



NEWS from the Shelby County Mayor's Office

Lee Harris, Mayor

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**NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE PRESIDENT MARC MORIAL TO DELIVER
KEYNOTE ADDRESS AT "SOUTHERN JUSTICE SUMMIT"**

*The Shelby County Mayor's Office and Memphis Urban League have recruited partner cities
across the South to join the virtual criminal justice conference.*

MEMPHIS, TN – Southern Justice Summit organizers have announced that National Urban League President and former New Orleans Mayor Marc Morial will deliver the keynote address. Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris and Memphis Urban League President Tonja Sesley-Baymon are behind the virtual event, which includes six host cities and will highlight successful criminal justice programs and policies that have been adopted in communities across the South. The Southern Justice Summit will take place online on Tuesday, July 14, 2020 at 9:30 AM. President Morial will deliver his remarks at 1:30 PM.

National Urban League President & CEO Marc Morial: "Now is our opportunity to not just hear the pain and outrage, but to offer a response. We cannot sit idly by. We must have the tough conversations, and then we must act to dismantle the 400 years of racism that have plagued our country. This is our moment to create a more diverse, inclusive and moral America. It is imperative that we do all that we can to get this right."

The virtual summit is a response to a public demand for a more progressive agenda for policing, sentencing, and re-entry. A few panelists include:

- **Samuel Sinyangwe**, the researcher behind the "8 Can't Wait" policing reform agenda;

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- St. Louis **Prosecuting Attorney Wesley Bell**, who previously served on the Ferguson City Council and made national headlines with his “Bell Plan” to reduce the St. Louis County jail population;
- Nashville’s **Dr. Janet Hopson**, who leads one of the country’s only long-term residential drug court facilities; and
- National Association of Black Journalists VP of Broadcasting **Ken Lemon**, who is helping shape new guidelines for how mugshots are used in newsrooms across the country.

The full schedule and line up of speakers can be found at www.southernjusticesummit.com.

Shelby County Commissioner Tami Sawyer: “No topic is more relevant to the historical moment of 2020 than justice. Justice is on the table in our elections, our public health decisions, education of our youth, incarceration of far too many people, and the everyday lives of Black and Brown communities. I’m proud that this summit will center this conversation in Shelby County and look forward to the exchange of ideas and, more importantly, action that will come.”

Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris: “Shelby County Government is pleased to partner with the Memphis Urban League and host this landmark #SouthernJustice Summit. With most Blacks residing in the South, this is the time and the place to have serious conversations about racial injustice, police reforms, and mass incarceration. The need for reform has never been clearer. The way forward is just as clear. This is that moment when those who crave change have to convene, make plans, assign work, and take action.”

Memphis Urban League President Tonja Sesley-Baymon: “Far too often, we witness the inappropriate actions and racism of authority figures and law enforcement that Blacks have endured for generations. Today, America stands at a crossroads. Do we have the will and determination to rise above 400 years of bigotry and racism? Are we ready to guarantee justice for all of us? This summit serves as an opportunity to acknowledge that in the midst of racially motivated violence that plagues our communities of color, there are some golden nuggets.”

The Urban League partners for the Southern Justice Summit include the Tennessee Urban League Affiliates (Memphis, Nashville, Chattanooga, Knoxville); Birmingham, Alabama; and Lexington, Kentucky. The municipal host is Shelby County Government. Virtual attendees should register at www.southernjusticesummit.com.

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