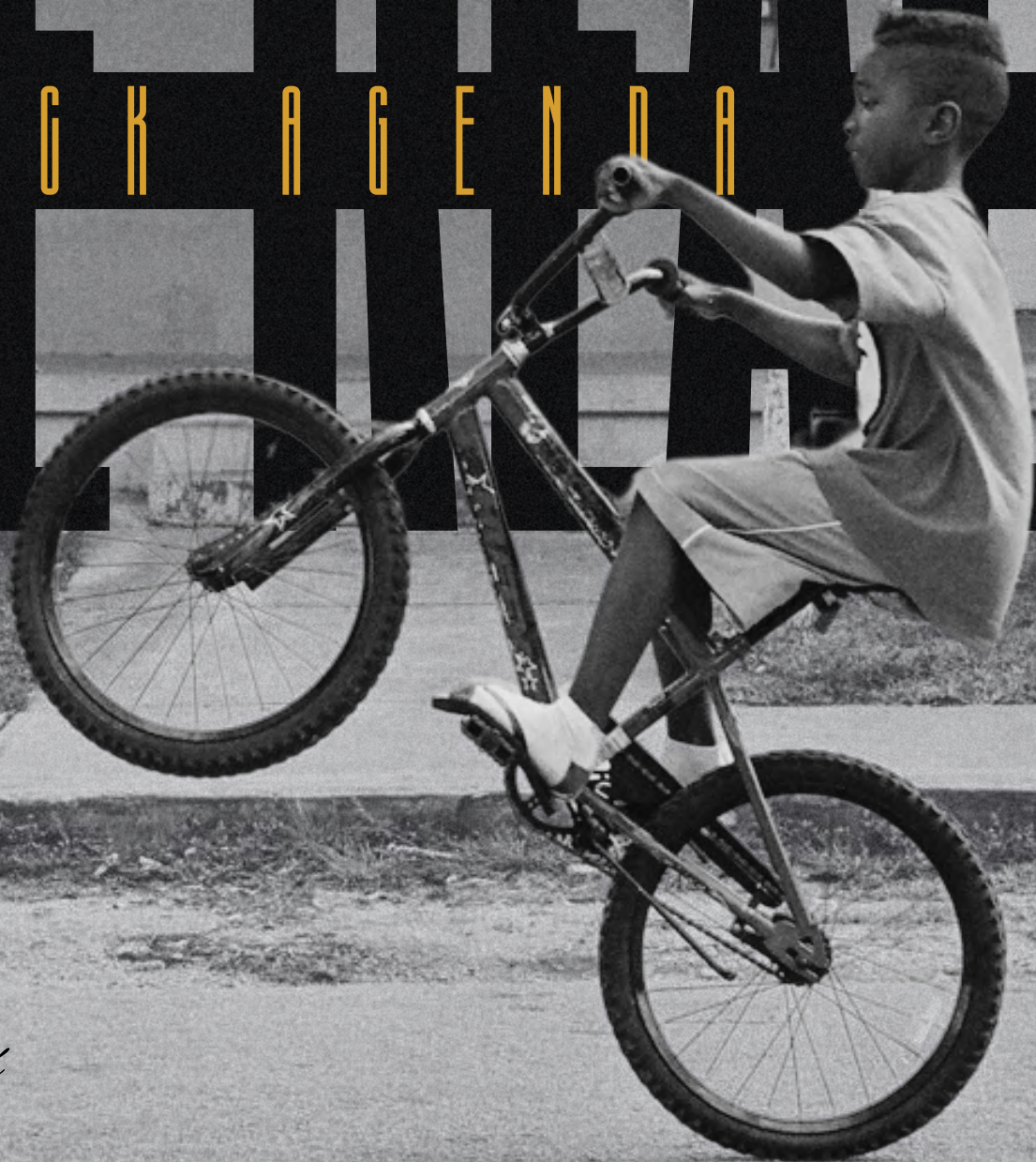


THE DREAM

BLACK AGENDA



this is for *you*
this is for *us*

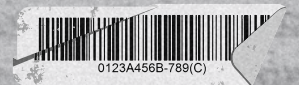


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Dear Black Miami,

We believe in a world where every Black child grows up laughing, loved, and unafraid—a world where they are met with care and support at home, school, and in public. A world where they feel safety, dignity, and belonging deep within their bodies. This is our vision.

A Haitian proverb says, “A great community is planted by elders who know they will never sit under the shade of what they plant.”

This reflects how The Black Collective views our work. We may not witness full liberation in our lifetimes, but like our ancestors who fought for our freedom, **we labor today for the freedom of our grandchildren.**

And in the meantime? We get what we need for our people— here and now.

The Noir Project is The Black Collective’s community-building and organizing initiative to learn what Black Miami wants and needs from our elected officials and each other. Its goal is to create a Black agenda rooted in the solutions our community cares about and, from there, to organize—building Black political and economic power.

The Noir Project is for you. For us.

Because the personal is political: We are from here. We have family here. The issues we’ve heard about while knocking on doors affect us, too. We’ve been homeless. We carry the weight of loved ones lost to gun violence. We know what it’s like to struggle to make ends meet, to lack access to medical care, or not to have safe and enriching after-school programs for our children.

Through conversations with tens of thousands of Black people across Miami-Dade, we’ve seen that they know precisely what stands between us and the lives we envision for our communities and our children. We understand these barriers’ root causes and have clear, actionable solutions to meet our needs and move toward our collective vision.

When Black people win, everyone wins—this has always been true. From trained paramedics to free school lunch programs or life-affirming approaches to public safety, these practices started in Black communities and have transformed lives nationwide. The same will be true of what Black people are asking for now: free medical clinics, secure jobs, and safe, clean, affordable housing.

We can’t wait to share what we’ve heard. And organize to achieve what our communities deserve.

In solidarity,
The Black Collective





When we founded The Black Collective, our mission was clear: to create a political home for Black people and to craft a visionary roadmap for the future of Florida's Black communities. As organizers, we recognized the importance of grounding our demands in the voices of those we serve, even before formal conversations had begun. To bridge this gap, we launched The Noir Project—a platform designed to engage, listen, and build a collective future based on our communities' lived experiences and aspirations.

