NC10 HBCU institutions.

Film screenings continue to be requested in local communities that are engaged in the process of reparations and continues to be an important tool to the Reparations movement. Currently, the film is streaming on Amazon Prime.



UNITED NATIONS  
PERMANENT FORUM  
ON PEOPLE  
OF AFRICAN DESCENT



United  
Nations

## SIDE EVENT HIGHLIGHT

In May, FirstRepair partnered with the University of Pittsburgh and Columbia University, to successfully organize an official United Nations side event at the Permanent Forum for People of African Accent.

The primary focus of this event was a comprehensive exploration of various techniques and strategies needed when advocating for local reparations within the United States. Drawing on the expertise of a diverse array of presenters from across the nation, the event served as a platform for sharing valuable insights and experiences within the broader reparations movement.

The event's impact extended far beyond the borders of the United States, attracting attendees from diverse corners of the globe. This international participation not only enriched the discussions but also significantly heightened the outreach and influence of FirstRepair on a global scale.



## SYMPOSIUM HIGHLIGHT

In December, FirstRepair hosted the third annual National Symposium for State and Local Reparations, welcoming 226 reparations leaders from 76 distinct reparations initiatives across the country.

Over three days, attendees engaged in sessions led by experts from across the reparations movement. These sessions covered a wide array of subjects such as legal frameworks, the intersection of arts, and strategies for community engagement.

The symposium provided attendees with knowledge, tools, and connections to continue to advance state and local reparations initiatives across the country.

**226** reparations leaders from  
**76** distinct reparations initiatives.  
**10** sessions. **26** speakers.

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“This Whole day has been amazing networking the spirit of collegiality. Reparations Now”

**Julia Earheart**

Retired Professor  
University of Oklahoma



## © Monthly Reparations Strategy Session

FirstRepair hosts Monthly Reparations Strategy Sessions drawing over 60 attendees from diverse corners of the country each session. Each session features a distinguished guest speaker sharing insights on a topic within their expertise, contributing to our collective mission of strengthening local and municipal reparations activism. These sessions catalyze fostering a comprehensive consensus on racial redress and the nationwide pursuit of reparations.

Furthermore, they provide a valuable platform for attendees to network and share updates on their ongoing and prospective initiatives, fostering collaboration and momentum within the reparations movement.





# OUR GENEROUS DONORS

**\$250,000+**



LEWIS-SEBRING  
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Wellspring  
Philanthropic Fund

GREATER KANSAS CITY  
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION<sup>SM</sup>

**\$50,000 - \$99,999**



**\$2,000 - \$50,000**

evanston!communityfoundation



**ABFE**  
A Philanthropic Partnership  
for Black Communities

SAN FRANCISCO  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
COMMISSION



**MATT AND ELLEN FELDMAN**

**Thank you to all that contributed \$5 - \$500 on our website and for every contribution**



# FirstRepair

Informing Local Reparations, Nationally

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## JOIN THE REPARATIONS MOVEMENT



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