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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## BCRI Receives \$500K Donation to Advance Efforts for Change

*Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP is Fueling the Next Generation's Fight for Social Justice*

BIRMINGHAM, AL (June 15, 2021) – The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute (BCRI) is pleased to announce that the law firm of Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP will be contributing \$500K to support the Institute's mission to enlighten each generation about civil and human rights by exploring our common past and working together in the present to build a better future.

On the heels of a difficult season riddled with a worldwide pandemic and extraordinary struggles for social justice across the nation, BCRI has a renewed sense of purpose and charge for changemaking. Cravath successfully concluded the long-fought employment justice case of [United States v. Jefferson County](#) and a portion of attorneys' fees awarded to the Firm are being donated to support BCRI's efforts to advance and update the facility to accommodate increased programmatic needs. Other recipients of funding from Cravath include The Equal Justice Initiative and its Legacy Museum, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, and Fisk University – an HBCU and the first such institution to gain accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in the U.S.

Although Birmingham's African American population was about 50% back in 1974, the city employed only one Black man and no Black women. Private plaintiffs, the NAACP, and later, the United States, filed claims alleging discrimination by numerous governmental employers in and around the city. Decades later, the City of Birmingham's police and fire departments now have equal numbers of White and African American police and firefighters, and the City has several high-ranking women and African Americans within its workforce.

DeJuana Thompson, Interim President and CEO of BCRI says, "Dr. King's final work centered on economic justice. We are excited to receive these funds to continue that important work and invest in strategies that change the material conditions of our entire community."

Over the course of nearly forty years, Cravath has represented African American and female plaintiffs alleging employment discrimination by governmental employers in Birmingham, Alabama. Their work on the case started in 1983 and, for decades, in addition to a significant partner commitment, numerous associates have had an opportunity to do meaningful work on the case - a reflection of the generations of Cravath attorneys who have supported this fight for justice. We invite you to read the details of the case which tells the story of a rigorous fight for justice in The Magic City.

Isaac M. Cooper, Chair of the BCRI Board of Directors says, "I'm pleased to know that the results of this case will be so monumental - not just by fostering equality for Birmingham's workforce, but by funding a new generation's fight for justice."

**About BCRI:** The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute is a cultural and educational research center that promotes a comprehensive understanding for the significance of The Civil Rights Movement in Birmingham. For more than 28 years, we have enlightened each generation about civil and human rights. A part of the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument and an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, we stand strong as the cornerstone of the civil rights story, a living memorial with an ongoing mission.