



Media Contact: Jennifer Chan, Porch Light PR
317.490.3770, jennifer@porchlightpr.com

Kennedy King Memorial Initiative Names Darryl Lockett Executive Director

Fundraising and management skills coupled with passion for collective impact positions leader to raise awareness, provoke thought and inspire action to eliminate division and injustice

INDIANAPOLIS (Jan. 24, 2020) – Following an extensive search, the Kennedy King Memorial Initiative (KKMI), a growing non-profit motivated by the words and values of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, has selected Darryl Lockett as executive director effective January 13, 2020. A native of Indianapolis, Lockett will be responsible for planning, implementing, administering and monitoring the day-to-day activities of the organization and crafting long-term strategies required to raise awareness, provoke thought, and inspire action to eliminate division and injustice. He succeeds Lena Hackett, president and founder of Community Solutions Inc., who had been serving as managing partner.

Lockett brings a wealth of experience in nonprofit management, resource development, human centered design, and diversity, equity and inclusion advocacy to KKMI, serving most recently as the advisor to the president of AARP Foundation in Washington D.C. Focused upon tackling senior poverty and helping vulnerable older adults build economic opportunity and social connectedness, he developed and implemented the Foundation's partnership-focused growth plan, managed external relations and strategic positioning and bolstered the organization's efforts in strategic grantmaking, innovation, and business operations. Lockett was recognized by AARP as an Innovation Champion and provided advice in human centered design and agile innovation principles to age-tech startups addressing public health challenges in historically underserved communities.

Furthermore, Lockett has served as a research and policy fellow at the Washington Development Industry Council (WDIC), project coordinator for Greenberg Quinlan Rosner (GQR) Research and Democracy Corps and development coordinator for the National Diversity Council.

“We look forward to this new chapter in the history of KKMI and working with Darryl to not only help us connect visitors to the values and legacy of Sen. Kennedy and Dr. King, but drawing on his experience to elevate conversations about race relations and position KKMI as a hub where not only our community, but those across the nation, can come together to convene bold conversations and inspire collaborations,” said State Rep. Gregory W. Porter, board chair of the Kennedy King Memorial Initiative.

KKMI builds on the historical events of April 4, 1968 and Sen. Kennedy's historic speech announcing Dr. King's assassination. Despite being urged to cancel his appearance, Kennedy delivered an impromptu speech from the back of a flatbed truck to a crowd who had not yet heard the news about Dr. King's death. His moving message of peace and forgiveness was offered in the midst of violence across the country. His words left a deep impression on all who heard it. Kennedy's call to strive for understanding and peace reverberates today and KKMI has big dreams and concrete plans to continue to transform the Kennedy King Park Center and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park campus into a center where people, institutions and community partners can come together in bold dialogue and purposeful action.

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“I am honored to join KKMI at the start of this promising new decade,” said Lockett. “I grew up reciting the words of Dr. King and consider it a privilege to serve as a steward for this moment in history and to summon the legacy of these two civil rights leaders to inspire others to convene candid and courageous conversations about equity and inclusion,” he said.

Lockett holds an undergraduate degree from Howard University and has completed graduate studies in an MA/MBA dual degree program at John Hopkins University’s Carey Business School and Krieger School of Arts and Sciences. He is married to Dr. Amanda Washington Lockett and has one son. Lockett was passionately involved in supporting many organizations in the Washington D.C. area, including: Mentor’s Inc.; Martha’s Table; and DC Central Kitchen. He looks forward to reacquainting himself to the Indianapolis community and advancing the city he cares so deeply about.

About Kennedy King Memorial Initiative

The Kennedy King Memorial Initiative is a voluntary 501(c)3 organization based in Indianapolis that works to commemorate the historic speech delivered by Senator Robert F. Kennedy in Indianapolis on the night that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated. The organization’s mission is to keep this unique moment in history alive and to leverage the message of Dr. King and Senator Kennedy to address issues of division and injustice experienced today. With support from the Indiana Pacers Foundation in 1994, an evocative and inspirational memorial sculpture was erected in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Park.

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