



Director, Thurgood Marshall Institute
NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.
New York, NY or Washington, DC

Since 1940, the [NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund, Inc.](#) (LDF) has played a critical role in the fight to achieve racial justice, equality, and an inclusive society. LDF's litigation, public policy advocacy, and public education programs in the areas of criminal justice, economic justice, education, and political participation seek to ensure the fundamental and basic human rights of all people.

LDF seeks an accomplished and dynamic thought leader, researcher, and convenor with deep experience and interests at the intersections of civil rights, racial, social, and economic justice, law, policy, and advocacy to serve as the next director of the Thurgood Marshall Institute (TMI).

Launched in 2015, the Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multidisciplinary think-tank style research center within LDF. TMI complements LDF's traditional litigation strengths and brings critical capabilities to the fight for racial justice, including conducting and disseminating cutting-edge research to inform policymaking, educate the public, and support targeted advocacy campaigns; organizing issue-focused convenings; serving as a strategic hub within LDF for the incubation of ideas; and collaborating with other advocacy and research partners on joint projects and initiatives. The institute also houses LDF's Archives—one of the most comprehensive and significant collections of materials chronicling the legal history of the U.S. Civil Rights Movement.

The director of the Thurgood Marshall Institute will lead the ongoing execution, review and alignment of the institute's strategy, priorities, and key performance indicators; manage the dissemination, promotion, and application of critical research and archival findings both internally and externally; lead, support, and collaborate with a team of dedicated researchers, advocates, and archivists; and facilitate effective and strategic engagement with critical internal and external stakeholders to build productive relationships.

You are a good fit for the role of director of the LDF Thurgood Marshall Institute if:

- You are passionate about advancing racial justice through the production, promotion, and application of civil rights-centered research in advocacy settings.
- You have a proven track record of multidisciplinary thought leadership in social justice, legal, public policy, and/or social scientific research.
- You have a deep understanding of ongoing social change, advocacy, and public education efforts being undertaken by LDF and peer civil rights and social justice advocacy organizations.

- You value documenting and preserving the history of a legacy civil rights institution and the civil rights movement, including the ongoing movement for racial justice in the U.S.
- You create a culture of transparency around you while also enforcing appropriate and necessary boundaries and maintaining confidentiality around sensitive matters.
- You can manage a team of research and archives professionals, drawing upon their expertise and enhancing esprit de corps.
- You build respect, trust, camaraderie, and credibility among your colleagues while also driving performance and holding team members accountable.
- You are solution-oriented and address challenges with a sense of clarity and determination without compromising the need for patience, understanding, and flexibility when warranted.

ABOUT NAACP LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND, INC.

LDF is the country's first and foremost civil and human rights law organization. Founded in 1940 under the leadership of Thurgood Marshall, who subsequently became the first African American U.S. Supreme Court Justice, LDF was launched at a time when the nation's aspirations for equality and due process of law were stifled by widespread state-sponsored racial inequality. From that era to the present, LDF's mission has been transformative—to use the power of law, policy, narrative, research, and people to defend and advance the full dignity of Black people in America. As the legal arm of the civil rights movement, LDF has a tradition of expert legal advocacy in the Supreme Court and other courts across the nation. LDF's victories—both in litigation and policy—established the foundations for the civil rights that Americans enjoy today.

LDF's historic desegregation campaign that culminated in the victory of *Brown v. Board of Education*, ending de jure segregation, was unequivocally one of the most transformational milestones in the history of the United States. LDF has spent more than six decades fighting to realize the full promise of Brown and to elevate the quality of education experienced by Black people in the United States. As a critical component of its strategy for education equity, since the early 1960s, LDF has conducted one or more scholarship programs for undergraduate and law school students.

Currently, LDF employs over 160 professional and support staff working at LDF's headquarters in New York City and its offices in Washington, DC and Atlanta, GA. Janai S. Nelson assumed the role of President and Director-Counsel in early 2022 after serving nearly eight years as associate director-counsel.

