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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A Courageous Conversation of Healing

Bridging the Gap between Birmingham's Black and Jewish Communities

BIRMINGHAM, AL (November 10, 2021) – The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute (BCRI) is pleased to announce an upcoming event aimed at bridging the gap between Birmingham's Black and Jewish Communities on Tuesday, November 16th at 7:00 p.m. The program will be live streamed on Facebook and YouTube, moderated by Sherri Jackson from CBS 42, and feature leadership from both BCRI and the Birmingham Jewish Federation.

Throughout the Movement for Civil Rights, the American Jewish community has played a significant role in the founding and funding of some of the most important civil rights organizations, including the NAACP, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Statistically Jews were one of the most actively involved non-black groups in the Movement.

In 2019, Birmingham's Black and Jewish communities were divided when The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute honored Dr. Angela Davis with the Fred Shuttlesworth Human Rights Award. Supporters and other concerned individuals and organizations, both inside and outside of Birmingham, made requests that the decision be rescinded, and a significant estrangement was forged. The loudest voices heard during this time were those that further divided us.

Now BCRI and The Birmingham Jewish Federation intend to bridge the breaches in our community through a restorative session featuring the new passionate and energetic leaders of both organizations – BCRI President and CEO, DeJuana Thompson, and Danny Cohn, CEO of The Birmingham Jewish Federation. The Institute will host members of both of Boards of Directors for a reception and dialogue of transparency and recovery with the objective of determining future collaborations and examining the potential accomplishments that can benefit both communities.

This event will be live streamed on Facebook and YouTube so that the community can witness this brave exchange. We look forward to hosting our allies on November 16th and hope to soon celebrate further successes for Birmingham's Black and Jewish communities. Visit bcri.org for more information and follow The Institute on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter - @bhamcivilrights.

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 30 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.