

## Power is the Product of Relationships: Best Practices for Research Actions

By JaiGregory Clarke, adapted by Carrie Atcheson



A Research Action is a meeting with a stakeholder with a goal of communicating a community need and learning about the stakeholder's situation & priorities. We approach a research action from a relational rather than a transactional standpoint.

I like to say, "Go in dumb. Come out smart." The biggest mistake people make in a research action is planning to talk too much. Going in, it's okay if you don't have all the information, all the relationships, all the nuance mastered. You will ask questions, listen, observe body language and you will gather that information you didn't have going in.

Even though we say "walk in dumb," this doesn't mean go in unprepared. Before you start asking questions, you should have a concise credential stating who you are and why you're there - also known as an elevator pitch. You should have also

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## \$973,000 Committed to Gun Violence Prevention in Montgomery

On June 22, 2022, the Montgomery City Council voted unanimously to approve spending of American Rescue Plan funds on six programs/projects that were suggested by citizens, including fully funding a Hospital Based Violence Intervention Program (HVIP).

Between March and June, FIAAL Montgomery Hub leaders & Organizer Muaath Al-Khattab worked to provide information to officials and speak at public forums to bring about the benefits of an HVIP.

## Long-time FIAAL Leader Carmone Owens Selected to Lead Birmingham VIP



Carmone Owens has been drawing on his experiences as a survivor of gun violence and as a formerly incarcerated person to help young men and families in similar situations for years. It led him to be active in Faith in Action Alabama's work, to form 2nd Chance Lifesavers, and to enter into partnership with Offender Alumni Association to lead the new Violence Intervention Program (VIP) in Jefferson County.

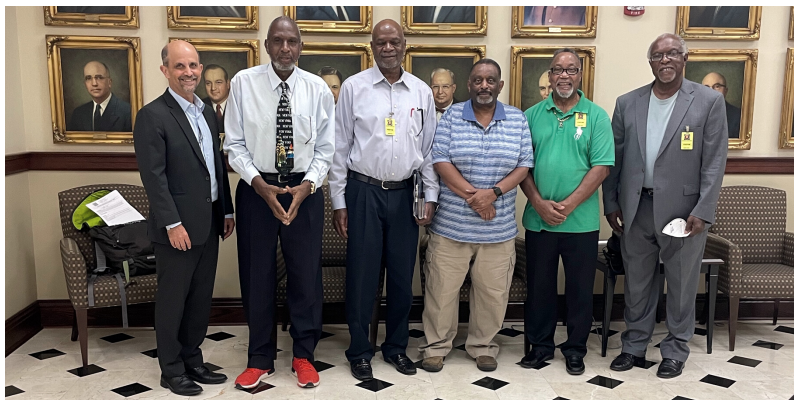
Early in 2022, the Offender Alumni Association was awarded a grant from the Jefferson County Health Department and the City of Birmingham to administer the VIP after \$5.3 M in funding was committed for a violence intervention program. Faith in Action Alabama (FIAAL) Peacemakers Campaign leaders and Deputy Director Onoyemi Williams played a key role in securing this funding in 2021.

Join us all at FIAAL in congratulating Mr. Owens and wishing him well as he begins this important work for the community!

## Research Action Continued

prepared some opening questions and an agenda. The agenda is an outline of the goals & major talking points you want to get through.

The first questions you ask your stakeholder should encourage conversation & invite their views. You want to get into



An energized FIAAL team after their August 4, 2022 Research Action with Alabama Department of Transportation.

the mode, the groove, get the conversation free-flowing. After this opening conversation where you get to know each other, you can get to the agenda items. See below for a breakdown of the team roles; each person on the team makes a key contribution to being able to get to key points on the agenda.

### Roles in a Successful Research Action Team:

- The Chairperson: this leader is the quarterback. This person keeps everything moving forward in a direction that is aligned with the strategy.
- The Timekeeper: these conversations have a tendency to go down rabbit holes, left, right, & around the mountain, so the timekeeper makes sure there is adequate time to touch on all the major talking points. The Timekeeper should be a different person than the Chairperson or Record-keeper.
- The Record-keeper: this person takes notes that record the facts & the nuance of what went on. If it's a larger group (more than 5 people), you may want to have 2 Recordkeepers because one person may catch things that the other misses & vice versa.

When the research action is complete, before you walk out of the room, you want to plan the future of the relationship. After the meeting concludes you want to do 2 things: you want to type up the notes and have an immediate evaluation & debriefing. The evaluation/debriefing is how you will learn from the experience, and determine how to roll this experience into more power and better programs for the future.

Join a Research Action today by contacting your Hub Organizer!



## Faith in Action Alabama Meetings & Actions

### Mobile Hub Meetings

October 28, November 28, December no meeting

Contact Pastor Marvin C. Lue, Jr. [marvin@fiaal.org](mailto:marvin@fiaal.org)

### Montgomery Hub Meetings

October 20, November 17, December 15

Contact Muaath Al-Khattab [muaath@fiaal.org](mailto:muaath@fiaal.org)

### Huntsville Hub Meetings

October 27, November 17, December 22

Contact LaGarrette Crawford [lagarrette@fiaal.org](mailto:lagarrette@fiaal.org)

### Birmingham Hub Meetings

October 13, November 10, December 8

Contact JaiGregory Clarke [jai@fiaal.org](mailto:jai@fiaal.org)

### Voter Engagement Phone Banking Weekly through November 7!

Contact your Hub leaders/hub organizers or Onoyemi Williams ([onoyemi@fiaal.org](mailto:onoyemi@fiaal.org))

**Mission Statement** Faith in Action Alabama honors God by dismantling systemic racism to create pathways of opportunity for all Alabamians



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