For additional information, please visit LDF's website: www.naacpldf.org

ABOUT THE THURGOOD MARSHALL INSTITUTE

TMI conducts research and produces an array of publications that elucidate and propose solutions for issues that affect the civil and human rights of America's most vulnerable communities. Whether it is addressing the country's prison systems, discrimination in housing, inequities in education, economic opportunities for communities of color, to participation in the democratic process, TMI's research and publications tackle these issues utilizing the best data and insights from the social sciences, history, and legal studies, among other areas,

to provide thoughtful and forward-thinking interventions and information. A collection of TMI's publications can be found here: <https://tminstituteldf.org/research/publications/>.

The Thurgood Marshall Institute also hosts "TMI Labs" where social scientists, advocates, academics, practitioners, and others can discuss strategies to address today's civil rights challenges. Recent TMI Labs and the issues discussed can be found here: <https://tminstituteldf.org/research/tmi-labs/>.

In addition to its own research staff, TMI has a fellowship program that engages scholars and experts to produce cutting-edge research on civil rights issues. Fellows provide consulting services, subject matter expertise, ad hoc research, and drafting support on various projects for TMI, as well as LDF's litigation and policy departments.

In addition to research, TMI designs and executes targeted multi-year issue campaigns where resources are focused on civil rights challenges in specific locations. TMI's first campaign, Policing Reform, launched in 2015. In 2018, TMI launched the "Who is My DA?" project to educate and empower communities on the importance of electing district attorneys who will reform the criminal justice system. A current campaign is focused on voting rights and TMI expects to initiate more campaigns as resources and the right opportunities present themselves.

TMI houses and preserves LDF's rich archival records. The core of the archival collection contains both legal and non-legal materials, including pleadings, research, and correspondence related to the thousands of cases LDF has litigated. The holdings also include photographs, videos, policy files, publications, fundraising materials, administrative records, and documentation of LDF's sustained efforts in community organizing and social science research. The archives are an essential source for unraveling the complexity of civil rights history and one of the organizations greatest assets.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE THURGOOD MARSHALL INSTITUTE

Produce credible and compelling research and advocacy campaigns that support LDF's mission and are aligned with LDF's key strategies and priorities

The director of TMI is expected to lead an exceptional team of researchers and fellows to produce research publications that can inform and inspire allies working on civil rights issues; key policy makers; and the public at large. TMI also produces research that is aligned with and supports LDF litigation and policy efforts. The director should bring knowledge of major trends, issues, and concepts that are driving the present-day civil rights and racial justice policy, advocacy, and litigation agendas as well as the social and intellectual history of these topic areas. The director will set TMI's research agenda, with guidance from the President and director-Counsel, and lead TMI's team of researchers, archivists, and fellows in the production and dissemination of research that is cutting edge, credible, persuasive, and of the highest quality.

In addition to its research work, TMI plays a lead role in the design and execution of LDF's advocacy campaigns. As vital compliments to LDF's work in litigation and policy, these advocacy campaigns help shape the public

discourse and impact the overall social context and terrain in which LDF's mission is carried out. From police reform, the election of district attorneys, to voting rights, TMI has played an important role in educating and inspiring citizens to change systems and policies for the better. TMI's next director must think judiciously about where to deploy the organization's advocacy resources to have the most positive impact.

Serve as an effective convener and disseminator of TMI's work to important communities and stakeholders

The reach and impact of the work TMI produces will be determined by how effectively it is able to be shared and received by the broader world it seeks to influence. The director of TMI will be an energetic networker ensuring the great work being produced gets the attention of individuals and organizations that play a crucial part in advancing the cause of civil rights and racial justice. The director will devise plans and strategies for dissemination and follow up with stakeholders that they assess can amplify the reach of important research findings and/or leverage TMI research to advance policy proposals and debates. The director will work in close collaboration with LDF's communication team strategically and effectively package and distribute TMI research in various formats and across platforms.

As one of several research institutes working directly or indirectly on civil rights and racial justice issues, the TMI director must develop enduring partnerships and collaborations with other researchers, centers, and institutions across the public, independent/organizational, and higher education landscapes. The director will be a convener who can bring together like minded and, where appropriate, unlikely allies to explore and address issues paramount to LDF's mission.

