



our  
**progress**  
Impact Report 2021



# The Florida Housing Coalition launched one of its largest initiatives in February, 2021: The Center for Racial Equity.

The Center for Racial Equity is the manifestation of an organizational commitment to advance racial equity in housing and serves as a composite platform for the Coalition’s efforts focused on race and equity in the public and private investments, regulations, and legal and policy frameworks that shape Florida’s neighborhoods, cities, and regions. This work is done side by side with national and state organizations.

## A Special Thank You to Our Funders Collaborative

To Our Major Underwriters:



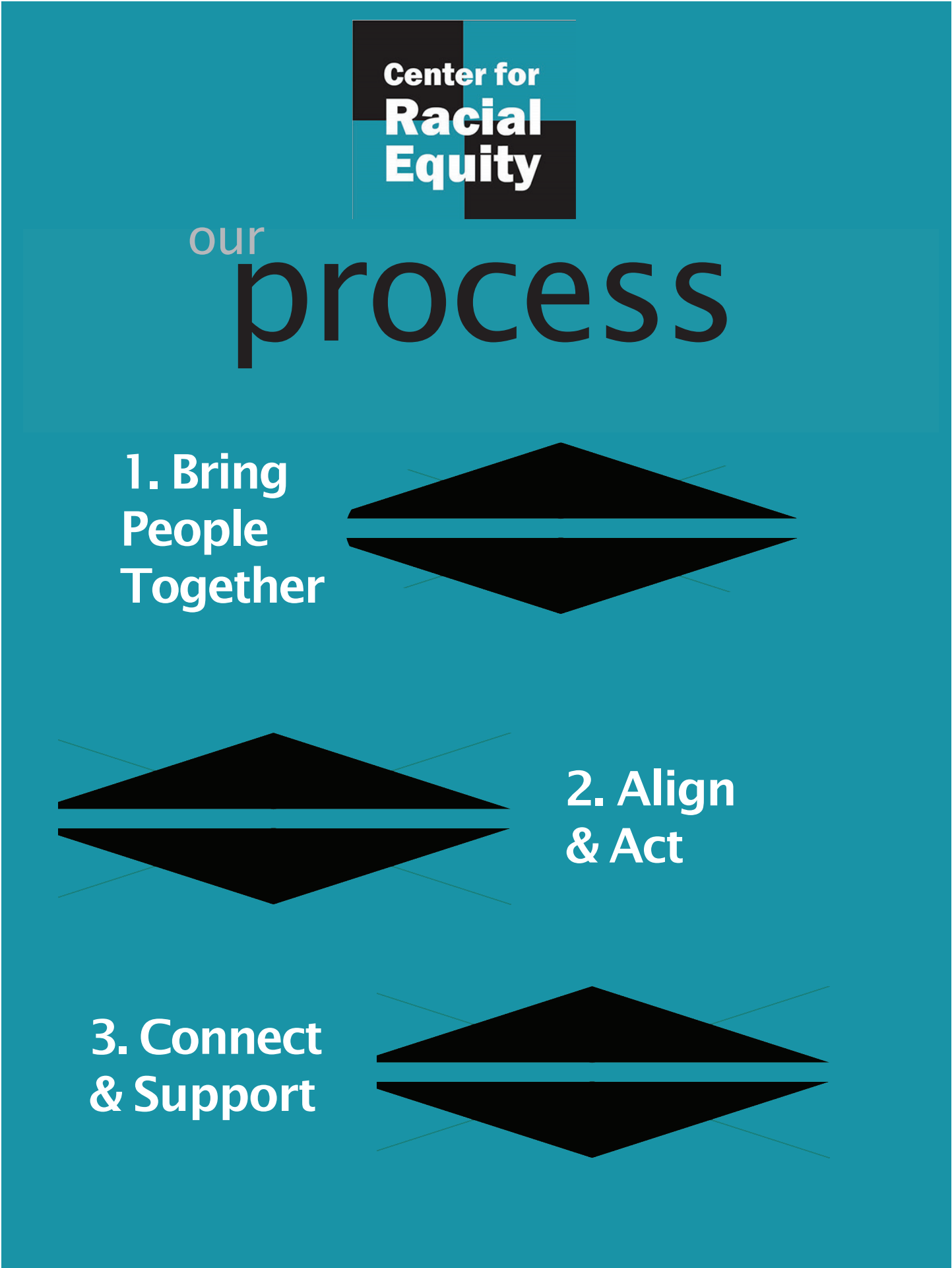
To Our Sponsors:



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**Our Allies:** Black Business Investment Fund, Community Justice Project, Florida Green Building Coalition, Florida Prosperity Partnership, Habitat for Humanity of Florida, Hispanic Federation Florida, Local Initiatives, Support Corporation-Florida, National Alliance to End Homelessness, National Association of Black Women in Construction, National Association of Real Estate Brokers, National Community Reinvestment Coalition, National Housing Trust, National Low Income Housing Coalition, Shimberg Center for Housing Studies, University of Florida



# Becoming an Anti-Racist Organization

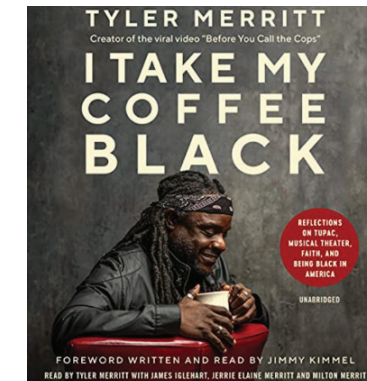
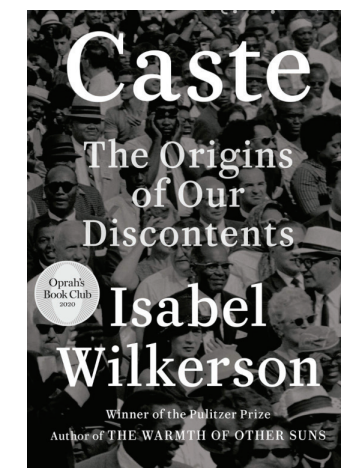
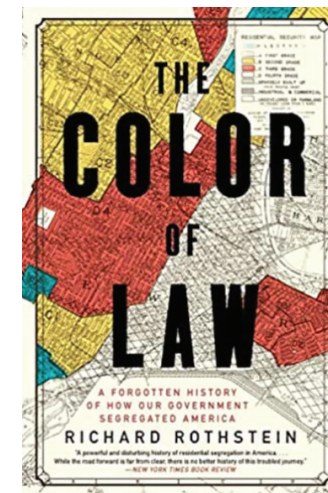
The Florida Housing Coalition made an external commitment with The Center for Racial Equity to bring the lens of racial equity to bear on all our work, with intentionality. We also made the commitment internally, as a staff and as a board, to educating ourselves on understanding our role in creating and maintaining justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion within our organization and how we, as individuals, can better identify and confront issues of whiteness, privilege, and internalized racism in our culture and systems.

Recognizing that unpaid internships disproportionately affect students of color, and give an unfair advantage to those who already have socioeconomic support and choices, the Coalition dismantled its unpaid internship program.

The staff and the board of directors participated in an in-depth series of workshops led by Racial Equity Partners (REP). The workshops covered such topics as the Structural and Historical Analysis of Racism, Becoming an Anti-racist Organization, as well as the Personal Journey: Understanding Racial Identity, Unconscious Bias and Spheres of Influence.



The work with REP resulted in a strategic action plan designed to help our staff embed racial equity in all aspects of our work and lives. Part of that plan included a monthly Book Club discussion group. Held at lunchtime once a month, staff have read and discussed a number of anti-racist titles including *The Color of Law*, *Caste*, and *I Take my Coffee Black*. In addition, every other week at lunch, the staff of the Coalition meets informally to discuss a piece of media suggested by one of the staff members. Entitled *Lunch in the Breakroom*, this informal and lively discussion has explored art, music, talks by Derecka Purnell, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Constance Wu and others.