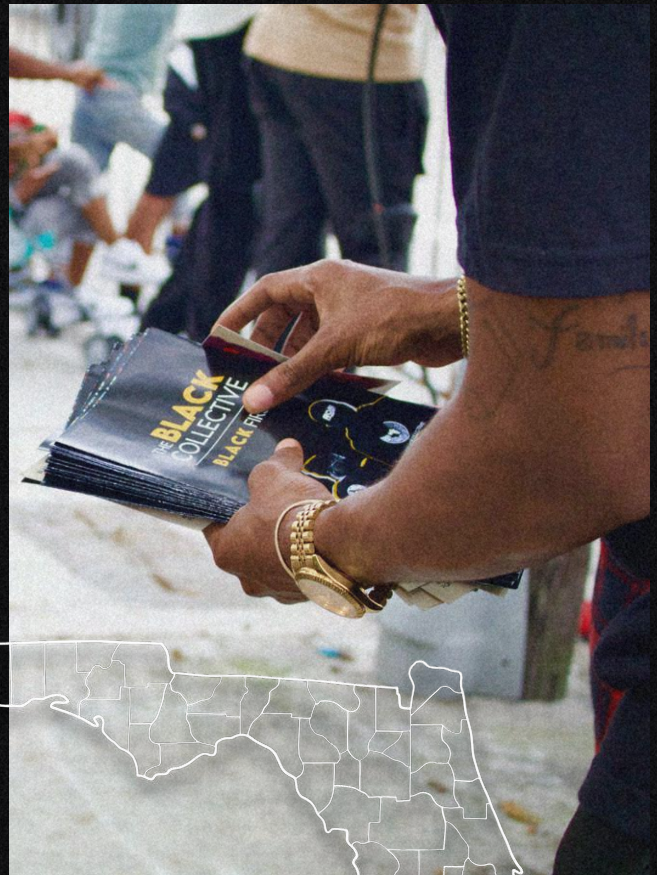
purpose

The Noir Project set out to listen to the needs of Black Miamians and use that input to create a Black agenda focused on safety, health, and community well-being. It seeks to amplify the voices of Black people, challenging false narratives and ensuring their priorities are heard. The project is dedicated to organizing Black communities and values-aligned partners to realize this shared vision.

What We Did: Surveyed **10,000** *Black* People

To create a Black agenda, you must first listen to Black people. That is precisely what we did. We spent more than 160 hours surveying over 10,000 Black residents of Miami-Dade on doorsteps, in local shops, and at community events. This effort makes **The Noir Project** the largest Black data initiative in Florida's history.

We developed and rigorously tested a survey at The Back Collective to yield meaningful, actionable insights. Researchers at the University of Miami also helped us analyze the data. **Between July 2023 and April 2024**, our team canvassed Black communities across Miami-Dade to deeply understand the issues that matter most to us.



OUTREACH

Neighborhoods visited: 18

Black Miami-Dade residents engaged: *Over 72,000*

Surveys completed: 10,512

NEIGHBORHOODS

Allapattah	Little Havana
Brownsville	Miami Gardens
Coconut Grove	Naranja
East Hialeah	North Miami
Florida City	North Miami Beach
Goulds	Opa-Locka
Homestead	Overtown
Liberty City	Perrine
Little Haiti	South Dade

ZIP CODES

33147, 33142, 33169, 33150, 33054, 33127, 33034, 33030, 33136, 33056, 33167, 33033, 33035, 33161, 33157, 33168, 33162, 33137, 33303, 33156, 33146, 33133, 33032, 33177, 33143, 33014, 33013, 33170, 33152, 33129, 33176, 33139, 33179, 33023, 33189, 33126, 33010, 33090, 33132, 33154, 33128

Safety

“I was not surprised to see, when it came to safety, that nobody asked for police, even when they said that they wanted fewer guns because gun violence is a problem in our community. Not one person said we needed more police when we talked about safety. Jobs and housing were number one. So, that means people feel safe when they have clean and safe housing. That helps them feel more secure in their community, not more policing and surveillance.”

— Valencia “Vee” Gunder, Co-Founder & Executive Director, The Black Collective



We asked Black people: “What do you need to feel safe in your community? What must your government do to make you feel safer?”

To feel safe in our communities, Black people want:

- ✓ Secure jobs
- ✓ Safe, clean, and affordable housing
- ✓ Fewer guns
- ✓ Youth services
- ✓ Neighborhood services

To increase safety, Black people want from our government:

- ✓ Guaranteed income
- ✓ Safe, clean, and affordable housing
- ✓ Government accountability
- ✓ More youth programs
- ✓ Participatory budgeting

These priorities are shared across gender, neighborhood, ethnicity, and age. Notably, many people ranked each of the top three needs—income, housing, and accountability—equally essential, reinforcing that *all of these factors* are critical for improving safety.

We know that the safest communities are those with the most resources, not the most police. Our survey confirms that Black Miamians understand this. To truly enhance safety, Black people want resources—guaranteed income, affordable housing, youth, and neighborhood programs—ways to care for our families and strengthen our communities.





Health

We asked Black people: “What are three things we can do to improve our community's health?”

To improve health in our communities, Black people want:

- ✓ Free medical clinics
- ✓ Food programs
- ✓ Mental health services

Across ethnicity, age, and gender—except for trans women—free medical clinics were ranked as the most critical factor in improving community health. For trans women, however, food programs were the top priority.

In most neighborhoods, free medical clinics were seen as crucial to enhancing health, though some communities placed greater emphasis on food programs or mental health services. Similar to the responses about safety, many people ranked *all of these needs* as equally important, reflecting the understanding that each plays a vital role in supporting community well-being.

“Every single time, somebody will click “free clinic” nine times out of 10. Then I would go, “Hey, do you know about the Freedom Lab down the street? You know my homie, Dr. Armen [Henderson]—yes, an actual doctor from the University of Miami, Jackson Memorial Hospital—three to four days a week has a free clinic where you don't need ID, you don't need any money. Whatever's wrong with you—come through—he will help you or get you to someone who can help you. Food programs and community gardens were other survey options that were picked a lot. And so, we told them about the Village Free(dge) at the Freedom Lab, which provides hot meals and groceries to people every morning.”

– St. James Valsaint, Organizer, The Black Collective



Democracy

We asked Black people: “What stops you from participating in democracy? Do you think your voice matters in decisions about our communities?”

Black Miamians said they do not actively participate in democracy due to time constraints, lack of knowledge, or distrust in the system, believing their vote does not matter. Barriers such as restricted rights, transportation issues, or navigating the voting process were also noted, along with frustration over unfulfilled political promises. While some actively participated, others called for better outreach and resources to make participation more accessible.

Views on whether respondents felt their voice mattered were mixed. Some felt heard but many were skeptical, citing disconnection or distrust in the system. Others believed their voices only mattered when they were part of a collective or depending on who represented them.

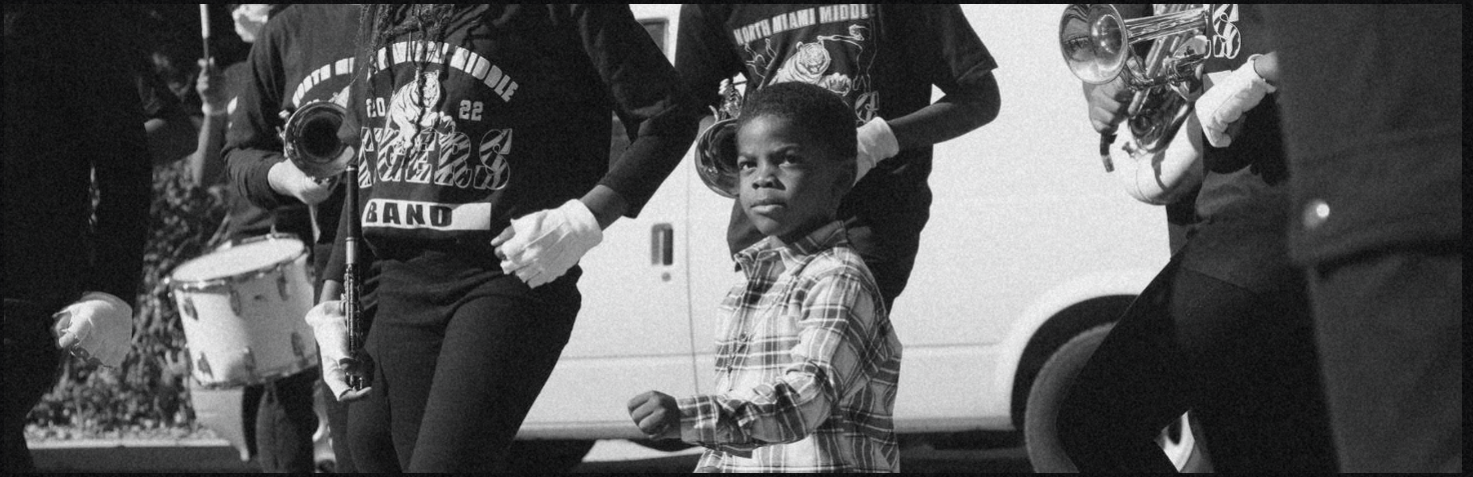
People expressed dissatisfaction with the government's investment in their communities' health, particularly in Black communities. Concerns included lack of healthcare access, insufficient mental health services, rising housing costs, and the government prioritizing wealthy people. Some acknowledged government efforts, but most felt these fell short of the needs of the Black community.



