



# GROWING KINGS

For Immediate Release:  
January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022

## Growing Kings Receives \$20,000 Grant

### Birmingham-based Non-Profit Organization Receives Grant from the Woodcock Foundation

Birmingham, AL – January 10, 2022 – Growing Kings, an organization that advocates and delivers enrichment and mentoring programs for at-risk males throughout the Birmingham region, is pleased to announce it has received a \$20,000 grant from the Woodcock Foundation. This grant was awarded to support Growing Kings' advocacy work as part of the Woodcock Foundation's commitment to supporting constructive systemic change to improve society and the quality of life, locally, nationally and internationally.

Growing Kings advocates for a policy agenda aiming to improve the lives of boys and young men who are most harmed by disparities across academic, social, and economic systems. Our work serves as a call-to-action for much needed reform to institutional laws, policies, and practices that have negatively impacted the lives of underserved male youth.

“The Woodcock Foundation's investment in our work is critical to ensuring that we have the tools and resources needed to be the voice our young people need in Alabama,” said Executive Director, Marcus D. Carson. “We are grateful for the contribution made by the Woodcock Foundation; their support directly impacts some of our city's most vulnerable youth by increasing the protective factors in their life.

Growing Kings focuses on advocating for positive change across three (3) core Areas of Interest:

Juvenile Justice & Policing Reform: Promoting mentoring and diversion programs as a strategy for reducing youth detention and incarceration; and examining the role and function of law enforcement in schools.

Workforce Hiring & Development Initiatives: Advocating for fair-hiring practices that reduce barriers to employment for those with a criminal history; and increases awareness and public partnerships around career and technical training opportunities available to unemployed youth.

School Discipline & Attendance Policies: Promoting alternative policies around discipline, truancy, and school attendance, in order to reduce the use of punitive measures that perpetuate the school pushout phenomenon.

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#### About Growing Kings:

*Growing Kings is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that operates with a mission to encourage and facilitate the critical thinking and positive attitudes of underserved male youth through systemic and targeted enrichment, research, and advocacy. Journey of a King is a school-based mentoring program that engages students as early as the fourth grade and follows them through graduation from high school. The program is provided free of cost to 500 boys and young men in nine different Birmingham City Schools. The program utilizes structured curricula to engage students in hands-on activities and discussion-based sessions that focus on various issues and topics specific to male youth.*