FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Riley Youth Community Center Receives $249,691 Grant to Launch Culturally Responsive Black History Curriculum

Indianapolis, IN – February 24, 2026 — The Riley Youth Community Center is proud to announce the receipt of a $249,691 grant from the Indianapolis African American Quality of Life Initiative (IAAQLI) to launch an original curriculum: Reflections of Us. This culturally responsive, youth-centered Black history curriculum is designed for youth in out-of-school time (OST) settings.

Reflections of Us is rooted in Indianapolis history and Black cultural traditions. The curriculum centers identity, joy, strategy, creativity, community, and future possibility, engaging youth in meaningful explorations of local history and legacy.

Development of the curriculum will be led in partnership with noted educator and cultural strategist Brother Jamaal Shabazz, who will serve as Subject Matter Expert. GrowthWise Solutions will support the development of the curriculum and provide training to other youth-serving organizations to ensure high-quality implementation and broader community impact.

The Cause Conduit assisted in writing the successful grant proposal and will manage the grant implementation. Since 2023, The Cause Conduit has secured nearly $1.5 million in funding for The Riley Youth Community Center, strengthening the organization's capacity to expand high-impact programming for youth and families.

"Reflections of Us is more than a curriculum—it's an affirmation of our youth's identity, brilliance, and power," said Leatrice Riley, Founder and Executive Director of The Riley Youth Community Center. "We are honored to receive this support from IAAQLI to create something rooted in our community's history and designed to inspire future generations. This work reflects our deep belief that every child deserves to see themselves in what they learn—and to know their story matters."

This initiative is made possible through IAAQLI, a partnership of the National Urban League, Indianapolis Urban League, and the African American Coalition of Indianapolis, with funding provided by Lilly Endowment Inc.

More information about IAAQLI is available at https://iaaqli.org

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