“When it comes to democracy, most people say they don't participate because they don't have the time. And I know some people say that's an excuse, but the reality is, many employers don't give their staff time off to vote.”

The second issue is that people are losing hope in democracy. They don't feel our local government is listening to the people's concerns. For example, how many times have we brought hundreds of people into the County Commission, advocated against something, and then sat there and watched our mayor and commissioners vote in favor of it?”

– Valencia “Vee” Gunder, The Black Collective



Vision for the future

We asked Black people: “What would Miami be without Black people? What makes Miami so unique culturally? What should the future of Black Miami be?”

Black Miamians believe that without their contributions, Miami would be unrecognizable. Black people, particularly Bahamians and Black Americans, played a crucial role in building the city physically, culturally, and economically. Many respondents emphasized that Miami would lack the vibrancy that defines it today without Black people. Despite ongoing struggles with racism and gentrification, Black Miami remains the foundation of the city’s cultural and economic identity.

“When it came to “What should the future of Black Miami be?” many people said, “We want it to be progressive, accessible, collective, and safe.”

– Valencia “Vee” Gunder,
The Black Collective

Looking to the future, Black Miamians envision a unified, thriving community with economic empowerment, more Black-owned businesses, affordable housing, and stronger community ties. This vision is central to youth development, mental health support, and preserving Black culture. Additionally, there is a strong call for greater representation in government, with Black Miamians playing a more active role in shaping the city’s future. This vision is one of a prosperous, inclusive, and resilient Black Miami that honors its history and moves toward a self-determined future.



What We Want: Demands + The Black Agenda

In the heart of Miami, beneath the sun-soaked allure of paradise, festers a profound injustice—one both glaringly visible and concealed beneath the myths of prosperity. As we contend with soaring rents, relentless displacement, and the unraveling of our vibrant communities, we must confront a fundamental truth: these crises are not accidental but deliberate outcomes of a system built on exploitation. Our beautiful city, once a symbol of hope and opportunity, now serves as a stark testament to the failures of a political and corporate elite that has consistently prioritized profit over people.

To fully grasp the depth of the injustice we face, we must revisit Miami's origins—a city founded on land stolen from Indigenous peoples and built on the backs of marginalized communities. From its inception, Miami's growth has been inextricably linked to the exploitation and displacement of its most vulnerable residents. Over the decades, political and corporate powers have crafted policies that elevate unchecked development over human dignity, profits over people, and exclusion over inclusion. This history is not some distant past—it is a continuous thread that shapes our struggles today.

We are not merely passive victims of a faceless system; we are living proof of the intentional decisions made by those in power—decisions that have driven us from our homes, pushed us to the periphery, and dismantled the communities we hold dear. Our demands are for reparations, not charity; they are rightful claims for justice. The truth is clear: Miami's political and corporate elites are the architects of our disenfranchisement, and they owe us more than just recognition—they owe us restitution.

As we present the demands in this document, we call on you to recognize the urgent need for systemic transformation and stand with us in the fight for reparations. This is not just about righting past wrongs but about reclaiming our future—a future where every Miami resident can thrive in dignity and justice.



The black agenda

WE THE PEOPLE DESERVE

Government Accountability to the Poor and Working-Class Black Communities

We demand a government that answers to us, not corporate interests.

We demand a government that answers to us, not to corporate interests. Corruption has robbed our people of opportunity, from the city hall to county chambers, where corporate puppets call the shots. Politicians serve the elite, not the people, and it is time we dismantle this power structure. We envision a system where the poor, the working class, immigrants, and all marginalized people of Miami determine our own reality. This is not a call for more token councils; it is a demand for a complete restructuring of power where our voices lead the way.

THIS IS OUR CITY

Housing for All

We built this city—yet we are pushed out, priced out, left out.

We built this city—yet we are pushed out, priced out, left out. Development is being weaponized not for progress but to displace us, to keep us precarious and exploitable. Housing is not a luxury; it is a right. We demand free, accessible housing for all. Miami's past—redlining and segregation—has led to a present where we fight each other for resources; resources we helped create, while wealthy people bask in paradise. This is our land, and we demand direct community control over public resources. No taxation without representation, especially for immigrants and the working poor.

THE YOUTH SHALL LEAD

Self-Actualization for Youth

Miami's social infrastructure is crumbling, and our isolation is by design.

Poverty is policed, our youth are criminalized, while the city neglects its responsibility to nurture us. We know the path to self-actualization and community care, but we lack the funding and infrastructure to make it real. We demand investment in our youth: mental health, recovery, and wellness programs that empower us to thrive, not just survive. We demand the tools to realize our potential because no system built to oppress us will willingly provide them.

PAY US WHAT WE DESERVE

Jobs with Dignity

Our labor is exploited by those who see Miami as a playground for profits.

Jobs here are run by outsiders looking to squeeze every drop from our sweat and pain—through wage theft, sexual violence, racism, and exploitation of immigrants. This creates a vicious cycle where the exploited are isolated and trapped, pushed toward imprisonment, where the exploitation only continues. Miami's indifference to this injustice fuels its economy. We demand jobs with dignity, fair wages, and the political power to secure our future through self-determination.

RUN US THE BAG

Guaranteed Income for All

The instability of Miami's tourist-driven economy leaves workers vulnerable to exploitation.

The path this city has chosen ensures that our work will remain precarious and our livelihoods unstable. Hyper-exploitation is the rule, not the exception. Miami contributed to global instability, extracting underpaid labor from nations like Haiti, which the United States helped destabilize for decades. We demand guaranteed income for all workers and immigrants, ensuring that the city that profits from our labor cannot abandon us to poverty.

THE FUTURE IS LOVE

Gender Justice

Miami's economy is built on patriarchal exploitation, dividing us along the lines of labor and gender.

Men are pushed into brutal physical labor, while women are relegated to caretaking roles—nurses, teachers, domestic workers—and sex work. Transgender people are left in the margins, alienated and imprisoned. The system thrives on this division, pitting us against each other while profiting from our exploitation. To end all oppression in Miami, we must confront the gendered nature of our struggle and demand true gender justice for all.

