



The National
**RETURNING
CITIZENS**
Association Inc.

Pathways to New Beginnings

NRCC

National Returning
Citizens Conference



6TH ANNUAL

**NATIONAL RETURNING
CITIZENS CONFERENCE**

**APRIL
7-10, 2026**
Jacksonville, Florida

2026 Conference Information

- Keynote Speakers
- Schedule At A Glance
- Registration Information
- Hotel Accommodations

Southbank Hotel Jacksonville Riverwalk
1515 Prudential Drive
Jacksonville, FL

Hosted By



nrcconference.org

FROM BARRIERS TO
**BREAK
THROUGH**

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**TIME, LOVE, AND THE
FIGHT FOR JUSTICE:
What It Takes to Hold a
Family—and a System—
Accountable**

FOX RICH

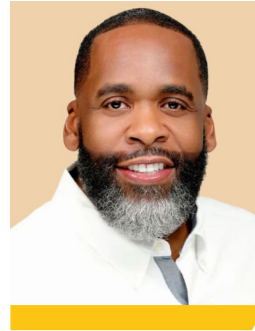
*Documentarian, Author & Justice
Advocate*

Fox Rich is a documentarian, author, and justice advocate whose work sits at the intersection of love, endurance, and systemic accountability. Widely respected for her clear-eyed storytelling and moral resolve, she brings audiences into the lived realities of families navigating incarceration and the long arc of justice.

An autodidactic filmmaker, Fox gained global recognition for *TIME*, her deeply personal documentary chronicling a decades-long fight to free her husband, Robert Richardson. The film premiered at Sundance, earned an Academy Award nomination, and was widely praised for its restraint, intimacy, and emotional precision. She later directed *TIME II: Unfinished Business* (2024), continuing the story as her family pursued freedom for their nephew and co-defendant.

Fox's journey began long before the films. After a failed business venture in the late 1990s led to financial collapse, she and her husband made decisions that altered the course of their lives. What followed was more than two decades of relentless advocacy, caregiving, and documentation. Through video diaries recorded over 21 years, Fox preserved a record of love under pressure—capturing the emotional labor carried by families left behind by the justice system.

A gifted orator and disciplined storyteller, Fox speaks with clarity about resilience, time, and the human cost of mass incarceration. With more than three decades of experience as a social entrepreneur and advocate for incarcerated families, she continues to challenge audiences to confront injustice with courage, compassion, and sustained commitment.



**POWER, COLLAPSE,
AND REDEMPTION:
Leadership, Character,
and the Cost of
Decisions**

KWAME MALIK KILPATRICK

*Minister, Speaker, Consultant &
Certified Character Coach*

Kwame Malik Kilpatrick is an ordained minister, motivational speaker, consultant, and certified character coach whose work centers on leadership, accountability, and character under pressure. He brings a rare and hard-earned perspective shaped by public leadership, personal failure, and deliberate transformation.

Born and raised in Detroit, Michigan, Kwame graduated with honors from Florida A&M University and earned his law degree from Michigan State University College of Law, passing the Michigan Bar Exam on his first attempt. At just twenty-six, he was elected to the Michigan State House of Representatives and later chosen by his peers to serve as Speaker of the House. At thirty-one, he became Mayor of Detroit.

His rapid rise was followed by a profound fall. Facing public scandal and federal charges, Kwame was sentenced to nearly 30 years in prison and ultimately served close to eight. During incarceration, he undertook an intensive period of self-examination, spiritual growth, and disciplined study—work that reshaped his understanding of leadership, power, and responsibility.

Today, Kwame speaks candidly about decision-making, resilience, and the long arc of character development. Drawing from real-world experience at the highest levels of government and from the consequences of failure, he challenges individuals and organizations to confront uncomfortable truths, embrace accountability, and pursue sustainable behavioral and cultural change.

As a husband, father, and faith-driven leader, Kwame's message is not about reinvention through image—but transformation through discipline, character, and purpose.

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FROM INCARCERATION TO
NATIONAL LEADERSHIP:
**Reimagining the
Future of Corrections**

JOSHUA J. SMITH

*Deputy Director
Federal Bureau of Prisons*

Joshua J. Smith is the Deputy Director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP), overseeing 122 facilities, six regional offices, two staff training centers, and 22 residential reentry offices nationwide. He leads a workforce of approximately 36,000 employees and is responsible for the care and custody of more than 156,000 federal inmates.

Sworn in on June 9, 2025, Deputy Director Smith brings a distinctive leadership perspective shaped by personal transformation and a deep commitment to correctional staff wellness. Prior to joining the BOP, he was a successful entrepreneur who built and sold Master Service Companies.

Following his incarceration, Smith redirected his focus toward transforming correctional culture. He founded the Fourth Purpose Foundation, investing \$10 million of his own resources to research best practices and advance a groundbreaking values-based wellness framework for the corrections industry. His work emphasizes healthier environments for correctional staff and more restorative spaces for those in custody.

In 2024, he expanded this impact by founding Prison Life Media, a platform amplifying the voices of correctional professionals to strengthen morale, improve recruitment, and reshape public understanding of correctional work. His appointment marks a historic milestone nationwide, as he is the first individual to be appointed to senior leadership within the Federal Bureau of Prisons after having personally served time in its custody.