# 1. Bring People Together

## Conference

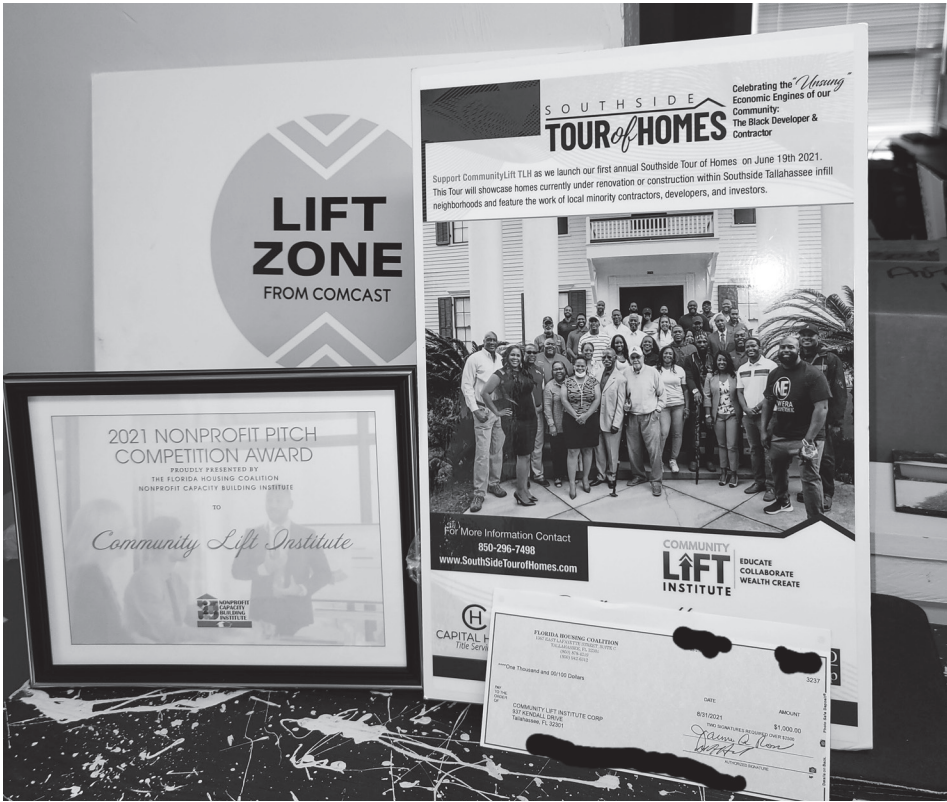
The Annual Home Matters Conference, held virtually in 2021, focused on Leading with Equity. With over 930 in attendance, each session--from the plenary's to the Forums--looked at affordable housing issues through a racial equity lens. Highlights included a State of the Nation by HUD Dep Secretary Adrienne Todman, a Keynote from Lisa Rice from the National Fair Housing Alliance, to other national allies including Diane Yentel, National Low Income Housing Coalition, Donald Whitehead Jr, National Coalition for the Homeless, Eileen Fitzgerald, Wells Fargo Foundation, Priya Jayachandran, National Housing Trust, and Ebony Thomas, Bank of America, among others.



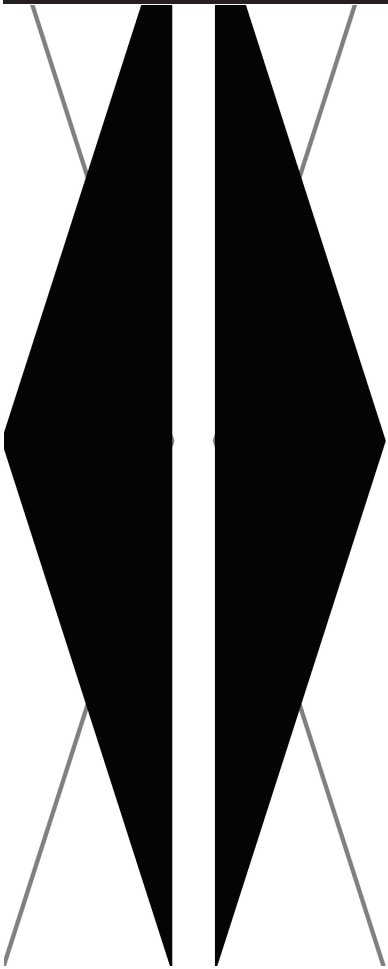
## Nonprofit Pitch Competition

Held at Fall 2021's Annual Home Matters Conference, Florida Housing Coalition held its first Nonprofit Pitch Competition. Selected by a panel of judges, the Tallahassee based Community Lift Institute won the \$1,000 award to explore innovative development and business solutions addressing racial equity in housing.