RESILIENCE FOR THE PEOPLE

Climate Justice and Land for Our People

We are not the cause of climate change; corporate greed is.

"Human factors" is code for corporate destruction, which is driving us toward environmental collapse. We demand land, for we are the Indigenous caretakers of this ecosystem, the stewards of its future. The ruling class cannot be trusted with our survival—they would develop us into oblivion. Any effort to combat the climate crisis must center on protecting our people, not displacing us further.

ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Community Control Over Resources

No more scraps from the corporate table—our future will not be dictated by profit.

We believe in direct community control over all public resources: housing, land, education, and health. Every immigrant, worker and marginalized voice must be represented in the decisions that shape our lives. We demand a future where we are no longer exploited, no longer silenced, but empowered to build the world we deserve.

We refuse to accept a Miami built on the backs of the oppressed, where a few profit indefinitely, while most families are left to suffer. Our demands are not requests—they are nonnegotiable declarations of the justice we are owed. This system of exploitation and greed must be dismantled at its roots. We are not interested in reforming a broken system; we seek to overthrow it. From government accountability to housing, from economic liberation to gender and climate justice, these struggles are intertwined and cannot be separated. We demand a Miami where the people—the poor, the working class, the immigrants, the marginalized—hold the power, not the corporate elite. This is our city, and we will take it back. Our future will not be dictated by the same forces that have oppressed us for generations. The time for half-measures is over. We will fight, organize, and create a liberated future where justice is not an ideal but a reality for all.



The Black Collective

We are The Black Collective, a Black-led organization dedicated to advancing a unified Black agenda, raising political consciousness, and building political and economic power for Black communities in Miami.

To us, building power means dismantling the systems of exploitation that oppress the poor, the working class, the immigrants, and the marginalized and reclaiming our city from the corporate elite. It means uniting our struggles for housing, economic liberation, and justice into an unstoppable force that demands radical, systemic change—not compromise. We will fight for a future where true power rests in the hands of the people and justice is a lived reality for all.

Founded in 2016 by a group of Black leaders in Miami, we saw the need to invest in and uplift Black power, so we took action and created an organization to meet those needs.

What we do

- Canvassing and Outreach
- Community Events
- Community PODS (*Powerbuilding, Organizing, Development*)
- Political Education
- Revolutionary Organizing School
- Models of Self-Determination
- Electoral and Legislative organizing

Revolutionary Organizing School

The Revolutionary Organizing School (ROS) is dedicated to Black liberation and frontline leadership by raising political consciousness and building the economic power of Black communities. This 8-week fellowship focuses on political education, developing key competencies, and cultivating both soft and hard skills. The ROS Fellows also engage in community service and lead a team service project as part of their experience

Freedom Lab

Freedom Lab, co-founded by six community organizations, including The Black Collective, is a space dedicated to mutual aid and building Black power. It is where individuals can access essentials like clothing, food, and medical care, all in one location. The facility features a maker space, coworking space, private offices, a community garden, and an event space, creating a hub for community growth and support.

Freedom Lab houses the following six organizations:

The Black Collective: That's us! Organizing Black Miami to build Black political and economic power.

Black Men Build: Organizing Black men into the movement for racial, gender, and social justice through healing, power-building campaigns, and political education.

Dade County Street Response: A free health clinic.

Roots Collective: A group of ambitious visionaries dedicated to the economic growth, social awareness & self-sufficiency of black & brown communities.

The Smile Trust: Free meals, showers, haircuts, and other services for unsheltered people. Disaster response/hurricane relief. Fresh organic food, food education, agriculture education.

Village Free(dge): A food pantry, free groceries provider.



The *Noir* Project Story

When we founded The Black Collective, our mission was to create a political home for Black people and build a shared vision for the future of Florida. But from the beginning, we felt strongly that we could not launch campaigns or make demands without first hearing from the people. We believed running a campaign without talking to the community was irresponsible

***“Well, let’s talk to them,”
said Nathaniel “Nate”
Moreau, our field
director.***

We set an ambitious goal. The county’s typical studies only engage about 300 Black people, but we aimed to gather feedback from over 10,000 Black residents living in Miami-Dade County. Inspired by other Black data projects, we envisioned gathering accurate data from our community.

Through The Noir Project, we wanted to remind people that Florida has long been part of the Black liberation and civil rights movements. In preparing for this, we did extensive research on past Black data projects, one of which was led by Charles Hadley (1913–1985), a significant but often overlooked civil rights leader from Miami.

Hadley was a key figure in Miami's Black political activism, known for founding Operation Big Vote, a grassroots movement that mobilized Black voters from the late 1950s to the 1980s. Born in Cairo, Georgia, and raised in Tallahassee, Hadley earned a Bachelor of Science from Florida A&M University before relocating to Miami in 1943.

Through Operation Big Vote, Hadley and a dedicated group of volunteers registered thousands of Black voters, conducted voter education, and provided essential support like free rides to polling stations. His work was crucial in boosting Black voter turnout and influencing critical elections, such as Florida's support for Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964. Often referred to as the "unofficial mayor" of Black Miami, Hadley's political endorsements were highly coveted; he was officially appointed to Miami's Civil Service Board in 1968. In recognition of his civic contributions, a park in Liberty City was named after him in 1982.

Local policymakers and pundits claimed to speak for Black communities, but what we heard in our organizing work was completely different. That is when we saw the need to bridge this gap by directly engaging with Black people and hearing their voices on what they truly want and need. Like Hadley, this story and organizing effort reflect our commitment to building power and listening to our community first.



Purpose




“The Noir Project is essential because the community told us we did the opposite of what most politicians do. We really went out of our way to talk to the people of the community about the issues that matters most to them. Those voices are what makes the foundation for The Noir Project.”

— Moise “Moe” Simbert, Lead Organizer, The Black Collective

The Noir Project set out to listen to the needs of Black Miamians and use that input to create a Black agenda focused on safety, health, and community well-being. It seeks to amplify the voices of Black people, challenging false narratives and ensuring their priorities are heard. The project is dedicated to organizing Black communities and values-aligned partners to realize this shared vision.

The Noir Project is a community-building project by The Black Collective that seeks to create a Black agenda to the issues our community cares about, based on solutions.

This project is more than just a survey. It is a movement fueled by Black Miami’s voices, experiences, and dreams.



The first step in building a Black agenda is listening to Black people. That is exactly what we did—we recollected feedback from over 10,000 Black residents across Miami-Dade, by engaging with tens of thousands at their doorsteps, in local shops, or during community events.

We designed our data project with three key goals in mind: reaching the full diversity of Black Miami, respecting the time and voices of those we engaged with, and delivering high-quality, meaningful data.

Achieving this required leading a strategic outreach strategy, generating a well-crafted survey, and a strong team. One of our top priorities was ensuring that everyone participated. Black people in Florida are often erased, so when we say "Black," we mean African American, Afro-Latinx, Afro-Caribbean, African, Spanish-speaking, Haitian Creole-speaking, migrants, undocumented, cisgender, transgender, gender nonconforming, queer, straight, renters, homeowners, homeless, incarcerated, students, parents, workers, business owners, and elders.

Everyone.

We created a tailored outreach plan to reach all these communities and translated our survey into Spanish and Haitian Creole.

