

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Texas Women's Foundation Awards Grant to the Earl Carl Institute's Black Girls Initiative for the Second Consecutive Year

(Friday, October 28, 2022, Houston, TX) – The Earl Carl Institute for Legal & Social Policy, Inc. (ECI) is proud to announce that the Texas Women's Foundation recently awarded ECI's Black Girls Initiative (BGI) a \$70,000 grant. The purpose of this grant is to facilitate Houston's first Young Women's Advisory Council. This is the second consecutive year that ECI has received this grant.

This grant will continue to provide young women of color ages 16-25 the opportunity to use their voices to effect policy change for social justice issues that impact women of color disproportionately. The 2022-23 cohort will focus on increasing access to, and the use of, mental health services for women of color.

BGI will use the funds to support the cohort's unique efforts to create change. YWAC members overwhelmingly agreed that the need to reevaluate the way in which the mental health needs of young women of color are addressed was urgent. One participant stated "Young women of color are ignored when they show pain. There needs to be something done immediately to support Black and brown girls when they express that they are not ok."

Over the next year, the cohort will continue to develop advocacy plans and strategies that include implementing culturally sensitive counseling services for students in predominantly-POC schools, social media campaigns to raise awareness of Black and brown women's' mental health challenges and needs, and de-stigmatizing the use of mental health services in their communities. Their desire is to not only bring awareness to these issues, but to be able to take immediate action toward effecting change, with youth voices being prioritized. This cohort will also actively be involved in raising their key issues with members of the Texas Legislature during the 88th Legislative Session.

Texas Women's Foundation (formerly Dallas Women's Foundation) has a 33-year history of leadership in advancing women and their families. The Foundation promotes women's philanthropy and raises money to support community programs that help women and girls realize their full potential. They are helping to educate and empower nearly 5,000 young girls annually through the Young Women's Preparatory Network in Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Grand Prairie, Houston, Lubbock, San Antonio and Ysleta.

ECI launched the Black Girls Initiative to confront the serious disparities that impact Black girls in schools, in courts, and in society; BGI covers an array of topics, including criminalization, trafficking & homelessness, school discipline & education disparity, violence & trauma, child welfare and parenting & familial relations because of adultification. The purpose of the Initiative is to change negative outcomes that Black girls are facing across multiple public systems through Awareness, Support and Policy Change.

About The Earl Carl Institute for Legal & Social Policy, Inc.

Founded in 1992, The Earl Carl Institute for Legal and Social Policy at Thurgood Law, on the campus of Texas Southern University, has become a top-tier think tank focusing on research, writing and outreach. The mission of the Institute is to empower underserved and disenfranchised communities by addressing systemic social issues through legal representation, research, education, and advocacy. For more information visit <http://www.tsulaw.edu/centers/ECI/>.