*“The solution we advocate to achieve equitable housing development is simple- activate, empower, and invest in the capacity of black builders to build and support homeownership in their communities.” -- Christic Henry, Community Lift Institute*



# 1. Bring People Together



## 1. Bring People Together

### Center for Racial Equity Policy Discussions

Bringing together national and state partners, our CRE Policy Discussions investigated policy practices and past injustices that have undermined racial equity, and sought to promote new strategies aimed at advancing racial equity in Florida's neighborhoods. These popular forums were attended by more than 650 partners in 2021. Policies examined included:

**Fair Housing**, March 2021

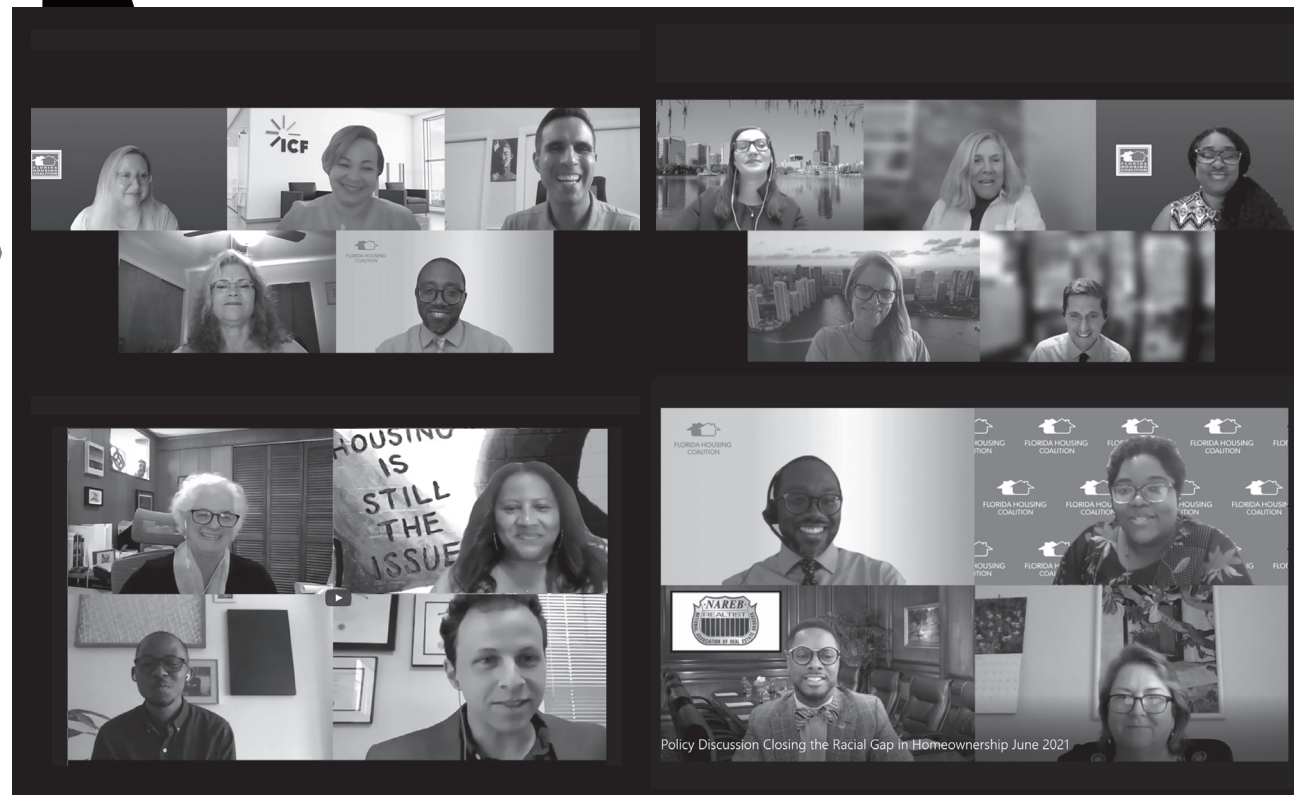
**Closing the Racial Gap in Homeownership**, June 2021

**Centering Racial Equity in the Housing**

**Crisis Response System**, August 2021

**Climate Justice**, November 2021

Each of these robust policy discussions have been archived and made available for free on our [CRE website](#).