The planning phase spanned 9 months and brought together our leadership, organizers, partners, and volunteers. We conducted in-depth research on past Black data projects, consulted with similar initiatives, and worked closely with a team of researchers from the University of Miami to carefully develop and rigorously test the survey.

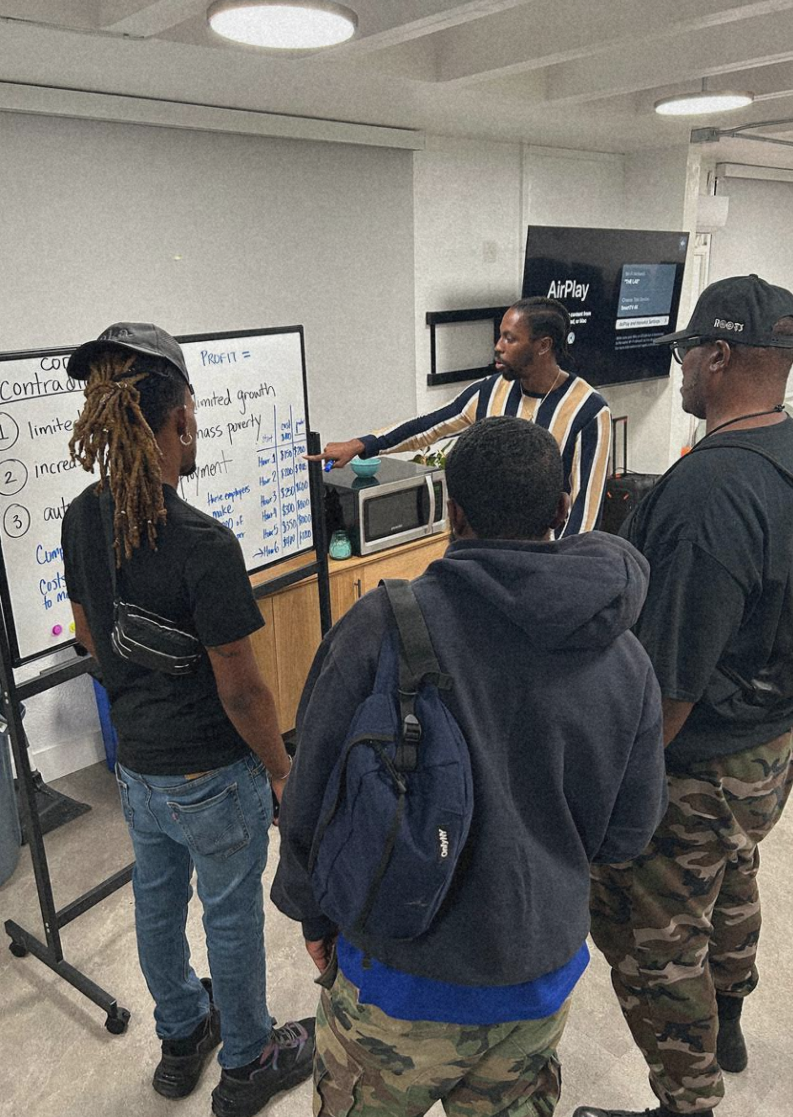
Canvassers used tablets to complete surveys or guided participants through the process. Once the data collection was finalized, the researchers provided critical support in analyzing the results, ensuring we gathered actionable insights.

“The Noir Project is the largest Black data initiative in Florida's history.”

Outreach

“When we started talking to people, the biggest thing that really surprised me—because so many organizations talk about how they canvass and engage these communities—was that so many people were like, “You’re the first person to ever come knock on my door.” Which is wild. One lady said, “I’ve been living in my house for 35 years, and no organization except for the Jehovah’s Witnesses has ever come knocking on my door.”

—Valencia “Vee” Gunder, Co-Founder & Executive Director, The Black Collective



Our ambitious outreach goal was to engage 5% of Black residents—around 38,000 people—in Miami-Dade County and collect 10,000 completed surveys. We are proud to say we achieved this goal and more.

From July 2023 to April 2024, our team canvassed neighborhoods across Miami-Dade to understand better what matters most to our community. Our outreach team was composed of:

- Two full-time organizers
- Ten Revolutionary Organizing School (ROS) fellows
- Two full-time Freedom Fellows from Movement for Black Lives
- One canvassing manager
- Canvassers trained as Organizing Disciples
- 200 volunteers

We intentionally recruited canvassers from diverse backgrounds and neighborhoods, ensuring a wide representation. Our team spanned generations, with the youngest canvasser at 17 years old and the oldest at 56. In Little Haiti, we engaged Creole speakers, while in Allapattah and East Hialeah, we brought in Spanish speakers to connect with Afro-Dominicans and Afro-Cubans. Every aspect of our canvassing approach was carefully thought out and tailored to the communities we served.

All canvassers participated in rigorous training, called the Organizer Disciples Training, and gained invaluable on-the-job experience.

Leadership development was also a key focus of The Noir Project. We saw this initiative as a data-gathering effort and an opportunity to cultivate new leaders. By combining training with hands-on canvassing, we sought to empower community members and equip them with the skills needed to advance Black power and leadership.

Our outreach tactics were comprehensive and varied. We utilized phone banking, tabling, online surveys, door-to-door and event canvassing, hosted events, and partnered with community and faith organizations. We reached Black Miami by visiting neighborhoods, schools, colleges, homeless camps, grocery stores, barber shops, businesses, parks, community centers, poetry potlucks, hip-hop shows, festivals like the Haitian Day of the Dead celebration, churches, and other local events. We went wherever Black Miamians gather.

Neighborhoods

In Liberty City, we had a lot of people who went out there and asked folks how long they'd been living in their house. And they'll say, "I've been here 30-40 years." You know, they've raised kids in their homes. They talked about the fact that they get a lot of mailing slips from people who want to buy their houses. They said that none of the neighbors they grew up with were there anymore

— Nathaniel "Nate" Moreau, Field Director, The Black Collective

"I didn't knock on the doors of people I knew. Little Haiti is being heavily gentrified, and many of the people I knew when I grew up there in the 80s are no longer there."

— St. James Valsaint, The Black Collective

- Allapattah (33127, 33136)**
AFRO-DOMINICAN, AFRO-PUERTO RICAN
- Brownsville (33142)**
BLACK
- Coconut Grove (33129, 33133)**
BAHAMIAN
- East Hialeah (33010)**
AFRO-CUBAN, AFRO-VENEZUELAN
- Florida City (33034, 33035)**
BLACK
- Goulds (33170, 33177, 33189)**
BLACK
- Homestead (33030, 33033, 33035, 33090)**
HAITIAN, JAMAICAN
- Liberty City (75647, 75662)**
BLACK, BAHAMIAN, JAMAICAN
- Little Haiti (33137, 33150)**
HAITIAN
- Little Havana (33125, 33128, 33129, 33136)**
AFRO-CUBAN, AFRO-VENEZUELAN
- Miami Gardens (33014, 33054, 33056, 33169)**
BLACK, JAMAICAN
- Naranja (33032)**
BLACK
- North Miami (33161, 33167, 33168)**
HAITIAN
- North Miami Beach (33162, 33169, 33179)**
HAITIAN
- Opa-locka (33013, 33054)**
BLACK, JAMAICAN
- Overtown (33133, 33137, 33139, 33142, 33150)**
BLACK
- Perrine (33157)**
BLACK
- South Dade (33143, 33155, 33243)**
BAHAMIAN

We focused on talking with Black people in the following neighborhoods:



Noir Project

Survey

Our survey was developed and analyzed in partnership with researchers at the University of Miami led by Dr. Sannisha Dale, director of the Strengthening Health through Innovation and Engagement (SHINE) Research Program, Victoria Petrulla, a data analyst at SHINE Lab, and Data Analyst, Felecia Cassanova.