Lead and collaborate with TMI's archives team to develop and execute creative strategies related to the expanded use of and access to LDF's archives by researchers, practitioners, and the public at large

While the next director is not required to be a trained archivist, they will be expected to astutely manage and work with the LDF archival team that is housed within TMI. The director should ensure that the archival team is properly supported in maintaining and sharing the rich legacy and history of LDF. The archival team is currently involved in a grant-funded project to digitize portions of the LDF archive for online, public access as well as a significant oral history project. The next director will provide support and thought partnership around these important efforts

LDF seeks a director who can also think innovatively about how to leverage the holdings of the archive to support current work. From affirmative action, criminal justice reform, education, to voting rights, LDF has dealt with a host of issues in the past that could greatly inform and contextualize contemporary efforts in these areas. The director will work with the archives team and other LDF colleagues to determine how archival material can be utilized to support current projects and priorities.

Serve as a positive contributor and member of the LDF community

As a senior leader at LDF, the TMI director will be expected to model the best qualities of a servant-leader. Beyond the scope of their own work and duties, the director should be a willing and active contributor in ensuring that LDF maintains a cohesive, healthy, and positive organizational culture. They should be able to provide thought partnership and guidance around important organizational and strategic questions to help

advance the overall mission. In addition, the TMI director should expect to participate in regular meetings and collaborative projects with other program leaders, as well as assist in the broader fundraising efforts of the organization, including consulting on grant proposals, meeting with funders, and working with the Development team on reporting and compliance.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND ATTRIBUTES

Professional Qualifications

- A record of accomplishment in civil rights and racial justice research and advocacy;
- An earned advance degree in a relevant field or discipline (law degree preferred but not required);
- Experience working with scholars and researchers in the academy, public sector institutions, and or research institutes/think tanks;
- Sophisticated understanding of research methodologies, strategies, tools, and best practices;
- Successful record engaging multiple tools and strategies to achieve social change, such as research, advocacy, organizing, communications, and litigation;
- Experience generating and/or using data and quantitative, as well as qualitative, research to address social issues;
- Successful experience working with advocacy coalitions, teams of scholars and experts, grassroots organizers, elected officials, and policy specialists;
- Superior written and oral communications skills;
- Experience in building and managing effective, cohesive, and high performing teams;
- Experience with departmental/organizational budgeting and financial management.

Personal Attributes

- Commitment to LDF's mission and a record of engagement with issues of racial justice;
- Capacity to lead via influence with an approach that attracts and inspires others;
- Self-confident, self-sufficient, and self-directed;
- A problem-solver who is resilient in the face of conflict;
- Ability to work comfortably in a diverse environment;
- Open, motivating, collaborative, and approachable working style and demeanor;
- Flexible, adaptable, and ability to prioritize and multi-task when necessary;
- Demonstrated integrity and a commitment to professional excellence.

This is not an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, skills, efforts, requirements, or working conditions associated with the job. While this is intended to be an accurate reflection of the current job, management reserves the right to revise the job or to require that other or different tasks be performed as assigned. This description does not constitute a contract of employment and LDF may exercise its employment-at-will rights at any time.

Please note that LDF requires all employees to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as a condition of employment. Accordingly, successful candidates must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and submit proof of vaccination prior to the commencement of employment, unless they qualify for a reasonable accommodation for bona fide medical or religious reasons.

To Apply

Applicants are required to send a resume and statement of interest describing how one's experiences meet the requirements of this position to the following web address: www.imsearch.com/search-detail/8725

Inquiries and nominations may be submitted to the same web address. Review of nominations and applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. All applications and correspondences regarding this position should be addressed to the search firm consultants noted below.

Ernest A. Brooks III, Partner
Kahn Lee, Managing Associate
Clay Batley, Associate
Isaacson, Miller

Electronic submission of applications and correspondence is strongly preferred
Applications received by November 30, 2022, will receive priority consideration.

Anticipated Salary Range: \$200,000-300,000

The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. is proud to be an Equal Opportunity Employer. We are committed to providing equal employment opportunities to you without regard to race, creed, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status, age, veteran status, medical condition or disability, genetic information, gender identity, or any other protected status under federal, state, or local law.