*Illustration by India Monae Johnson, Graphic Design Intern from FAMU*

### HBCU Leadership Academy

The Center for Racial Equity recently launched the HBCU Leadership Academy to introduce minority students attending our state's historically black colleges and universities to the affordable housing development and finance fields. The goal of the program is to address the need for talented professionals, while increasing representation of Black and other minority professionals in the field. Training series begins during the Spring semester of 2022 covering the affordable housing industry in Florida, including programs such as SHIP and the LITHC program. This will also provide an opportunity to meet with representatives from key agencies and professional organizations such as Florida Housing Finance Corporation.

## 1. Bring People Together



## 2. Align & Act

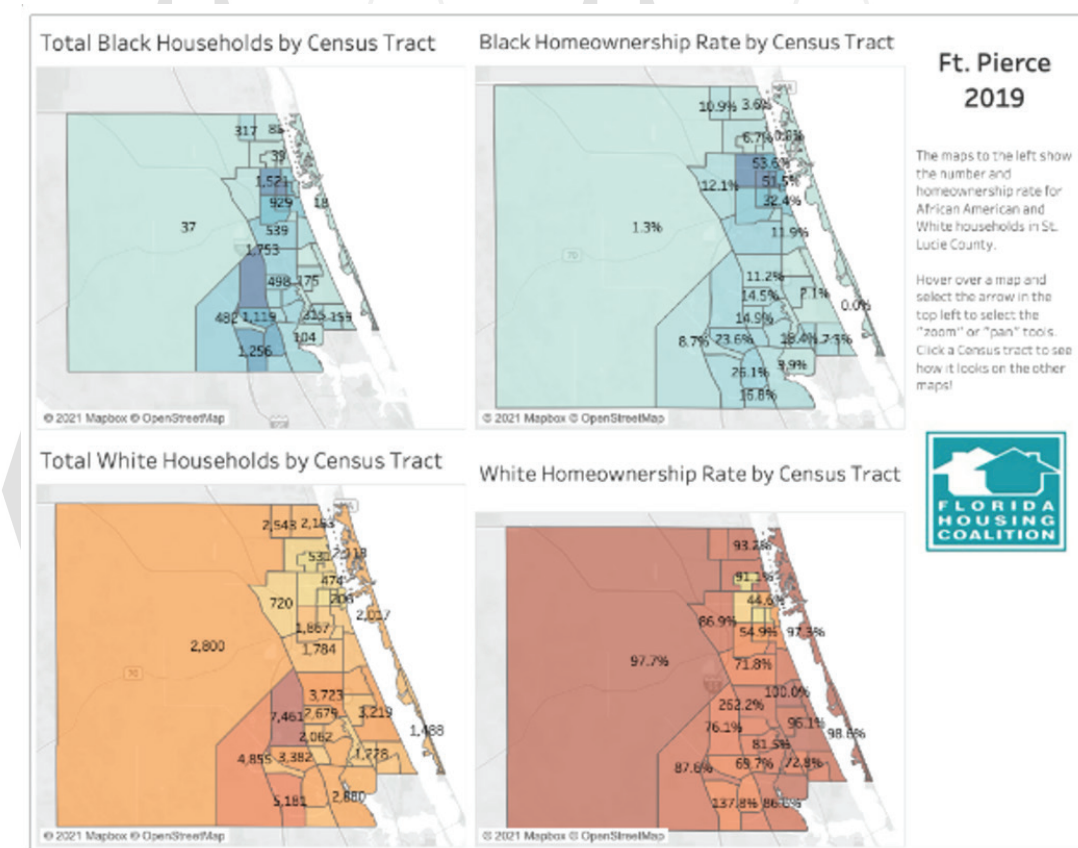
## Investing in Black Homeownership



*“By strategically targeting areas of homeownership and financial independence in Lincoln Park, Incubate Neighborhood Center (INC), aims to revitalize this economically deprived community and build wealth from within. Thank you for the guidance and assistance that you are providing to help our nonprofit become a HUD certified homebuyer counseling agency. This will help Incubate Neighborhood Center increase its outreach to homebuyers of color.” Canieria Gardner, CEO, INC*