Visioning

- A. What would Miami be without Black people?
- B. What makes Miami so unique culturally?
- C. What should the future of Black Miami be?

Demographics

- A. Do you feel comfortable with sharing your race?
- B. Do you feel comfortable with sharing your gender?
- C. Do you feel comfortable with sharing your housing status?
- D. Zip Code?
- E. Neighborhood?

Health

- A. What are three things we can do to improve our community's health?

Safety

- A. What do you need to feel safe in your community?
- B. What does your government need to do to make you feel more safe?

Democracy

- A. What stops you from participating in democracy?
- B. Does your voice matter on what is being decided for our communities?

LEADERSHIP TEAM

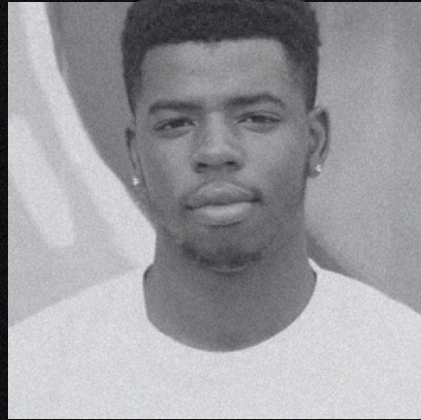


Valencia "Vee" Gunder
Co-Founder & Executive Director

Valencia's roots in Miami run deep, as her family is one of the pioneering Bahamian families in the city. Her great-great-great-great-grandfather was born in Dade territory 20 years before Miami was officially chartered. Raised in Liberty City, where she still lives and works, Valencia has always been committed to her community. In 2014, she founded Make the Homeless Smile, a nonprofit providing meals, showers, haircuts, and other services to homeless individuals in Miami and Atlanta. She also organized the Community Emergency Operation Center, delivering supplies and support to 18 low-income communities after Hurricane Irma—reaching them before any other organization. Additionally, Valencia has worked with groups like the New Florida Majority, continuing her dedication to community service and advocacy.

The Black Collective Team

Lashaevia "Shae" Burns
St. James Valsaint
Iyenda "Scoe" Williams
Ochtavia Reid
Jasmine Floyd
Im'Unique Hyler
Revolutionary Organizing School
Fellows (Cohort 5)
Organizing Disciples
And 200+ volunteers



Nathaniel "Nate" Moreau
Field Director

As field director for The Black Collective, Nathaniel leads community organizing efforts to drive impactful change in Miami. With a background in international relations and public administration from Florida International University, he has spent the past four years dedicated to grassroots activism and advocacy.



Moise "Moe" Simbert
Lead Organizer

Moise, a Miami native from Little Haiti, has made significant strides in his journey with The Black Collective. Starting as a participant in the organization's fellowship program, the Revolutionary Organizing School, Moise's dedication and curiosity for community service quickly earned him a position as an organizer. After three years of outstanding work, he was promoted to lead organizer, supervising and mentoring incoming organizers.

University of Miami

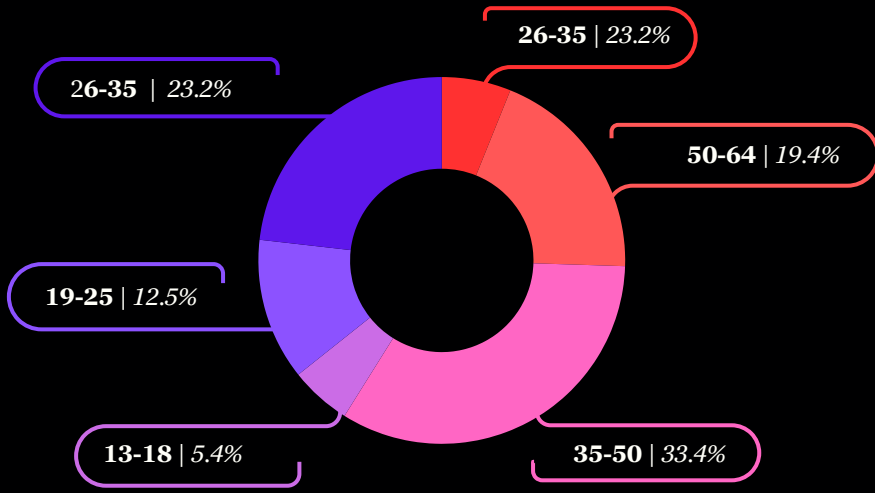
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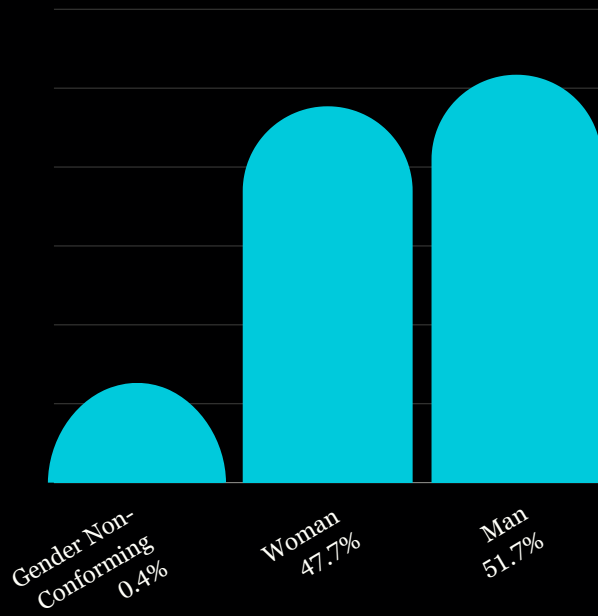
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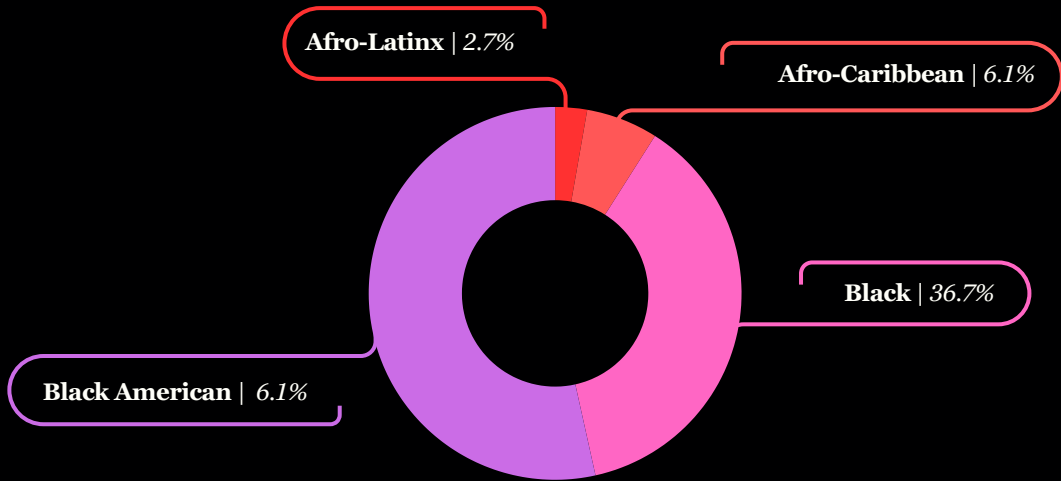
age



gender



ethnicity



Safety

We asked Black people, “What do you need to feel safe in your community? What does your government need to do to make you feel safer?”