FROM PRISON KITCHENS TO
GLOBAL STAGES:
**The Power of Purpose,
Discipline, and
Reinvention**

CHEF JEFF HENDERSON

*Award-Winning Chef, New York
Times Bestselling Author, Speaker
& Philanthropist*

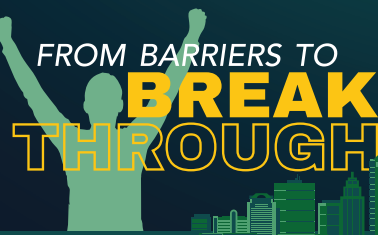
Chef Jeff Henderson is an award-winning chef, New York Times bestselling author, philanthropist, television personality, and highly sought-after speaker. Known for his direct, high-energy teaching style and results-driven message, Jeff delivers practical strategies for personal growth, leadership, and sustained transformation.

A California native, Jeff began his culinary journey in an unexpected place—federal prison—where he discovered his talent for cooking and committed to changing the trajectory of his life. Following his release, he entered the industry as a dishwasher at a fine-dining restaurant in Beverly Hills and quickly rose through the ranks under the mentorship of Chef Robert Gadsby. He went on to work at premier properties including the Coronado Island Marriott, Ritz-Carlton, Hotel Bel-Air, and L'Ermitage.

In 2000, Jeff relocated to Las Vegas, becoming the first African American chef at Caesars Palace, The Hard Rock Hotel, and the Bellagio. His 2007 memoir, *Cooked*, became a New York Times bestseller, leading to a high-profile interview with Oprah Winfrey and a film rights acquisition by Sony Pictures. He later starred in the Food Network docu-reality series *The Chef Jeff Project* and hosted multiple television shows, including *Beat the Chefs*, *Family Style with Chef Jeff*, and *Flip My Food*.

Jeff is also the author of several cookbooks and self-development titles, blending culinary mastery with life strategy and mindset work. His story of transformation has been featured across major national media outlets, reaching millions worldwide.

In 2020, he founded The Chef Jeff Project, a Las Vegas-based nonprofit dedicated to changing lives through food by providing culinary and leadership training to disadvantaged youth and adults. His work continues to open pathways to employment, confidence, and purpose—inside and outside the kitchen.



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APRIL
7-10, 2026
Jacksonville, Florida

Schedule At A Glance

TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2026

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm	NRCC Welcome/Networking Reception	TBD
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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2026

8:00 am - 9:00 am	Conference Registration	Conference Center Foyer
9:00 am - 10:00 am	Opening Session Keynote - Fox Rich <i>Documentarian, Author & Justice Advocate</i>	
10:00 am - 11:30 am	Director's Forum	Grand Ballroom
11:30 am - 11:45 am	Break	Conference Center Foyer
11:45 am - 1:15 pm	Luncheon Keynote - Kwame Malik Kilpatrick <i>Minister, Speaker, Consultant & Certified Character Coach</i>	Grand Ballroom
1:15 pm - 1:30 pm	Break	Conference Center Foyer
1:30 pm - 3:00 pm	Breakout Sessions	Various Rooms
3:00 pm - 3:15 pm	Break	Conference Center Foyer
3:15 pm - 4:45 pm	Breakout Sessions	Various Rooms

THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2026

8:00 am - 9:00 am	Conference Registration	Conference Center Foyer
9:00 am - 10:00 am	Opening Session Keynote - Joshua Smith <i>Deputy Director, Federal Bureau of Prisons</i>	Grand Ballroom
10:00 am - 11:30 am	Returning Citizens Panel Moderator - Dr. Kendall Taylor	Grand Ballroom
11:30 am - 11:45 am	Break	Conference Center Foyer
11:45 am - 1:15 pm	Luncheon Keynote - Chef Jeff Henderson <i>Award-Winning Chef, New York Times Bestselling Author, Speaker & Philanthropist</i>	Grand Ballroom
1:15 pm - 1:30 pm	Break	Conference Center Foyer
1:30 pm - 3:00 pm	Breakout Sessions	Various Rooms
3:00 pm - 3:15 pm	Break	Conference Center Foyer
3:15 pm - 4:45 pm	Breakout Sessions	Various Rooms
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Reception	Conference Center Foyer
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	Awards Banquet/Dinner	Grand Ballroom

FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 2026

9:00 am - 10:30 am	Breakout Sessions	Various Rooms
10:30 am - 10:45 am	Break	Conference Center Foyer
10:45 am - 12:00 pm	Veterans Panel	Grand Ballroom
12:00 pm - 12:30 pm	Closing Session/Retiring of Colors	Grand Ballroom

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THREE-DAY CONFERENCE | AWARDS GALA

Join us for a powerful three-day experience dedicated to dismantling barriers and creating breakthrough opportunities for justice-impacted individuals and the communities that support them. The **2026 National Returning Citizens Conference kicks off Tuesday, April 7th**, with a Welcome Reception, followed by two days of inspiring plenaries, hands-on workshops, and coalition-building sessions designed to accelerate reentry success nationwide.

On Thursday evening, our signature Annual Gala will honor changemakers and visionaries who are redefining what's possible in the reentry movement.

From policy to personal empowerment, we'll explore what it takes to turn obstacles into opportunities—together.



REGISTER TODAY

<https://nrcconference.org>



The National Returning Citizens Conference is dedicated to empowering individuals transitioning from incarceration and those formally incarcerated by fostering pathways to personal growth, community reintegration, and economic stability. Through collaboration, advocacy, and innovation, we seek to remove barriers to successful reentry, promote restorative justice, and elevate the voices of returning citizens.



2026 Venue

Southbank Hotel –
Jacksonville Riverwalk
1515 Prudential Dr,
Jacksonville, FL 32207



BOOK
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HOTEL
TODAY!



604 N. Highway 27, Suite
14 Minneola, FL 34715 (352)
988-5921



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FOR UPDATES