## Closing the Gap Grants

After a rigorous application process, the City of Fort Pierce, and the City of West Palm Beach were selected to receive the Center’s first Closing the Gap grants. The 24- month engagement began in September 2021 during which the Coalition’s Closing the Gap team has actively engaged with these two local governments in a comprehensive, systems-change effort towards closing the racial gap in homeownership. In the early Spring 2022, the team will present the findings of the Equity Profiles for each community. These profiles offer each community a comprehensive review of historic and contemporary policies, demographic data, institutional practices, and housing programs which will serve as a metric for furthering racial equity efforts. To complete this phase of the work, the Center has identified allies who may not be usual partners, and made concentrated efforts to include the voices and concerns of residents, and those with lived experiences as we finalize the Equity Profiles for each community.



### 3. Connect & Support

## BIPOC Support & Connect

In Fall of 2021, the Coalition worked with representatives of 18 nonprofits to increase their capacity as nonprofit housing developers through our **Nonprofit Capacity Building Institute**. Thanks to our course development partner, **Fifth Third Bank**, this intensive and interactive 8-week course was provided for free to the following nonprofits:

**Abundant Life Ministries-Hope House, Inc., Boley Centers, Inc., The Community Solutions Group, Community Land Trust of Palm Beach County, Community Lift Institute, Cora Properties LLC, East to West Development Corporation, Florida Home Partnership, Blackland Entreprises, Florida S.P.+E.C.S., Inc., Greater Lake City CDC, I AM Wright Construction, LCN Group, New Life Village, People Helping People Community Development Corp, Provident Housing Solutions, Inc, South Florida Community Land Trust, Tooley Community Development Group.**

One of our first partnerships resulted in complimentary trade association membership for our nonprofit developers in the Coalition of Affordable Housing Providers (CAHP).



FIFTH THIRD BANK



Our approach starts with training and technical assistance, then connects those developers to opportunities preparing them to access the capital needed to realize their development concepts. The goal of our BIPOC Support & Connect program is to break through barriers for minority-led businesses within the Florida real estate development industry to increase opportunities for emerging BIPOC real estate developers and for nonprofit affordable housing providers to build their development team options with qualified minority-owned businesses.



***“Thank you to the Florida Housing Coalition for being such a great partner, counselor and advisor. We have truly appreciated all your efforts to help us get this far...we continue to look to you for your support. Hannibal Square CLT is stronger because of the Florida Housing Coalition.” -- Camille Reynolds Lewis, Executive Director, Hannibal Square CLT***



### 3. Connect & Support

## Climate Justice: Heirs Property

In partnership with Fannie Mae, the Center is tackling its first Climate Justice Goal: To preserve lives and properties of low income, minority, elders, and persons with disabilities in flood hazard areas by resolving heirs' title issues. The restoration of clear title to heirs will open the door for financing, disaster assistance, mitigation, leading to insurable assets.



## OUR APPROACH

### RESEARCH

The first step in our collaborative approach was to develop a research methodology and analytical tools to identify heirs' property locations throughout the state.



### LOCATE

Using parcel and tract level data, our team was able to track and identify where incidence of heirs' property issues are most likely to be occurring in our sample communities.

### RISK ASSESSMENT

The next step will be to conduct an assessment of those areas most vulnerable to climate change-based hazards within those identified zones.



### TRAIN & CONNECT

Our approach then will be to connect housing providers, advocates, local governments, and legal services to the tools and methodologies developed to assist heirs' property owners to obtain marketable title.

### PROVIDE TOOLS

This will result in a series of recommendations and draft language for a FEMA affidavit system for heirs' property residents to qualify for Individual Assistance.





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### Florida Housing Coalition

1311 N. Paul Russell Road, B-201, Tallahassee, FL, 32301

Phone | 850.878.4219 Fax | 850.942.6312

[www.flhousing.org](http://www.flhousing.org)