To feel safe in our communities, Black people want:

- ✓ Secure jobs
- ✓ Safe, clean, and affordable housing
- ✓ Fewer guns
- ✓ Youth services
- ✓ Neighborhood services

Most Black people—regardless of gender, neighborhood, ethnicity, or age—ranked secure jobs first and affordable housing second for what they need to feel safe. What people picked third was slightly different from group to group, with most choosing fewer guns. Those who identified themselves as Black Americans, especially women, ranked youth services as third. Afro-Caribbeans and people age 65+ ranked neighborhood services as third.

“I was not surprised to see, when it came to safety, that nobody asked for police, even when they said that they wanted fewer guns, because gun violence is a problem in our community. And the reason why I don't shy away from talking about gun violence is because it's a ripple effect. And we feel those effects, right? I feel it because sometimes it's somebody I know, or one of my family members that are impacted, or they are the cause of it, whichever side we fall on, you know?”

Even when people say we need fewer guns in our community, not one person said we needed more police when we talk about safety. Jobs and housing were number one. So that means that when people have clean and safe housing, they feel safe. That helps them feel more secure in their community, not more policing and surveillance.”

— Valencia “Vee” Gunder, The Black Collective



“There was a county survey where they talked to Black people. People said they wanted more community services, more community programs, more things for youth, and things like that. There was an option for more money for police, and that got the least amount of money. But then what the county did was beefed up the police budget to run more community programs. To do the things that people ask them to do, but they were doing it through the police, through the system. We don't want that. A common thing we heard was wanting community safety without increasing police presence.”

— Nathaniel “Nate” Moreau, The Black Collective

To increase safety, Black people want from our government:

- ✓ Guaranteed income
- ✓ Safe, clean, and affordable housing
- ✓ Government accountability
- ✓ More youth programs
- ✓ Participatory budgeting

This holds true across all demographics—gender, neighborhood, ethnicity, and age. Many people ranked the top three priorities equally important, signaling that all are critical to enhancing community safety.

This resonates with us at The Black Collective—we understand that the safest communities are those with the most resources, not the most police. Our survey confirms that Black Miamians know this too. To truly improve safety, Black residents want the government to provide things like guaranteed income, affordable housing, and youth and neighborhood programs. In short, they want resources that help us care for our families and communities.

Health

“I was super proud to hear that people wanted more free clinics. They wanted mental health services and medical services within walking distance of their homes, and that’s super important to know.”

—Valencia “Vee” Gunder, The Black Collective



We asked Black people: “What are three things we can do to improve our community’s health?”

To improve health in our communities, Black people want:

- 1 Free medical clinics
- 2 Food programs
- 3 Mental health services

Regardless of ethnicity, age, or gender—except for trans women—free medical clinics ranked as the most important. Trans women put food programs first. Food programs were second for most other groups. Mental health ranked third for most groups. Similar to the safety question, many people ranked all these equally important.

For most zip codes, free medical clinics were the most important to improving community health, though some areas said food programs. Food programs, mental health, and free wellness clinics ranked second for many zip codes. And mental health and food programs were third.





We asked Black people: “What stops you from participating in democracy? Do you think your voice matters in decisions about our communities?”

While some people said they actively participate in democracy, others do not for various reasons. The most common barriers preventing people from participating in democracy are time constraints and a lack of knowledge about the process. Many respondents also distrust democracy, feeling that their vote does not matter or that the system is corrupt. Some cited restricted rights or lack of access as obstacles, such as issues with transportation or difficulty navigating the voting process. A few noted feelings of apathy or frustration with unfulfilled political promises. While some respondents actively participated, others emphasized the need for better outreach and resources to make participation more accessible and meaningful.

The responses to whether people feel their voice matters in decision-making were mixed. Many respondents felt that their voices mattered, but others were skeptical, with some feeling that while they spoke up, their voices were not fully valued or acted upon by officials. Many respondents said outright that their voice does not matter, reflecting a sense of disconnection or distrust in the system. Others expressed conditional optimism, believing their voice matters only when part of a larger collective or depending on who represents the community. While some feel heard, many remain doubtful of their influence on decision-making processes.

When it comes to democracy, most people say they don't participate in democracy because they don't have the time. And I know some people say that's an excuse, but the reality is, many employers don't give their staff time off to vote. And nobody gives their employees time off to go down to the county to be a part of a legislative process, you know?

The second issue is that people are losing hope in democracy. They don't believe in it anymore.

They don't feel our local government is listening to the people's concerns. For example, how often have we brought hundreds of people to the County Commission and advocated against something, only to watch our mayor and our commissioners vote in favor of it?

People are like, "This doesn't feel like democracy. These things do not feel like we are actually making a decision.

—Valencia “Vee” Gunder, The Black Collective

Government

The overwhelming majority of respondents expressed strong dissatisfaction with the government's investment in their community's health. Most people believe the government neglects Black communities, with shared concerns including a lack of accessible healthcare, insufficient mental health services, and rising housing costs. Many pointed out that government resources favor wealthy people and that healthcare remains unaffordable, even for those with health insurance. Some noted that community programs and free clinics are scarce, while others highlighted issues like food deserts, gentrification, and environmental neglect. A few respondents acknowledged government efforts, but most felt these actions fell short of addressing the community's needs.

I didn't expect so many people to not know how to answer the question, "What is the future of Black Miami?" I thought that after asking all the questions about what we need, you would have an idea of what you envision about what we need. But hearing so many people respond, "I don't even know how to answer that question," meant they don't even think about their future here or their future in general, which is a part of poverty, right?

—Inez Barlatier

*V*ision for the future

We asked Black people: "What would Miami be without Black people? What makes Miami so unique culturally? What should the future of Black Miami be?"

Black Miamians believe that without their contributions, Miami would be unrecognizable. They emphasize the critical role Black communities—especially Bahamians and Black Americans—played in building the city physically, culturally, and economically. Without these contributions, they say, Miami would lack the vibrancy and cultural richness it is known for today.

Many highlighted Black Miami's deep roots in the service, hospitality, and entertainment industries, while acknowledging the city's ongoing struggles with racism and gentrification. Despite these challenges, there is a strong belief that Black people are the foundation of Miami, infusing the city with life, culture, and progress.

The city's unique cultural identity stems from its diversity and the blending of influences from the African, Caribbean, and Latin America diaspora, and beyond. Miami is described as a true melting pot, where Black, Afro-Caribbean, Afro-Latinx, and others unite to create a dynamic cultural tapestry. This mix is visible in the city's music, food, art, and fashion. Even in the face of segregation and gentrification, Black Miamians hold onto a sense of pride and resilience, contributing to the city's evolving identity.

Looking to the future, Black Miamians imagine a thriving, unified, and self-sufficient community. They envision a city where economic empowerment is at the forefront, with more Black-owned businesses, affordable housing, and increased access to resources. Stronger community bonds are key, with Black Miamians supporting one another, creating safe spaces, and building wealth collectively.

Youth are central to this vision, with more opportunities for education and mental health support, alongside efforts to preserve Black culture through green spaces and community-led development.

Many dream of a future where more Black politicians and leaders are representing the Black community, and there is a desire to end violence and offer better support for the homeless. At the heart of this vision is a deep yearning for unity and fairness, where Black Miamians work together to build a brighter future.

There is also a clear demand for more representation in the government, ensuring Black Miamians have a meaningful role in shaping the city's direction. The hope is for a prosperous, inclusive, and resilient Black Miami that honors its rich history, while advancing toward a self-determined future.

In the heart of Miami, beneath the sun-soaked allure of paradise, festers a profound injustice—one both glaringly visible and concealed beneath the myths of prosperity. As we contend with soaring rents, relentless displacement, and the unraveling of our vibrant communities, we must confront a fundamental truth: these crises are not accidental but deliberate outcomes of a system built on exploitation. Our beautiful city, once a symbol of hope and opportunity, now serves as a stark testament to the failures of a political and corporate elite that has consistently prioritized profit over people.

To fully grasp the depth of the injustice we face, we must revisit Miami's origins—a city founded on land stolen from Indigenous peoples and built on the backs of marginalized communities. From its inception, Miami's growth has been inextricably linked to the exploitation and displacement of its most vulnerable residents. Over the decades, political and corporate powers have crafted policies that elevate unchecked development over human dignity, profits over people, and exclusion over inclusion. This history is not some distant past—it is a continuous thread that shapes our struggles today.

We are not merely passive victims of a faceless system; we are living proof of the intentional decisions made by those in power—decisions that have driven us from our homes, pushed us to the periphery, and dismantled the communities we hold dear. Our demands are for reparations, not charity; they are rightful claims for justice. The truth is clear: Miami's political and corporate elites are the architects of our disenfranchisement, and they owe us more than just recognition—they owe us restitution.

As we present the demands in this document, we call on you to recognize the urgent need for systemic transformation and stand with us in the fight for reparations. This is not just about righting past wrongs but about reclaiming our future—a future where every Miami resident can thrive in dignity and justice.

The black agenda



WE THE PEOPLE DESERVE

Government Accountability to the Poor and Working-Class Black Communities

We demand a government that answers to us, not to corporate interests. Corruption has robbed our people of opportunity, from the city hall to county chambers, where corporate puppets call the shots. Politicians serve the elite, not the people, and it is time we dismantle this power structure. We envision a system where the poor, the working class, immigrants, and all marginalized people of Miami determine our own reality. This is not a call for more token councils; it is a demand for a complete restructuring of power where our voices lead the way.

THIS IS OUR CITY

Housing for All

We built this city—yet we are pushed out, priced out, left out. Development is being weaponized not for progress but to displace us, to keep us precarious and exploitable. Housing is not a luxury; it is a right. We demand free, accessible housing for all. Miami's past—redlining and segregation—has led to a present where we fight each other for resources; resources we helped create, while wealthy people bask in paradise. This is our land, and we demand direct community control over public resources. No taxation without representation, especially for immigrants and the working poor.

EARN THE RESPECT OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

Self-Actualization for Youth

Miami's social infrastructure is crumbling, and our isolation is by design. Poverty is policed, our youth are criminalized, while the city neglects its responsibility to nurture us. We know the path to self-actualization and community care, but we lack the funding and infrastructure to make it real. We demand investment in our youth—mental health, recovery, and wellness programs that empower us to thrive, not just survive. We demand the tools to realize our potential because no system built to oppress us will willingly provide them.

PAY US WHAT WE DESERVE

Jobs with Dignity

Our labor is exploited by those who see Miami as a playground for profits. Jobs here are run by outsiders looking to squeeze every drop from our sweat and pain—through wage theft, sexual violence, racism, and exploitation of immigrants. This creates a vicious cycle where the exploited are isolated and trapped, pushed toward imprisonment, where the exploitation only continues. Miami's indifference to this injustice fuels its economy. We demand jobs with dignity, fair wages, and the political power to secure our future through self-determination.

RUN US THE BAG

Guaranteed Income for All

The instability of Miami's tourist-driven economy leaves workers vulnerable to exploitation. The path this city has chosen ensures that our work will remain precarious, our livelihoods unstable. Hyper-exploitation is the rule, not the exception. Miami contributes to global instability, extracting unpaid labor from nations the United States helped dismantle. We demand guaranteed income for all workers and immigrants, ensuring that the city that profits from our labor cannot abandon us to poverty.

THE FUTURE IS LOVE

Gender Justice

Miami's economy is built on patriarchal exploitation, dividing us along the lines of labor and gender. Men are pushed into brutal physical labor, while women are relegated to caretaking roles—nurses, teachers, domestic workers—and, sex work. Transgender people are left in the margins, alienated, and imprisoned. The system thrives on this division, pitting us against each other while profiting from our exploitation. To end all oppression in Miami, we must confront the gendered nature of our struggle and demand true gender justice for all.

RESILIENCE FOR THE PEOPLE

Climate Justice and Land for Our People

We are not the cause of climate change; corporate greed is. "Human factors" is code for corporate destruction, which is driving us toward environmental collapse. We demand land, for we are the Indigenous caretakers of this ecosystem, the stewards of its future. The ruling class cannot be trusted with our survival—they would develop us into oblivion. Any effort to combat the climate crisis must center on protecting our people, not displacing us further.

ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Community Control over Resources

No more scraps from the corporate table—our future will not be dictated by profit. We believe in direct community control over all public resources—housing, land, education, and health. Every immigrant, worker, and marginalized voice must be represented in the decisions that shape our lives. We demand a future where we are no longer exploited, no longer silenced, but empowered to build the world we deserve.

We refuse to accept a Miami built on the backs of the oppressed, where a few people profit indefinitely, while most families are left to suffer. Our demands are not requests—they are nonnegotiable declarations of the justice we are owed. This system of exploitation and greed must be dismantled at its roots. We are not interested in reforming a broken system; we seek to overthrow it. From government accountability to housing, from economic liberation to gender and climate justice, these struggles are intertwined and cannot be separated. We demand a Miami where the people—the poor, the working class, the immigrants, the marginalized—hold the power, not the corporate elite. This is our city, and we will take it back. Our future will not be dictated by the same forces that have oppressed us for generations. The time for half-measures is over. We will fight, organize, and create a liberated future where justice is not an ideal but a reality for all.

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the mandate

The mandate for Black people at this time is to avenge the suffering of our ancestors, to earn the respect of future generations and be willing to be transformed in the SERVICE OF THE WORK! ~ M. Hooks



Black Miami spoke. We listened. And history has shown us that organizing is the best way to get what we want.

There are a lot of ways to get involved.

-  **Become a member.**
-  **Join our email list.**
-  **Follow our social media.**

